

# Tarleton & Rufford



## Parish Magazine

DECEMBER 2025 /  
JANUARY 2026 ISSUE

# DW

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Deadline for next  
magazine is:  
Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>  
January 2026

# from the rector

A new archaeological discovery this Autumn has shown that our Bronze Age ancestors travelled vast distances to take part in huge meals together where pigs, cattle and sheep were roasted and eaten. Proof that banqueting has been in our DNA for centuries, may be for ever.

Now most readers will know how I enjoy eating out, but why am I starting my article at the start of the new church year with this fact?

Banquets get mentioned in the New Testament 58 times; Jesus talks a lot about and is frequently quoted as being at a Banquet. The Gospel of Matthew regularly speaks of heaven as being a place of Banquet. The Holy Eucharist is often referred to as a fore taste of the heavenly banquet.

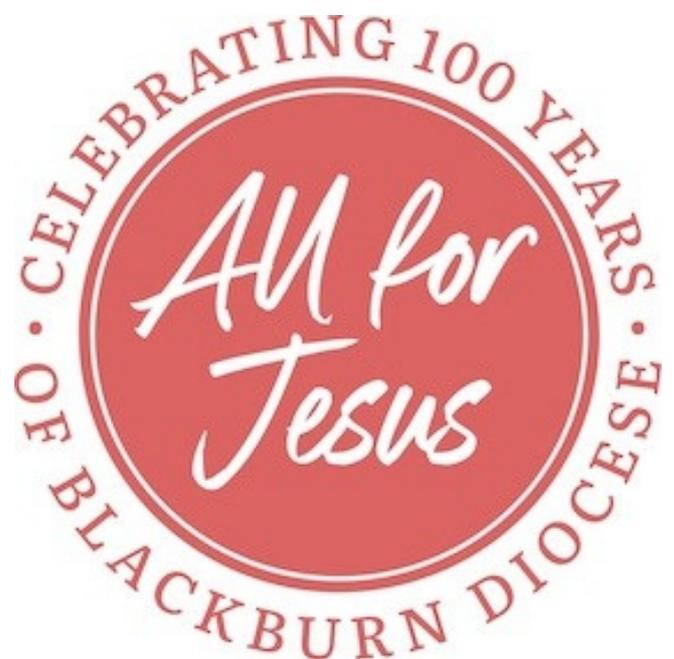
The internet is full of recommendations for people to go and eat good food because we want to share with others the good experiences we have had. WE, so often want others to experience it also - that is part of the enjoyment for us. Why then are we so reluctant to tell people about the promise of the heavenly banquet, why are we so shy and reticent to share the wonderful good news of Jesus Birth, death and resurrection? For this is the most amazing thing that as ever happened to us, so surely we would want others to experience it also.

As we start this New Church Year, we also start the Diocesan Year of Mission, as we celebrate the Centenary of the creation of the Diocese of Blackburn. The challenge of this year is for us to ensure All (are) for Jesus. Through our actions and words we share the good news and bring all people to know Jesus.

The past year we have been praying for growth and renewal. Now we need to be open to hear how God wants us to bring about that growth and renewal. How God wants us to spend the coming year ensuring All for Jesus.

If you read this Magazine, but have not yet come to know Jesus, sorry if my message so far has not spoken to you. To you I say until you try an eatery you don't know how wonderful it is. So it is with faith. Dip your toes in, join our Sunday services online at 10.45 on our Facebook page, if your not yet ready to join us in person. If you'd like chat call Fr Joe or me and we can meet over a coffee, beer, glass of wine or whatever.

Blessings, Mark.



## 2026 -THE CENTENARY OF THE DIOCESE OF BLACKBURN

TARLETON.CHURCH  
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# from the rector

A year long programme of events is planned for the Centenary / Year of Mission:

- a Whit Walk style event at Blackpool
- a service at the Cathedral and locally
- joining the Diocese in a weekend of Mission September 11th -13th
- Visiting Christian Theatre Group shows

### Gentle Mission

Some tips:

- Show hope in your lives:have time for others; know they've been forgiven; behave as a person called to patience and courage
- Live lives that provoke curiosity - "why do they do that?" is what people should say about you as a Christian
- Do the inviting

