



ST PAUL'S

LOW MOOR PARISH CHURCH



FEBRUARY 2026

Reaching out and growing together in God's love

Epiphany, the Gift of New Beginnings - and a New Chapter for St Paul's and Christ Church

The season of Epiphany arrives just as a new year begins. While Christmas celebrates that Jesus was born, Epiphany celebrates that He was revealed and shown to the world. The word epiphany means 'a revealing' or 'a moment of seeing something clearly'. It is about light breaking into darkness and helping us understand who Jesus truly is.

We see this in the story of the Magi. Guided by a star, they travel far to find the Christ child. They were not part of Jesus' community or culture, yet God reached out to them. When they finally arrived, they knelt and offered their gifts, recognising that this small child was a great king. Epiphany reminds us that Jesus is for everyone, not just for a few, but for all people, everywhere.

This message fits beautifully with the start of a new year. January often feels like a fresh page. We make plans, set goals, resolutions and hope that things can be better than before. Epiphany invites us to do something deeper than simply making resolutions. It invites us to look for where God is being revealed in our lives right now.

Like the Magi, we are all on a journey. We may not always know where the road leads, but God continues to guide us, sometimes in quiet ways, sometimes in surprising ones. Epiphany encourages us to pay attention - to notice the signs of God's presence in ordinary moments, in people we meet, and even in challenges we face.

A new year will bring joy and struggle, certainty and questions. Epiphany does not promise an easy road, but it does promise light for the journey. Christ is still being revealed - in love, in forgiveness, in hope, and in the courage to begin again. As we step into this new year, may we walk like the Magi: open-hearted, curious, and ready to follow God's light wherever it leads. May this be a year when we see more clearly who Christ is - and who we are called to be, especially as we begin the next chapter in the life of St Paul's and Christ Church.

God Bless.

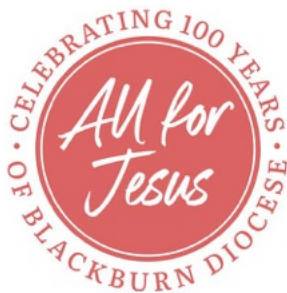
Catherine

Cover photo: At the Dawn of a New Year

*At the year's first light,
Christ's dawn rests on this place,
On stones shaped by prayer
And lives shaped by grace.
Rooted in all we have been,
Yet called anew by God's Spirit,*

*We stand as one parish, one people,
Trusted with our own way forward.
May faith deepen where we are planted,
May love guide what we become,
And may God who has led us thus far
Lead us on, into His future. JH*

The year 2026 is our centenary year as a Diocese

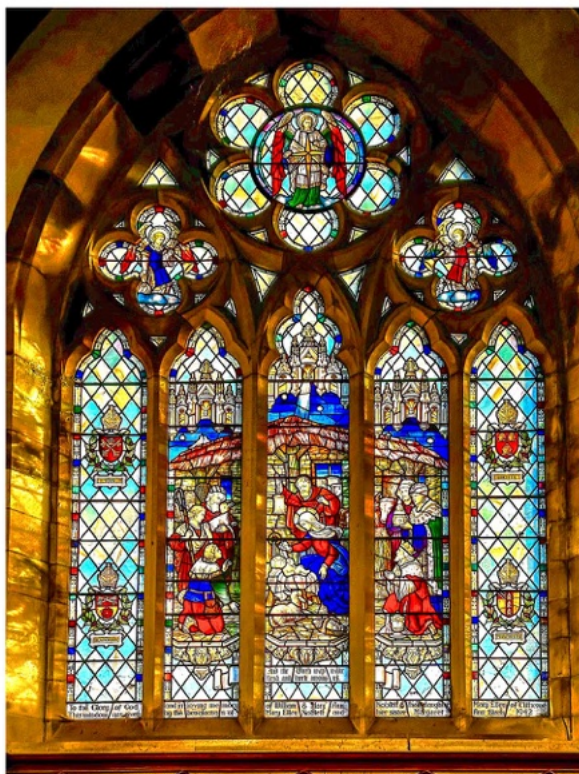


It will be a chance to give thanks for all that God has done through his people in the Diocese of Blackburn since William Temple founded it in 1926, and an opportunity to commit ourselves anew to mission and ministry in the service of Jesus Christ across Lancashire.

The East Window and our Diocesan Story

The main stained-glass window at St Paul's, Low Moor, displays the coats of arms of the dioceses of Blackburn, Manchester and Chester, together with that of the Province of York. This is not just decorative heraldry: it tells the story of where our parish sits within the Church of England. Historically, this part of Lancashire was

overseen by the Diocese of Chester, then by the newly created Diocese of Manchester in the nineteenth century. In 1926 the Diocese of Blackburn was formed to serve this area more closely, and it remains our present diocese today. All three belong to the northern Province of York, whose arms crown the group. Together, these shields form a visual record of our church's spiritual oversight through time, linking St Paul's to centuries of worship, continuity and the wider life of the Church.



News from the Parish

Christmas Services throughout the Diocese saw a rise in numbers attending and St Paul's was no different with our Carol Services, Living Nativity and our Christingle Service being very well attended. We pray that we will see more families in the coming year as we find ways to encourage them to come to church and learn more about their faith.

