

*The Magazine of
St Paul's Church, Warton
Serving Christ ~ Serving the Community*



"....Behold, all things are become new..."

11 Corinthians 5.17

JANUARY 2026



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**Link Parish - Timmerlah
in the Diocese of Braunschweig,
Lower Saxony, Germany**



Sunday 4th

09.30

EPIPHANY

Parish Eucharist

Wednesday

7th

09.30

Holy Communion

12.00-15.00

Foodbank

Saturday

10th

10.00

St. Paul's Cafe

Sunday 11th

09.30

BAPTISM OF CHRIST

All Aboard

Tuesday

13th

13.00

Women's Institute
in the Village Hall

Wednesday

14th

09.30

Holy Communion

12.00-15.00

Foodbank

Sunday 18th

09.30

Epiphany 2

Parish Eucharist

Tuesday	19 th	Week of Christian Unity	
Tuesday	20 th	19.30	History Society in the Village Hall
Wednesday	23 rd	09.30	Holy Communion
		12.00-15.00	Foodbank
Saturday	24 th	Coffee and Toasties at Holy Trinity	

Sunday 25th

CONVERSION OF PAUL
PATRONAL FESTIVAL

09.30

Parish Eucharist

12.30

Parish Lunch at

Rigbys Farmhouse Restaurant

Wednesday	28 th	09.30	Holy Communion
		12.00-15.00	Foodbank
		13.30	Mothers Union in Church
		followed by AGM meeting in the Village Hall	

PLEASE NOTE

The **DEADLINE** for articles for
the **FEBRUARY** magazine is
FRIDAY 23rd JANUARY

My dear friends,

On Remembrance Sunday last year (I am writing this in 2025) the journalist, Alison Pearson, was visited by two police officers who told her that she had been reported for a non-crime hate incident.



She asked what it was she had said, or written, but they said they couldn't tell her.

She asked who her accuser was. Not only was she told that they couldn't tell her but said that she mustn't refer to the person as the "accuser" but as the "victim".

What happened to innocent until proved guilty?

When she wrote an article about it, she had a lot of support but she was nevertheless very upset. Shortly after the article appeared, she took a taxi in London. When she got out the taxi driver looked at her and growled, "You that Alison Pearson?"

"Yes, I am," she replied, fearing the worst.

"No charge, love," he said and drove off.

Now she was a well paid journalist, probably on expenses, so the saving of the taxi fare meant very little to her, but this act of kindness meant a great deal.

We live in mad times at the moment, with wars and conflicts all over the world and acts of gratuitous violence in all countries, including our own. Even the law seems to have gone pear-shaped with police having enough time to send two officers to report an unspecified non-crime hate incident, but can't seem have enough policemen to do anything about serial shoplifting or other thefts.

It seems to me that small acts of kindness in these times are more important than ever.

Jesus never gave us the idea that things were going to get better. In fact He warned us that the world, if anything, would get worse. He said that there would be wars, famines and earthquakes.

However, He also said, “Believe Me, anyone who gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones, just because he is My disciple, will by no means lose his reward.”

So there we have it, small acts of kindness.

So as we travel into 2026, we would like the world in general to improve but even if it doesn't we should still take the opportunity to do small acts of kindness, because in that way we can make the world close to us a better place and it is a way of showing that we are Jesus's disciples.

All good wishes for a blessed New Year.

Yours in Christ,

Grace



FROM THE REGISTERS
Holy Trinity Freckleton & St Paul's Warton

Funerals

24th November 2025	(Donald) Malcolm Grant (Holy Trinity)
27th November 2025	Patricia Margaret Norcross (Holy Trinity)
27th November 2025	Megan Anne Simmonds Compton (Burial of Ashes) (Holy Trinity)
12 th December 2025	Joyce Burnettt Harrison (Holy Trinity)
16th December 2025	Deryck Lund (Holy Trinity)
18th December 2025	Jane Shaw (St Paul's)
22nd December 2025	Frederick Charles Squires (St Paul's)



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Churchwarden's Letter

“I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me will never go hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty”

(John 6:35)

Our Christmas Fair was a busy event with people popping into church for cake and coffee and browsing the stalls for last minute gift ideas. Our chocolate tombola was popular, as too was the Mothers Union stall. Appreciation goes to the Warton Singers for providing a musical accompaniment to the event and singing a medley of Christmas songs, and to everyone who gave up their time helping out in order to raise funds for our church.

The combined church's PCC party at the Vicarage was a very festive affair. Rev Tracy cooked a variety of dishes so no one went hungry or thirsty, in fact many of us indulged in second portions (well it was Christmas and the food was tasty!)