### Lets Go Green September 12-13th 2026

**As part of the Diocese Mission Weekend we will host a community 'Celebration of God's Creation', at Holy Trinity, Tarleton, which will contain environmentally friendly displays of flowers, plants and food grown locally.**

**"The earth is the lord's, and all that there in is" - how much effort do we make to steward it for the future. Includes a demonstration of floral designs with Ann Coulton.**

<https://suschurchflowers.com>



Fr Callum Mullet (2nd left) will swap places with Fr Joe (2nd right) for a few weeks starting at the end of January. In order to widen their experience during Curacy Fr Joe will spend time at St George's, Preston, and Fr Callum will come from there to us. They will both be back in their own Parishes for Lent.

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Our Anna Chaplain, Dr Helen Hindle, works regularly with residents at Asley Lodge: bringing them to church for activities, leading Bible Study or sharing in worship



# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CURATE

Fr. Mark has asked me to write something describing a day in the life of a curate. It's a difficult task because, although it sounds like a cliché, no two days are the same. But being the obedient curate that I am, I shall do my best to comply with my training incumbent's wishes!

I have always been a morning person, so I typically wake up at about 5.30am. The alarm is set for 6am, but rarely does it go off before I'm already up and about. Shower, get dressed, and after grabbing a cup of coffee from the kitchen, I get settled into my office.

I enjoy this time of the morning – the rest of the family are still in bed, and the house is lovely and quiet. I try to take half an hour to spend time with Scripture while I enjoy that first cup of coffee. So much of my engagement with Scripture is for a specific purpose like writing a sermon or preparing a Bible study; it's important to me that I take an opportunity at this time simply to read Holy Scripture, to be with God, and to listen to what the Holy Spirit might be saying to me.

It's then time to get caught up on emails, see if there are any treasury duties needed, and plan for the day ahead. Today I am leading Collective Worship in two of the schools, so I gather together the head scarves, fake beards, and props needed. Then, after getting the rest of the family up and sufficiently annoying them with my morning enthusiasm (they are all night owls), I head up to church at about 8am.

Fr Mark and I pray Morning Prayer together each day. Although anyone is welcome to join us, it is typically just the two of us, sat in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel together praying the Psalms, reflecting on God's Word, and praying for the parish, the diocese, and the world. Putting prayer at the very start of our working day is absolutely essential.



Following prayer, we typically have time for a brew and a quick catch-up to discuss what we've been up to, what we're hoping to get done that day, any problems or challenges we're facing, any encouragements, and how we have seen the Holy Spirit at work in our parish.

9am sees me walk over to THT Primary School for the first Collective Worship of the day. This is always the fun part! The previous week, I would have spent a fair bit of time deciding how I wanted to teach the given subject, thinking of ways to keep the children engaged while doing so, putting the slides together, choosing the music, and so on. Now it's just about enjoying myself and delivering the prepared material. I love the work we do at the schools, and the children are always such an inspiration to me.

I don't have much time to linger at the school though, as I need to get back for our mid-week Eucharist. As I am leading Collective Worship in the schools today, Fr Mark will be celebrating the Eucharist. What a blessing it is to encounter Jesus in Word and Sacrament.

Following Mass, I jump in the car and head down to Rufford for the second Collective Worship of the day. On the drive down, I reflect upon what worked well at THT, and any ways in which things can be tightened up a bit. The delivery gets slicker at each school!

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CURATE

On this particular day, I've arranged to take Holy Communion to someone who is housebound, and so when I am done at the school, I head over to church to pick up the sacrament and drive over to their house. It's sometimes necessary to switch between emotions quickly. At the school I can be a silly and playful worship leader – whereas on the visit, it is more important to be a quiet and empathetic listener.

After all that, I head home at about 1pm for a bit of lunch. I then have a couple of hours free in the diary where I can get some prep work done. As Fr Mark said Mass this morning, that means I get to celebrate Mass tomorrow in Rufford. And so I begin by spending some time prayerfully reflecting on the readings for tomorrow. I try to understand the context in which they were written, the main theological points contained within each, and to consider why it is that the lectionary has paired the readings together – and, perhaps most importantly, asking what the Holy Spirit is saying to us today through them. Having done that, there will typically be something that stands out to me and speaks to me in some way – and that will serve as the basis for the sermon. Once that's written, I'll turn my attention to writing the intercessions, which I try to tie in with the readings and the theme of what I'm planning to preach on. And the last bit of the puzzle are the propers (Entrance antiphon, call to confession, prayers, etc.) which again should tie in with the theme of the service.