January got off to a really good start as we welcomed the Venerable Jane Atkinson, our new Archdeacon of Blackburn. Jane preached at our service and impressed everyone with how approachable she is. She came for several reasons; to acknowledge the beginning of our newly formed Benefice with St Paul's Low Moor and to be with us for the launch of Blackburn Centenary year with the theme 'All for Jesus'. Events will be held throughout the year and will include a Big Day out in Blackpool on Saturday May 16th. The Diocesan Conference will be held in Liverpool in July with a Mission weekend in our Parishes over the weekend of Saturday September 12th. All this will conclude with a service in Blackburn Cathedral in November. There's plenty of information on our website if you would like to know more.

On Saturday January 10th a group of people from both Parishes met at Turret House to see where we go from here as we come to the end of our formal training on Leading our Church into Growth. Led by Revd Sarah O'Donoghue we spent the day thinking about how our story fits into the church's story and into God's story.

A time line of key events and memories of our congregation was drawn up and this will be in church for anyone to add their own stories and the importance of St Paul's and Christ Church in their lives. We also looked at the things we do well, the things we might improve, the challenges we face and the opportunities we have as a church and we will be following this up with our congregation.

The day ended thinking about the Vision we have for our church in the future concluding with Holy Communion. We enjoyed a good lunch, plenty of conversation, prayer, laughter and joy. Thank you so much to everyone who came - it really is much appreciated.

Catherine

(Photos of the above events may be found throughout the magazine)



Clitheroe Christians in Partnership

The Clitheroe Churches in Partnership Advent Carol Service was held on Sunday 30 November and brought together representatives and congregations from across the local area for a well-supported act of worship. The service opened with O Come, O Come Emmanuel, setting a reflective Advent tone.

Readings from Isaiah, the prophets, the Gospels and the Epistles were shared by ministers and representatives from the Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic, URC and Salvation Army churches, including Rev Grace Gaze (Rector of Bowland Benefice), Rev Ian Humphries (Trinity Methodist Church), Andy McGuire (St Michael & St John R.C), Rev Paul Sherwood, (St Mary's), all highlighting the shared Christian hope of light, peace and the coming Kingdom.

In between were well-chosen Advent hymns, including Longing for Light, Come Thou Long Expected Jesus and Hark the Glad Sound, which encouraged strong congregational participation.

Musical contributions, including Like a Candle Flame and The Road to Bethlehem, added depth and variety, while the reflection given by Rev Sam Cheesman offered a clear and accessible focus for the season of Advent. Prayers were led by Alan Meyer.

The service ended with a blessing, and the hymn The Day Thou Gavest, sending everyone out with a sense of unity and shared purpose as Advent began, and rounding the evening off with the refreshments provided after the service. Thank you James.

Shoe Box Thanks

Thank you to all who enabled us to send 52 shoe boxes, blankets, sheets and scarves to Eastern Europe through International Aid and £200 towards transport costs.

Derek and Anne

Line Dancing at St Paul's



We all had a really enjoyable time at our last line dancing session before Christmas - with mince pies, Christmas nibbles and Daphne's famous Eccles cakes all being on the menu.

I would like to thank everyone who comes along and supports us every Tuesday, raising money fore St Paul's Church and having a lot of fun on the way.

We meet every Tuesday at 1.15pm in St Paul's Church and everyone is welcome - whether you have danced before or a complete novice.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Why not come along and try it!

Avril

Christmas at St Pauls - Our Church family had a bit of Do!



What a cracking evening we all shared at Low Moor Club in December 2025 for our Church Family Christmas Doo, It was lovely to see so many from our church family coming together to enjoy good company, plenty of laughter, and celebrating the festive season.

A huge thank you to everyone who brought along food, who helped with the planning and on the night, massive cheers to Wendy, who kindly treated everyone to a Christmas drink! The buffet was absolutely plentiful and enjoyed by all. A very special mention also goes to Cathleen for organising and hosting the brilliant quiz, which added so much fun to the evening and kept us all on our toes.

Thank you to everyone who came and helped make the night such a joyful occasion. As truly fills me with joy to see so many people who could make it, We're already looking forward to the next one! Cheers Ash.

Christmas at St Pauls - Carol Singing

A jolly group of about a dozen of St Paul's People, all well wrapped up with coats, scarves, hats and gloves braved the cold weather and went around our parish spreading the Christmas spirit with all the usual carols. The idea was to give rather than receive so a selection of sweets were offered at the various houses which were well received



Thanks



James and Faith were thanked for sharing their gift of music with us throughout the year and were presented with gifts from the choir at our Carol Service





Left: Christmas at St Pauls - Christingle

Christmas Eve saw the church filled to capacity for our Christingle service. It was good to see so many new faces

Right: Christmas at St Pauls - Christmas Sunday with Bacon Butties and later - The Runners

A lovely way to end our service on Christmas Sunday - with bacon butties supplied by Miles and Linda. The aroma (and Wendy and Ashley) drew in a large number of runners from the Clitheroe 10K Run being held nearby



Below: Christmas at St Pauls - Clitheroe Brass Band Concert

Another capacity filled church for the Clitheroe Brass Band concert - a most enjoyable afternoon with something for everyone. It was good to see the group of residents from our neighbours at Beech Grove joining in with their favourite sing-a-long Christmas favourites.