Finding the time to talk socially with members from our sister church was invigorating. Maybe we should add it at the top of our list of new year resolutions? Thank you Rev Tracy and Richard for catering and hosting the event and making it such an enjoyable occasion.

Our Christingle Service saw our youngsters in the congregation help Rev Tracy find her missing candle from her christingle cup cake. Hidden around the church were biblical clues to help these young sleuths discover where the thief had hidden her lost candle. Finally the church lights were dimmed so its congregation could briefly hold up their lit cupcakes to celebrate Jesus as the light of the world. Our thanks goes to Lynn Willetts who baked all the delicious cup cakes for our service and to the children who made the service so vibrant.

The Warton Singers Christmas Concert was a sell out performance in church. The choir performed a variety of modern

and traditional carols during the concert and at the break the audience mince pies accompanied by mulled wine or a spritzer served. Stewart drew the winning raffle numbers and five lucky people took home large gift hampers as a prize plus five other prizes. By the end of the concert the church vibrated to the sound of “Feliz Navidad”(Merry Christmas in Spanish), and the joy of Christmas was palpable throughout the building. Many thanks to the Warton Singers for providing us with such an enjoyable concert.

The day after the Warton Singers Concert, our regular church choir sang a selection of Christmas songs to accompany the church’s traditional Carol Service. As the service retold the story leading up to Jesus’s birth the readings between carols were given by members of the congregation who do not normally participate in our church services, so it was nice to see new faces at the lectern becoming involved in the service.

On the 25th of this month we celebrate the Conversion of St Paul to the christian faith. I hope many of you can join us in our patronal festive lunch planned at Rigby's Restaurant.

Blessings and Happy New Year to you all

Jackie



**PUT THIS
on YOUR
CALENDAR!**

Patronal Festival Lunch
Sunday 25th January
2026
Rigbys Farmhouse
Restaurant
12.30 for 13.00
Details from Mike Willetts

January is **National Clean Up Your Computer Month** and **National Hot Tea Month!**

Here are some more fun things to celebrate in January:

- **January 1:** Z Day (On this day, those whose last name begins with “Z” get to go first instead of last.)
- **January 3:** National Chocolate-Covered Cherry Day
- **January 6:** National Bean Day
- **January 8:** Elvis Presley’s Birthday
- **January 10:** National Houseplant Appreciation Day
- **January 14:** National Dress Up Your Pet Day
- **January 20:** National Penguin Day
- **January 22:** National Answer Your Cat’s Questions Day
- **January 29:** National Puzzle Day

St Paul's Little Café



*Saturday 10th January
2026*

*10.00 – 12.00
All Welcome*

What you didn't know about EPIPHANY

Epiphany, an ancient Christian feast day, has several unusual aspects and diverse global traditions that differ significantly from common Christmas customs.

Key Theological and Historical Unusual Facts

Older Than Christmas: Epiphany is one of the oldest Christian feasts, celebrated in the Eastern Church before Christmas was established as a separate holiday in the West.

Multiple "Epiphanies": The feast originally commemorated four "manifestations" of Jesus' divinity in one day: his birth, the Magi's visit, his baptism in the Jordan River, and his first miracle at the wedding in Cana.

Eastern vs. Western Focus: While Western Christianity primarily focuses on the Magi's visit (representing Christ's manifestation to the Gentiles), Eastern Orthodox churches focus almost entirely on Jesus' baptism and call the feast "Theophany" (manifestation of God).

The Magi Weren't Kings or Three in Number: The Bible's Gospel of Matthew refers to them as "Magi from the East" (likely astrologers or a priestly class from Persia), not kings. The tradition of there being three, named Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, stems from the number of gifts (gold, frankincense, and myrrh), not the biblical text itself.

Unusual Global Traditions

Gift Giving on Jan 6: In many Spanish-speaking countries and Italy, children receive gifts on the morning of January 6th, left by the Three Kings (or a kindly witch figure called *La Befana* in Italy), rather than on Christmas Day.

Icy Water Plunges: In Greece, Bulgaria, and Russia, a central Epiphany (Theophany) tradition involves a priest throwing a cross into a body of water (sometimes an ice-covered river or lake). Brave individuals dive into the frigid water to retrieve it, with the winner receiving a special blessing and good luck for the year.

Women's Christmas: In Ireland, Epiphany is known as Nollaig na mBean or Women's Christmas. Traditionally, women get the day off to rest and gather socially after the hard work of the Christmas holidays, while men handle the housework and cooking.