Once that's done, I start thinking ahead to Sunday... I have the same preparatory work to do ahead of the morning services – not to mention a baptism to get ready for and Impact 412 to plan.

Before I know it, it's 4pm. Time to head back to church to say Vespers with Fr. Mark. We pray together, giving thanks for the day. We then have a brief catch-up and fill each other in on any news.

I then head back home for an hour. I have a school governors' meeting tonight, so I spend a bit of time with my family and find out about their days before I have to head back out. Thankfully I prepared everything I need for tonight's meeting yesterday, so I'm able to spend a relaxed hour with them.

Following the meeting, I'm back home for about 9pm. My wife Laura cooked this evening, which was greatly appreciated. I grabbed a plate, said night prayers, and then joined her in bed to watch a bit of telly – although I drifted off to sleep about five minutes later.

Before I know it, my eyes pop open at 5am, and I'm ready to rock-and-roll another day!

I think the biggest challenge of curacy is getting the balance right between work which is needed in the parish, my own spiritual well-being, and honouring my first vocation as a husband and parent. I hope that I get that balance right more often than not. Please keep me in your prayers – and, as always, be assured of mine.

*Fr. Joe Kochanski*

**We will launch the Diocesan Centenary year with prayers and commissioning at our Sunday Services on January 4th and at Families @4 on Saturday, January 10th.**

**The Rector writes, "The details of this year's activities are listed elsewhere in the Magazine, but I am sure you will agree with me it could be a full an exciting year of spreading the Good News of Jesus".**

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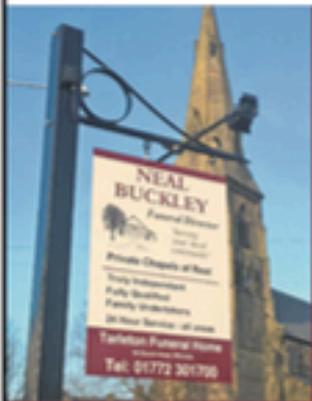
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# IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PARISH SHARE

