

JC Lytham Parish Office

The Parish Hall

Church Road

Lytham

FY8 5QL

Tel: 01253 736488

Email: parish.office@jclytham.church

Usual office hours: Monday – Friday 9.00am – 1.00pm

The Vicar's Day off is Friday and Emma works Sunday to Wednesday.
If you need urgent support on a Friday, please contact Fiona in the office who will be able to put you in touch with someone who can help.

Website: www.jclytham.church

Facebook page: @ JC Lytham

YouTube Channel: St Cuthbert's Lytham



JC Lytham is a charity registered in England and Wales

Charity Registration No. 1199630

Registered Office: - Swyncombe, Talbot Road, Lytham, FY8 4JJ

Wishing you a joy filled Christmas and a Happy 2026



The Ecclesiastical Parish
of St John the Divine and
St Cuthbert Lytham



PARISH MAGAZINE – December 2025

Dear Friends

During the past year we have been a part of the Diocesan Renewal Programme; this has informed the PCC agenda and led to some good discussions. A main aim of the programme is to embed the principles of Leading Your Church into Growth (LYCiG) into the day to day life of the parish.



I first attended a LYCiG conference in about 2001, and this is the third time I have engaged with it. The difference this time is that whole of the parish, especially the PCC, is encouraged and assisted to engage with it through support from the Diocesan Renewal Team. Our PCC has gone through the programme over the past year and will be revisiting it again during 2026 to help us clarify and develop a clear vision under God for the future growth of JC Lytham.

The programme included our Anchored in Faith mission, and as the Blackburn Diocese celebrates its centenary in 2026 one of the aims is for every parish in the diocese to hold a mission in the autumn. We are anticipating this being over the first weekend in October, linking it with our Harvest Festival.

One of the things the programme has highlighted for me is that we must always be prepared, and brave enough, to talk about our faith in Jesus when opportunities arise. That is true in our personal lives, but also as a church. When we arrange an event and invite people along, we must make sure we tell them something about Jesus. Often in my ministry I have sought to be a Christian presence where ever I am, but not necessarily spoken directly about Jesus.

As we approach Christmas this year we need to remind ourselves

The Ministry Team

Vicar: Revd Nick Wells 07852 254 907

Mission Enabler: Revd Emma Swarbrick 07866 335230

Hon. Assistant Priest: Revd Helen Houston

Licensed Lay Jacqui Briscoe, Joanne Hutchinson,

Ministers: David Matthews, Bev Wells

LLM Emeritus: Angela Lee

Authorised Lay Ministers: Marianne Cottier Brown and James Walmsley

Our usual Pattern of Services of Worship.

	1 st Sunday	2 nd Sunday	3 rd Sunday	4 th Sunday	5 th Sunday
8:30am BCP Communion	St Cuthbert	St John	St Cuthbert	St John	St Cuthbert
10:15am Morning Service	Parish Communion	Holy Communion St John	Holy Communion Both churches	Holy Communion St Cuthbert	Holy Communion Both churches
		All Age Service St Cuthbert		Service of the Word St John	
11am Communion	Each Wednesday at St Cuthbert				



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that Jesus is at the heart of Christmas. We then need to witness to what this means across the whole of life. The most important messages of Jesus as not so much his birth, but his ministry, teaching and primarily his crucifixion and resurrection.

There are times when the Nativity is dismissed as nothing more than a charming tale for children. Yet in reality, it is a historic and miraculous event—one we must never outgrow or reduce to sentiment. It is the radiant beginning of a life that would shake the foundations of history and transform the world forever.

Please pray that all those who come to celebrate Christmas with us this year that they will come to recognise that there is much more to Jesus than just a manger & a stable and that this child, the Son of God, wishes to be their friend for life too.

Yours in Christ



PARISH COMMUNION

Our next Parish Communion
will be on
Sunday 4th January at 10.15am
in St Cuthberts

Christmas Through The Keyhole



It's that time again!

We will be welcoming Years 2 and 4 from Hall Park and Lytham C of E to experience the trail on Tuesday 2nd and Wednesday 3rd December.

On Saturday 6th December, we will be opening the trail to the community, 10-12:30. Parents,

grandparents, aunts, uncles and family friends are invited to attend with their connected children! The trail will run in 2 time slots: 10 am and 11:15. Tickets are free and are available online using this link, or follow this QR code:

www.tinyurl.com/jclytham-eventbrite

For those who wish to join for the atmosphere, but are happy not to go on the trail, adult non-trail tickets are available. These tickets include refreshments and a Christmas ornament to make and create.