"Chalking the Door": A tradition in parts of Europe and North America involves writing the year and the initials of the Magi (*C+M+B*) in chalk above the front door. The initials also stand for the Latin phrase *Christus mansionem benedicat* ("May Christ bless this dwelling").

King Cakes and Hidden Figurines: Across the world, from France (*galette des rois*) to New Orleans (Mardi Gras King Cake season starts on Epiphany), special cakes are eaten with a small token (a bean or baby Jesus figurine) hidden inside. The person who finds the token is traditionally crowned "king" or "queen" for the day or is responsible for buying the next cake

Gift Laden but not so Wise

A camel's cough, an infant's cry,
a king's enraged confusion; starry
eyed,
the foreign envoys stumble on
and do not catch his unsaid thing;
and will not see, till Angels sing
a lullaby to change their path,
the star reflected in a drawn
sword.

Gifts so lavish, unchild friendly,
symbolize but do not help;
illustrate but do not feed;
meet their yearnings not his need.
And thus, unknowingly, they
prophecy.
This little king they seek to bless

will bless far more in every way.
Their largesse, scattered without
thought,
is mirrored in his opposite.

His gifts, the ones we need but do
not want.
received, rejected, ignored, lost;
trampled, discarded and
forgotten;
but remaining offered,
and we can be the sharers.

Gold maybe seen in a sunrise.
Incense can fill a bluebell's breath,
and myrrh, that healing touch of
love
which sweetens even lonely
death.

By Fr Mark Skelton.

Our November meeting was a fantastic candle making demonstration and talk by Jo Houghton. She was assisted by her friend Pat, who also helps out at a lot of the markets and fairs. Jo has always had a love of candles and after attending a workshop in 2018 she started making them herself. Then in 2021 she heard about the St Paul's Christmas Market and this became the first of many that she attended.



She is now very busy, especially at Christmas time and her house is full of candles, burners, wax melts and reed diffusers ready for the markets she has planned.

Jo talked about the history of candles, with the Egyptians using rushes soaked in animal fat and in Japan whale fat was used, mixed with spices to improve the aroma. Candles have been used to provide light and have been used at religious ceremonies for hundreds of years. Many churches use candles, a symbol of enlightenment, faith and God's love, shining in the darkness.



Jo had brought equipment to melt the soy wax that she uses to make the candles, showing us the delicate process of melting, adding scent, placing the wick and pouring into the container carefully to avoid bubbles.

It was a really interesting talk and afterwards we had the opportunity to buy some of the gifts she planned to take to the market. As a result of mentioning

her talk for St Paul's Mothers' Union she was asked to do other demonstrations and talks, so she is going to be busy!



Lin Willets kindly organised our Christmas meal at the Coach and Horses on the 4th December. Most of our members, along with some ladies from Holy Trinity joined together for a lovely meal and good company. We also said goodbye to Pauline Dollman who is moving to Bournemouth to be nearer to her family. Best wishes from all of us at Warton Mothers' Union.

Our next meeting will be **Wednesday 28th January, starting at 13.30hrs in Church, then the AGM in the village hall.** All welcome.

God bless

Amanda



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We're told that "Christmas is a time for giving" and it certainly seemed that way when the Warton W.I. Christmas party got underway on the afternoon of December 9th. Stacks of cards were distributed on a table overlooked by festive branches decorated with our own hand crafted angels and each member received a "Secret Santa parcel", while tucking into Lin's delicious tea time treats.

Everyone loves a raffle and this month's was a cracker (no pun intended, although we did indeed have fun pulling our crackers at tea time.) With Hazel presiding, no fewer than 7 lovely gifts were given out, followed by a further 6 winners who each took home a Christmas table decoration made by Pauline.

There were prizes too for the winners of the Christmas jumper competition : Yvonne sparkled quite literally with her Christmas lights sweater, while our newest member, Joanne, came second and Michelle took third place. Michelle scored again when her team got the highest marks in the Pauline's Christmas quiz.

But the highlight of the afternoon was unquestionably provided by a group of children from St. Paul's C.E. School who sang Christmas songs and carols, not just in English but in Spanish and German too. We all hope that the children got as much enjoyment from singing as the ladies did from listening to them.

The party was concluded with the very fitting gift of a lovely bouquet to President, Ann Jackson, in recognition of all the hard work she invariably puts into making Warton W.I. such an enjoyable organisation to belong to. All good wishes for the festive season go out to present and past members and to the Warton community as a whole.