Budget 2026

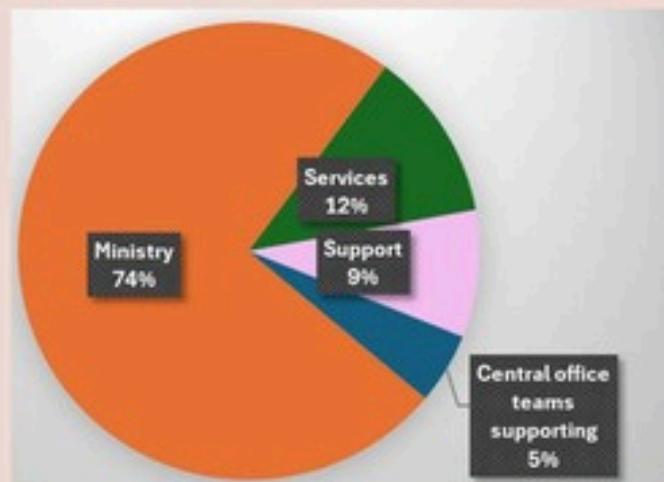
WHERE IS THE MONEY GOING

The total budget is split as follows



## BASIC BUDGET

Excluding the DIP funding the budget looks like this

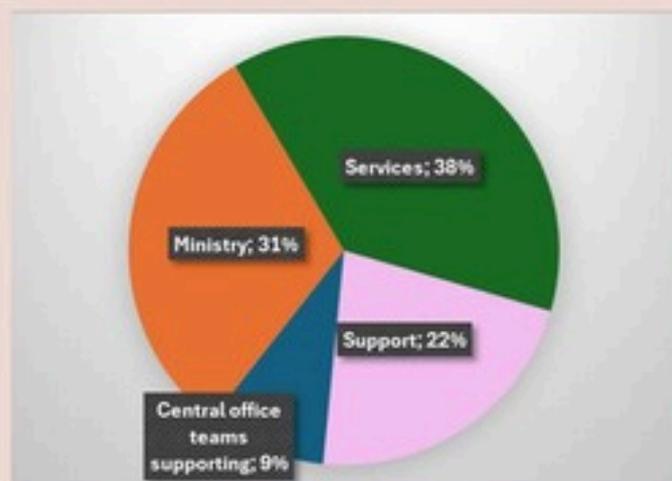


DIOCESAN INVESTMENT PROGRAM

**18%**

of expenditure

## DIOCESAN INVESTMENT PROGRAM BUDGET



# NEWS IN BRIEF

## PARISH SHARE

Share for Tarleton for 2026 is £65,632. Average weekly attendance has gone up from 68 to 70  
Share for Rufford for 2026 is £35,487. Average attendance has gone down from 47 to 45

In addition to the figures in the pie chart, funds from the central Church of England is paying for the majority of our Youth Coordinator's Salary costs. Our contribution of c£65,000 over 5 years is funded from the Cookson Legacy.

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### Re: Jean Rawsthorne (nee Rimmer)

Gillian, Paul, Heather and all the Rawsthorne family would like to say a huge thank you for all the lovely cards and kind messages of condolence following the death of Jean on 5th September aged 97 years. An amazing lady. A heartfelt thank you also goes out to everyone for the donations given in her memory which amounted to £920 which, as she requested, has been forwarded to the Rector for the benefit of St Mary's Church, Rufford with Holmeswood.

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### LEPROSY MISSION SUNDAY - January 25th

As we do each year we will have a speaker from the Leprosy Mission talk about their work on the last Sunday in January. This year their campaign focuses on young people in Nigeria.

It will be particularly poignant day this year, as sadly our Parish Representative for the Mission has recently died. This leaves a role to fill, if any of you are interested please let the Clergy know.

### The Leprosy Mission ...

... was featured in the eulogy for Sue's funeral, and hopefully in donations for that as well as Holy Trinity parish. Deep thanks for all the love and support expressed for her.

We hope shortly to have a new contact for TLM literature, and Fr Mark is now the contact for our visiting preacher for Leprosy Sunday – in 2026 to be 25th of January. To the prayer pattern:

- 1-7 December: Mon-Thu Norway, donor country; Fri-Sun, South Africa, for the clinics and for churches welcoming those with disabilities.
- 8-14 December: India, Research and Training.
- 15-21 December: Bangla-Desh, Inclusive Development and Advocacy.
- 22-28 December: TLM's Christ-Centred Approach: a holistic way of serving people, first treating them, then counselling, empowering, reducing stigma, addressing their rights, supporting livelihoods, praying for them and their communities.
- 29-31 December: Creation Care.

The January overall theme is 'No more child leprosy'. Week 1: Christ-centredness – as above; Week 2: Children affected by leprosy: please pray for every child who will hear they have leprosy this year; Week 3: Ending stigma, isolation and bullying of children with signs of leprosy, or even cured from leprosy; Week 4: Sunday 25th is World Leprosy Day: please pray that leprosy will be included in government health systems.

And on Leprosy Sunday, World Leprosy Day, please be ready to donate generously, if you are not already donating directly.

**Ian Wells, LLM Emeritus.**

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Songs of Love and Praise – Tarleton Holy Trinity 14 September

David Massam and friends dispelled blustery autumnal weather and delighted their audience with a sensational afternoon of music, combining traditional hymns with hits from musical theatre and folk genre. Opening with ‘Can you feel the love tonight’ David’s wonderfully rousing voice immediately instilled a sense of warm community. He explained that on a visit to Rome, he had met a street artist selling beautiful paintings of his church, a man who gave him heartfelt words of encouragement - “ You have to use the gifts that God gave you, for good ... always.” This was to be a sentence which resonated deeply and spurred David’s mission to use his vocal talent to bring happiness and hope to others, to those enjoying his concerts and to the charities who could benefit from his inspirational talent.

Bebe’s Hive has emerged from a dark place of grief and tragedy as a beacon of hope for the future. David was singing for Bebe and her devoted family, and for everyone wanting to make the world a safer, more loving and compassionate place.