Quiz Questions for November: A Complete Miscellany: ANSWERS

1. Orange, 2. He was outstanding in his field, 3. About 11½ feet, 4. BMW, 5. December 31st, Janary 1st, 6. Day, 7. Science, 8. Lounger, 9. Bus fare home, 10. Archelaus, 11. Westray and Papa Westray, 12. A bed, 13. Frank, 14. Smoke detector, 15. Hashtag, 16. That's All Folks!, 17. Incorrectly, 18. Uranus, 19. Cana in Galilee, 20. Broccoli, 21. Belize, 22. Puck [A Midsummer Night's Dream], 23. Three, 24. Mount Nebo, 25. True, 26. Igor Sikorsky, 27. Q, 28. Peru, 29. Sodom and Gomorrah, 30. Pyramids of Giza, 31. Didymus/The Twin, 32. Barry Manilow, 33. Daphne Du Maurier, 34. Mark Anthony, 35. Butterfly.

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Christmas Services

- Tue 9th 7pm Regional Scouts Carol Service
at St Cuthbert's
- Thu 11th 7pm Blue Christmas at Lytham Methodist
Church
- Sun 14th 6pm Christingle at St John's
- Tue 16th 2pm Hall Park School Carol Service at St
Cuthbert's
- Wed 17th 9:30am Lytham CofE School Carol Service
at St John's
- Sun 21st 10:15am Carol Service at St John's
Communion at St Cuthbert's
- 6pm Service of 9 Lessons and Carols at
St Cuthbert's

Christmas Eve

- 4pm Crib Service at St Cuthbert's
- 4pm Quiet Crib Service at St John's
- 9pm First Communion of Christmas at St John's
- 11:30pm First Communion of Christmas at St
Cuthbert's

Christmas Day

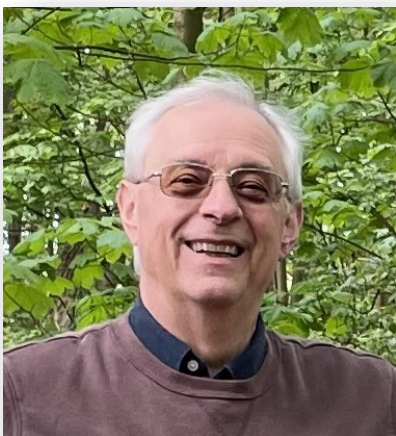
- 10:15am Christmas Communion at both
churches

*Our other services are as usual except there will not
be an 11am Communion on Christmas Eve.*

Getting to know you ... 60 seconds with John Dixon

We are delighted that John and Anne Dixon are part of our JC Lytham family. They are both great assets to our churches bringing with them a wealth of gifts, knowledge and experience to share with us. John now regularly plays the organ at St Johns and has been instrumental at helping us source the new organ.

Here is a bit of background to John ...



I am the son of a Vicar, born in London. Married Anne in 1979 and have three children. For much of our life together we lived in Bury St Edmunds where I was an organist and music leader for over 30 years. I have been privileged to have had opportunities to serve on various church, school and charitable bodies and have many faults which Anne

readily points out to me!

I retired in 2016 but my occupation was originally a music teacher before working as an official for the National Union of Teachers (now the NEU).

Anne and I moved to Lytham in April 2023 to be close to our grandchildren who live in Preston. As soon as we visited Lytham, we felt it would be a wonderful place to live.

My favourite place to spend my spare time is Fairhaven Lake. And to relax I enjoy walking, particularly along the promenade, and I enjoy watching old programmes on TV. My hobbies include playing the



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piano and organ and since moving to Lytham, singing in a local choir.

There are two bible verses which inspire me. John 3 v 16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life”. And also Matthew 7 v 3 “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?”

I was asked about my favourite hymn or worship song. I have to say that I don’t have a favourite but appreciate a mixture of traditional and worship hymns/songs in services.

When asked about when and how I came to faith my response is that I can’t point to a particular time or place but have benefited from growing up and learning within a church family as well as feeling God’s presence particularly during difficulties and times of joy.