Christmas at St Pauls - Carol Concert

The Carol Service held on December 14 was a thoroughly enjoyable and uplifting occasion, drawing the congregation together in a spirit of celebration and reflection. The service began beautifully with the processional carol *Once in Royal David's City*, with the soloist's opening verse from the west end of the church creating a moving sense of anticipation as the choir processed.

A rich selection of well-loved carols and choral pieces was thoughtfully interwoven with readings from Isaiah and the Gospels, clearly and confidently read by members of the congregation. These readings traced the Christmas story from prophecy to fulfilment, helping everyone reflect on the meaning of the Incarnation. The choir made a particularly strong contribution with items such as *Look to the Skies*, *Still, Still, Still* and *Shepherds' Pipe Carol*, which were warmly received.

Congregational carols, including *In the Bleak Midwinter*, *O Come, All Ye Faithful* and the final rousing *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*, were sung with enthusiasm. The service concluded with prayers, a blessing, and an organ voluntary played by James, whose musical support and help in preparing the service were greatly appreciated.

Overall, the service was well planned, prayerful, and joyful, and provided a fitting and memorable celebration of the Christmas season.



Christmas at St Pauls - Living Nativity 2025

Our *Living Nativity* brought to life by members of our congregation dressed in traditional biblical costumes portraying familiar figures from the Christmas story adding to the sense of shared celebration. Together, the scenes capture the spirit of retelling the Nativity as a communal act of faith, storytelling, and joy.



February Diary

Sunday 1st	9.30 Holy Communion- Candlemas
Sunday 8th	9.30 All Age Worship - Love
	2.00 Messy Church
Monday 9th	7.00 Bible Course at the Vicarage
Tuesday 10th	10.50 Bible Course at Christ Church
	7.30 MU
Friday 13th	12.00 Soup Lunch
Sunday 15th	9.30 Holy Communion
Monday 16th	7.00 Bible Course at the Vicarage
Tuesday 17th	Pancake Night
Wednesday 18th	10.00 Ash Wednesday at Christ Church
	Followed by Bible Course
Sunday 22nd	9.30 Holy Communion
Monday 23rd	7.00 Bible Course at the Vicarage
Tuesday 24th	10.50 Bible Course at Christ Church



Visit of Venerable Jane Atkinson, our new Archdeacon of Blackburn on Sunday 4th January

Previously Area Dean of Poulton and Vicar of St John's, Little Thornton, she took up the role in November 2024; succeeding the Venerable Mark Ireland who retired in April.

She will be one of two Archdeacons in the Diocese.

The other is the Venerable David Picken who is the current Archdeacon of Lancaster.

Mothers' Union

Programme for 2026:

10th February

10th March

14th April

6th May

12th May

21st May

9th June

Open meeting

AGM. Bring and Share Supper

Discussion about 9th June meeting

Open meeting: Rosemary Moor Poetry Reading

Deanery Festival at St Cuthbert's Darwen 7.00pm

Business meeting

Quiet Day at Turret House

150 Years of MU celebration



*Valentine
Soup
Lunch*

**SAVE
THE
DATE!**

**FRIDAY 13th FEBRUARY
12.00 - 1.30**



ST PAUL'S
LOW MOOR PARISH CHURCH

LOW MOOR READING ROOM AND SOCIAL CLUB

ST. PAULS STREET – TELEPHONE 01200 423496

Baptism Birthday, Wake, Practice Sessions.

All your Family get togethers.

If you need a Function Room for anything, contact Bar
Staff or phone the number above.

£20 deposit (cleaner) required.

Will be refunded if not required.



Awayday at The Turret House

On Saturday 10 January, members from both parishes gathered at Turret House for an awayday to reflect on the next steps as we approach the end of our formal Leading Our Church into Growth training. Led by Revd Sarah O'Donoghue, the day invited us to explore how our own story connects with the story of the Church and, ultimately, with God's story. (See Timeline) We concluded by reflecting on our shared vision for the future of our church, ending the day with Holy Communion. Alongside this, we enjoyed a good lunch, thoughtful conversation, prayer, laughter, and a real sense of joy and fellowship.



Tree Maintenance in the churchyard

You may remember that a while ago some branches fell from trees bordering Edisford Road. During January those trees that had been inspected and shown to be in need of further trimming received the attention of tree surgeons to be made safe.

The February Magazine is kindly sponsored by
Nicola Chilton

Thanks to all who have contributed photographs for this issue of the magazine, including Faith, Ashley and Avril



Messy Church at Christmas

Another well attended Messy Church with lots of activities and fun. Bethany brought her own Nativity scene which she had made at home and which took pride of place on the font over Christmas. Thanks to Faith and the team for all that they do.

ADVANCE NOTICE!

**CRAFT
FAIR**

Saturday 28th March

1.00pm - 3.00pm

Table: £20