Every song in David’s set list was thoughtfully selected. Some, such as ‘The Last Waltz’ and ‘Dance with My Father’ evoked a bittersweet sense of nostalgia. ‘Song for Ireland’ conveyed yearning for a beloved landscape and songs from The Sound of Music and Les Miserables transported us to different times and struggles, different triumphs of hope over adversity. When the audience joined David to sing ‘In Christ Alone’ it was clear that we were united in the belief that Christ’s love brings us the courage and strength to confront any difficulty, steering our way through the ‘fiercest drought and storm.’ The concert finished with a shared, enthusiastic rendition of ‘Auld Lang Syne’ – Robbie Burns’ mainstay of Hogmanay celebrations and a very appropriate conclusion to an afternoon of music in which we had all remembered those we had loved and lost and reflected on our unique opportunities to make a powerful difference.



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# SERVICES & DIARY DATES

## Carol Services

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December, 7pm Rufford CE School**  
**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December, 7pm Tarleton Village Carols**  
**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2pm Blue Christmas - a quieter celebration**  
**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 7pm Rufford Village Carols**

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## Christmastide Services

**December 18th 2.30pm Healing & Wholness Service, at Tarleton**

### Christmas Eve

3.15 Christingle & Nativity at Rufford; 4.30 Christingle & Nativity at Tarleton  
8.00pm Bethlehem Mass at Tarleton; 11.30pm Midnight Mass at Rufford

### Christmas Day

9.15am Holy Eucharist & Carols at Rufford; 10.45am Solemn Mass & Carols at  
Tarleton

### St Stephen's day (December 26th)

9.30am Holy Eucharist at Tarleton

### St John the Evangelist (Saturday December 27th)

9.30am Holy Eucharist at Tarleton.

### Feast of the Holy Family (Sunday, December 28th)

8am Holy Eucharist at Rufford  
9.15am Holy Eucharist & Carols at Rufford  
10.45am Solemn Mass & Carols at Tarleton

### Holy Innocents day ( December 29th)

9.30am Holy Eucharist at Tarleton

### New Year's Eve ( December 31st)

10am Holy Eucharist at Tarleton

### New Year's Day/ Circumcision of Jesus

7pm Holy Eucharist at Rufford

### Feast of the Epiphany (Tuesday, January 6th)

7pm Holy Eucharist at Tarleton

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What does the Creed say about the Church?

As we celebrate 1700 years of the Nicene Creed and the Centenary of the Diocese, during Advent the clergy will look at what the Nicene Creed says about the *Church*.

*"One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church"*

Nov 30th: Fr Mark 'One'; Dec 7: Fr Joe 'Holy'; Dec 14: Fr Mark 'Catholic'; Dec 21: Fr Joe 'Apostolic'.