Church is important to me as it provides us with the opportunity to worship together, sharing and strengthening our faith with fellow Christians, supporting each other in times of difficulty and learning more about God’s love for us with the challenge to share this good news.

Mothers' Union

The Christmas Lunch is on Thursday 11th December at 12.30 for 1.00pm at Lytham Hall. We are to hold a raffle & prizes would be much appreciated.

A reminder that we meet on Saturday 14th December at 9.30am in church to prepare the oranges for the Christingle Service.

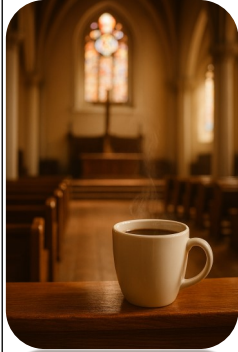
May we wish everyone Christmas Blessings & Good Health & Happiness in the New Year.

Choir Practice

The choir is regularly practicing for our Christmas services.

The rehearsals are on Sunday 7th December at 12:15, Sunday 14th December at 3pm and Friday 19th December at 7pm all at St John's.

Anyone who would like to sing with the choir especially for our Carol Services will be warmly welcomed.



Coffee Morning

There is just one Coffee Morning

in December which is on

Saturday 13th at St John's.

Doors open at 10am.

Everyone is very welcome.

From the Registers

November

Funerals

15th Roger Meredith

17th Sheila Hill

27th Peter Hewitt

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JC Lytham Community Craft Group

The group has been meeting for 10 years and is open to everyone, any faith or none or gender. As a group they work as a team as well as individually if not working on a project.

During part of this year the group has been involved with post box toppers, the latest is on Fairlawn Road in Lytham marking the men and women who gave their lives during global conflict; and purple poppies for the animals that lost their lives was placed on the post box outside a local vets.

The Royal British Legion received a £100 donation for their Poppy Appeal from the Craft Group and sent 54 shoe boxes to Ukraine for the Military male, female and children.

Everyone is welcome to join the group.

Go along and enjoy a chat, a cup of tea or coffee and not forgetting the biscuits - Thursdays 9.30am to 11.30am in St Cuthbert's Church.

Quiz Questions for December—Advent and Christmas

The season of Advent is observed during the four weeks leading up to Christmas. It marks the beginning of the liturgical year and a time for spiritual reflection and anticipation. The word *Advent* is derived from the Latin *adventus* meaning *coming* or *arrival*, signifying both the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ and the hopeful expectation of his promised return. It is this dual nature which allows Advent to incorporate remembrance and anticipation.


It is a season steeped in symbolism and tradition. A common practice is the lighting of an Advent wreath which features four candles [four 'andles?'] representing hope, peace, joy and love. The lighting of an additional candle each week gradually illuminates the path towards

Christ as the Light of the World. A fifth candle, lit on Christmas Day, signifies the fulfilment of God's promise: Emmanuel, 'God with us.'

Advent is much more than a countdown to Christmas. It is a call to prepare our hearts and to consider again the mystery of the Incarnation – God becoming human – and to embrace its transformative hope. Advent, then, allows for a time to step back from distractions and focus on the eternal truths of faith. Worship, prayer and acts of kindness should encourage a deeper connection with God and fellow humans.


Forty questions follow. All have December/Christmas connections.

1. True or false? The Advent wreath originated as a symbol of Christ.
2. Which country started the tradition of erecting a Christmas tree?
3. In 1932, which British monarch made the first royal Christmas broadcast?
4. Which item for the Christmas table was invented by Thomas Smith in 1847?
5. Which more recent Christmas tradition was created by Carol Aebersold?
6. Which popular alcoholic Christmas drink is best served hot?
7. Name the author of *A Christmas Carol*.
8. Which Christmas carol was broadcast from space in 1965?
9. In which carol is everything *calm and bright*?
10. Who wrote *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*?
11. In which make of chocolates would you find green triangles?
12. Stollen is a Christmas confection from which country?
13. Pigs in blankets have a different name in Scotland. What is it?
14. Which famous scientist was born on Christmas Day in 1642?
15. Which one of Santa's reindeers has the same name as the Roman god of love?



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Here's a cryptic collection ...