Gwen



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St Paul's 2025 Grand Draw

As you probably know, our annual Grand Draw took place after the Festival of Lessons & Carols on 14th December. Once again we had a terrific array of prizes, including £100 cash, a magnificent Christmas hamper and a meal for two at Rigby's Farmhouse Restaurant. These, and the rest of the prizes were generously donated, our sincere thanks go to everyone who provided a prize, it would not be possible to run the Draw without such generous support. Of course, our thanks also go to the many people who purchased tickets. It is their support that has raised almost £590 to help St Paul's in our mission to Serve Christ and the Community. Thank you.

Unfortunately not everyone can win, but those lucky names drawn from the hat [actually a large box], with prize numbers, are as follows:

1 J Barfoot	8 J Murray	15 M Willetts
2 L Willetts	9 L Smith	16 B Simmons
3 R Ridealgh	10 R Braithwaite	17 E Ecclestone
4 S Lockhart	11 C Dean	18 B Fenton
5 J Yates	12 S Ecclestone	19 K Baptist
6 M Hyham	13 O Pitman	20 D Barfoot
7 D Higginson	14 J Barfoot	21 S Johnson

Lucky winners, who were not present at the Draw, are being contacted individually.

MKW



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DECEMBER MEETING

I, for one recognised the dilemma facing our December speaker, Brian Topping when many years ago he was asked what he wanted to do as a career. However, his mother was having none of it and very soon he was confronted with a list of 'proper' jobs in the Civil Service. He told us he really had no idea what Customs and Excise amounted to, but it soon became clear that he made the right choice and can look back on a long and distinguished working life in the public service of which he speaks very highly.

Very soon he was based at Heathrow Airport and, as he explained, the people we think of as Customs Officers are in fact Security, so Brian was usually to be found behind the scenes when somebody and their luggage underwent extra scrutiny. Very often the instincts of officers were alerted by 'body language' and posture so that being **observant** is a vital skill.

The ability to **assess** a situation is also required and it was clear that the huge movement of illegal drugs was and continues to be a major part of the work of Customs and Excise. Here he illustrated the cunning tricks, on an industrial scale, the criminals employ in trying to get high value items past customs officers and even precious stones are ready quarry.

Tenacity is the third quality essential in the work and Brian told us how repeatedly going back over again on something that doesn't just 'smell right' often yielded good outcomes. One major aspect of the work lies in its being populated by some nasty people, with 'the front line' being a place of actual risk, a fact to which Brian could personally testify.

He told us that confiscated goods are normally destroyed; alcohol goes down the drain and as tobacco products are incorrectly labelled for UK use they are always incinerated. In answer to a question about gems, he gave us the strongest impression that serious decisions have then to be taken.

At the close of his excellent talk, Brian touched on a subject very close to his heart. We will all have heard of sudden cot death in infants, but Brian's life has been marred by the loss of his beloved grandson Frankie at age three. Frankie went to bed as normal in May 2019 only to be found unresponsive the next morning. Since then, Fund-raising for SUDC, Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood, (a National registered charity) has gone from strength to strength and is on course to reach £200,000 very soon.

Members were very happy to support this worthwhile cause which could affect any family and Brian, whom we sincerely thank for a super evening, donates a portion of his speaker's fee to it.

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JANUARY 2026 SUNDAY ROTAS

Date	Readers
January 4th	Alison Eccleston Sally Lockhart
January 11th	Family Service
January 18th	Colin Charnley Margaret Jacob
January 25th	Sue Parkin Stewart Hankinson

Date	Coffee
January 4th	Joan Liptrot Sally Lockhart
January 11th	Chris Denham Anne-Marie Marsden
January 18th	Kathy Baptist Jackie Ridealgh
January 25th	Barbara Fenton Stewart Newall

Churchwarden Duties

JANUARY	4 th	Lin Willetts
	11 th	Audrey Charnley
	18 th	Colin Lake
	25 th	Simon Eccleston



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Organisations

Day	Section Leader	Contact Number
<u>Monday</u> <i>Squirrels</i> (4-6yrs) <i>Guides</i> (10-14yrs) 6.30 -8.30 pm	Chloe Miller Bridget Davison	07388 554048 01772 671740
<u>Tuesday</u> <i>Cubs</i> (8-10½yrs) 6 -7.30pm	Kate Parker	01772 635514 07788 551100
<u>Wednesday</u> <i>Rainbows</i> (5-7yrs) 5.45-6.45pm <i>Brownies</i> (7-10yrs) 6.30-8pm	Catherine Potter	01772 493475
<u>Thursday</u> <i>Beavers</i> (6-8yrs) 5.45-7pm <i>Scouts</i> (10½ -14yrs) 7.15-8.45pm	Amber Chauhan Chloe Miller	07468 616692 07388 554048
<i>Group Lead Volunteer</i>	Chloe Miller	07388 554048