16. Introduce an air duct [6]
17. December is the month to be dreaming of this [5,9]
18. Trois poules [5,6,4]
19. I like mine to be mixed with bits of spice [anagram] [5,4]
20. This is what Saint George did to the dragon [6]
21. Pam and Tim need one to create a show. [anagram]
Oh, no they don't! [9]
22. Think back: 30th October 1974 in the jungle [6,3]
23. Liz edging around the French [9]
24. Mourinho's measure of acidity [6]
25. A trio of shrewd males [5,4,3]
26. *Erithacus rubecula* [5]
27. French eating? The person in charge has lost heart [6]
28. Does he participate in Red Nose Day as well? [7]
29. Cliff Richard coupled this with his wine [9]
30. Clue: I am the fool involved with a fly [anagram] [1,4,3,2,8]
31. Chop the trees off a soap opera [5]
32. The newspapers gather around a hospital department [8]
33. And we won't go until we get some! [5,7]
34., bangles and beads [7]
35. Abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz [4]
36. This game involves a silent living room drama [8]
37. SCD's favourite embellishment [7]
38. Hart yell who [anagram] [5,6]
39. Elton sings: not good in the wind [6]
40. Hexagonal, unique and decidedly chilly [4,5]

Answers will appear in the next issue.

St John's Bells Project Update

The bells at St. John's are continuing to get more difficult to handle so it is unsure how much longer we will be able to ring them for. It is already very difficult to ring a Quarter Peel on them and we may not do another until the bell frame has been replaced and the bells refurbished. Hopefully we will still be able to do the planned ringing for Christmas and New Year.

The faculty needed to allow the bell frame replacement work to go ahead has been fully approved. This is another major step on the way to achieving the refurbishment and continued life of St. John's bells.

Fundraising is going well. It's only been just over three months since we started fundraising in earnest so we are very pleased with the progress so far.

The Rev. Nick has co-opted me onto the PCC and so far I have attended two PCC meetings, the last one being on November 17th. The aim is to enhance good communication and partnering between the church trustees and the ringers and so far this is working very well.

I give the PCC regular updates on the progress of fundraising and engage them in any fundraising event proposals. The PCC is responsible for maintaining the churches and obtaining the faculties as and when required so the better the relationship is between ringers and church the smoother things progress.

On Friday, November 14th a quarter peal (QP) was rung at St. Cuthbert's. There were eight ringers from St. Peter's, St Joseph's and St. John's bands. They rang Grandsire Doubles with three covers. The QP went very well, was well struck and was the first QP for one of our

Financial Giving to our parish



If you wish to make a one-off gift or begin to give regularly to St John the Divine and St Cuthbert Lytham, please follow the link through this QR Code on your smartphone or tablet.

PLEASE NOTE that if you prefer paper-based there are forms at the back of each church.

The Parish Hall - For more information call Fiona on 01253 736488

Tuesday	9am-3pm	Tumble Tots Tumbletotslynz@hotmail.com
	6pm-7pm	Beavers (term time)
	7pm-9pm	Scouts (term time)
Wednesday	9.30am-11.30am	Bertie Bear Group (term time)
	1.45pm-4pm	Over 50's Table Tennis
	7pm-8pm	Pilates with Georgia – 07875590724
Thursday	5pm-6pm	Rainbows (term time)
	6.30 -7.30pm	Brownies (term time)

distribution. Stephen was one of these: his Greek name suggests that he was himself a member of the Hellenistic community. The seven were then blessed by the Apostles in an act that later came to be understood as ordaining them as deacons, and so they began their work. Stephen is singled out as being a miracle-worker, full of faith and inspired by the Holy Spirit. But there were members of certain synagogues who challenged Stephen's new Christian teaching. When it proved impossible to defeat him in debate, they orchestrated more hostility against him, made use of false testimony, and had him seized and brought before the Sanhedrin on a charge of blasphemy against Moses.

Most of Acts chapter 7 is taken up with Stephen's defence, strongly supporting the ministry of Jesus as a fulfilment of Jewish history and teaching, not a destruction of it. He concludes with a rousing condemnation of the Jews for resisting the Holy Spirit in a manner he describes as 'stiff-necked'. This angered the crowd even more, and so they took him outside the city and stoned him to death, with Stephen committing himself to God as he died, and begging God to forgive them for what they were doing. A young man, by the name of Saul, stood and watched, looking after the cloaks of those doing the stoning. At the time, he was a vigorous persecutor of those who followed the new faith. But he later underwent a dramatic conversion and, as Paul, became one of the great leaders of the early church.

Joyce Hill

new ringers, Andy Wiseman. The QP comprised 1,320 changes and took 53 minutes. It was rung in celebration of our King's 77th birthday and it was also a sponsored event aimed at raising funds to help pay for a replacement bell frame at St. John's in Lytham.

The event was also a bit of an open day with free refreshments and tours of the bell tower. It was a very successful day and raised over £2,500. The 'Sum-up' machine for collecting card donations at the back of St. Cuthbert's church has been set up with an option to donate directly to the bell fund and there have been a few donations, I'm not sure exactly how much at the moment, the PCC treasurer will let me know.

Our JustGiving page has also received another £1,750 in the last week alone which also qualifies for gift aid. Applications for funds for St John's bells had now been made to 28 separate organisations. We didn't expect positive responses from all agencies and, so far, seven organisations have responded to say they can't support our project. On the positive side a total of £25,500 has been pledged so far by three organisations and we are optimistic that we will get more soon as other applications go through the various vetting processes, some of which are quite rigorous.

Adding together the pledged funds, the potential gift aid amounts and the actual cash in the bank the total amount we have so far is just under £40,000.

One of our ringers, Paul Hart, is particularly good at woodwork and he has completed the construction of two "Bellometers". He has placed one in each of our churches. These will be updated as and when the fund increases to show a running total of funds raised. Our initial target is £91,102. If we can raise £100,000, we will be able to afford

to upgrade the planned steel frame with a more weather resistant and durable frame which has cast iron sides. The additional cost of which is £9,412. We are planning to enact a few cost saving activities to reduce the final cost from Taylors, namely: Provide Local Labour - Saving, £7,121. Locally provided accommodation - Saving, £3,960. Local removal of small items - Saving, £430. This will bring the total cost to £79,591. Adding the cast iron upgrade will bring the cost back up to £89,000. We are also hoping to be able to reclaim the vat which will be around £15,000 to £20,000. However, we actually have to pay the vat in the first place before we can claim it back and will have to see if we still have that eligibility post budget.

We are hoping to raise enough funds to get the refurbishment work started early in the second quarter of next year.

In other news, during the practice at St. John's on Tuesday November 4th a loud bang was heard from the belfry. On investigation it was discovered that the clapper had become detached from the number two bell! Lucky there was no damage done. The bolt which attaches the clapper to the staple inside the bell had come out of position thus releasing the clapper during ringing. Mick and Neil were able to fit a new bolt prior to Remembrance Sunday to enable all six bells to be rung for the service.

Further inspection revealed that three of the bells need attention as the staple bolts are loose and need new leather washers fitting and retightening.

The stay on the tenor at St. Cuthbert's is also in need of attention. Mick and Neil are planning a maintenance day in the next week or so to address all these minor issues.

The Feast of Stephen

The title of this month's article, as I'm sure everyone will recognise, is from the opening of a popular Christmas carol: *Good King Wenceslas looked out on the Feast of Stephen*. Wenceslas was Prince and Duke of Bohemia from 931 to probably 935, when he was assassinated by his younger brother. Almost immediately he was held up as a heroic ruler of great virtue, whose death was regarded as a martyrdom. The story familiar to us captures his determination, piety, kindness and generosity. It has its origins in the words of the chronicler Cosmas of Prague who, in c. 1119, wrote, 'no one doubts that, rising every night from this noble bed, with bare feet and only one chamberlain, he went around to God's churches and gave alms generously to widows, orphans, those in prison and afflicted by every difficulty, so much so that he was considered, not a prince, but the father of all the wretched'. The words of the carol were published by an American, John Mason Neale, in 1853. It's wholly imaginative, but its vivid details capture the essence of Wenceslas's virtue as a ruler, for which he is venerated in the Czech Republic.

Mason's poem presents a scene that takes place in the depths of winter, 'on the feast of Stephen', celebrated on 26 December. Stephen is the church's protomartyr, or first martyr (Greek *πρῶτος*, *prótos*, 'first'). Our only information about him is in the Acts of the Apostles, chapters 6-8. There we learn that Hellenistic (Greek-speaking) Jews who were following the new teachings of Christ began to grumble that the widows of their community were doing less well from the daily distribution of food than those of the Hebraic Jews. So the twelve Apostles proposed that the growing number of those who were busy with this distribution should appoint seven men 'full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom' who could be relied upon to oversee fair