# HARVEST 2025

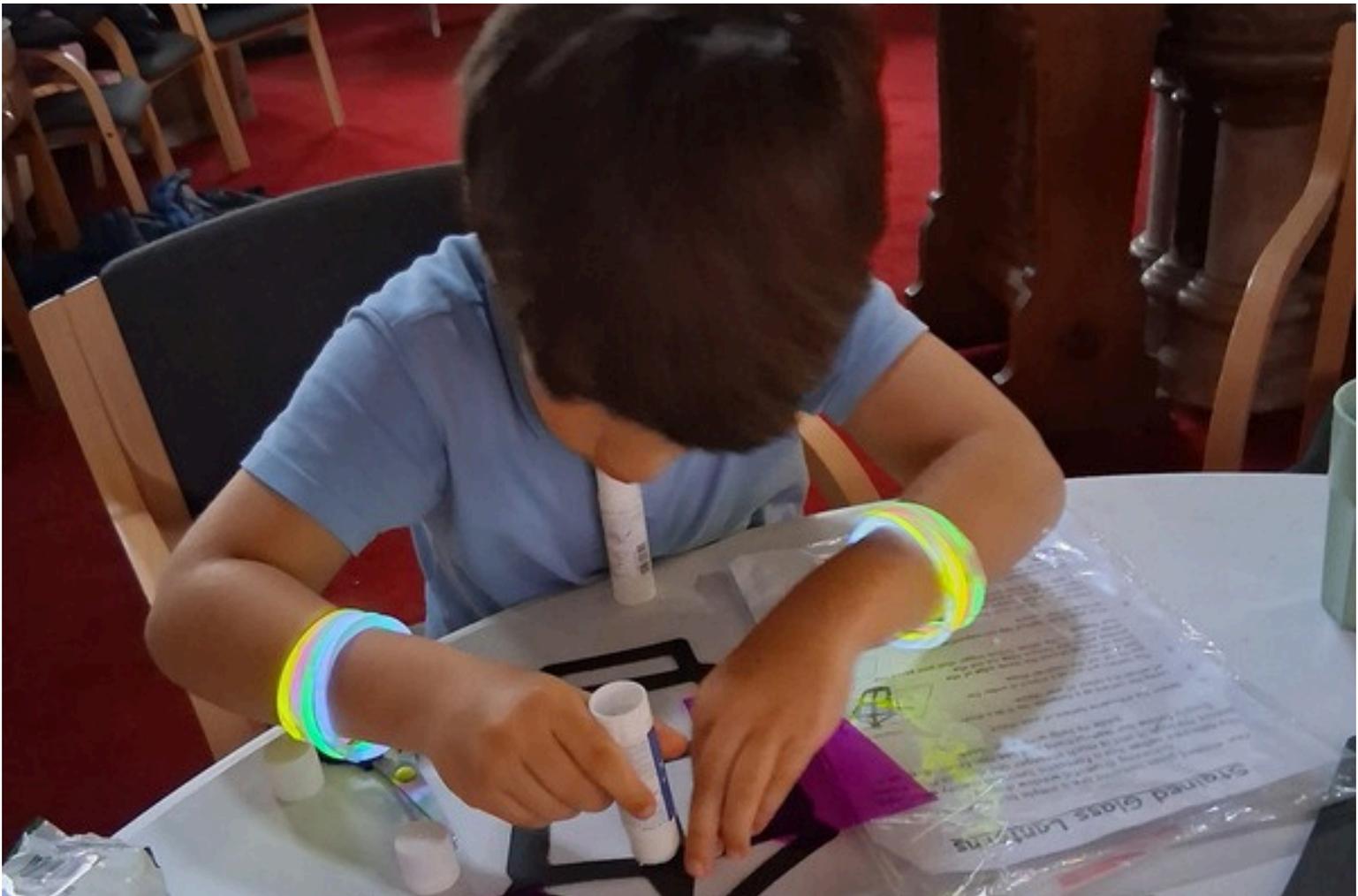


# YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S PROVISION



*This Half Term, Hattie was looking at 'Compassion' in the Faith in the Forest sessions at Rufford CE School*

*An image from our Light Party*



# SCHOOLS

## Mere Brow CofE Primary School

It's been a time of new beginnings at Mere Brow, with our new reception children settling in beautifully! We are thrilled to share that the children have recently voted for two new school values: perseverance and courage. Each month, we will celebrate a school value!

We have seen lots of our children showing our value of perseverance this term...

Many of our children have participated in various sporting competitions, including netball, football, relays, and athletics. We are immensely proud of their achievements and always aim for all of our children to have the opportunity to represent our school.

Furthermore, our Year 6 students recently embarked on their residential trip, where they demonstrated remarkable perseverance, courage, and teamwork. From the lively activities to the beautiful surroundings, the children truly had a fantastic time, and we are certain they have created memories that will last a lifetime. Our year 6 children have also embraced their new roles within the school, with many stepping up as worship buddies and helping our reception children shine brightly.

Each Friday our children have relished in their Forest School sessions, engaging with nature, building independence and resilience. They are working well together to enhance our outdoor areas!

This term, we enjoyed our first messy church session, honouring Remembrance Day and our value of peace. We eagerly anticipate hosting a forest church morning for our parents soon, to celebrate the value of joy and Christmas.

I'd also like to pass on my thanks our dedicated PTA who have been working tirelessly, organising numerous events to support our school; they are always happy to welcome new members.. as we say the more the merrier! Miss J Rowe.



*Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Director, Iain Parkes, has donated footballs to Mere Brow School. When he came to the School with Bishop Phillip for the Commissioning of the new Head, the Bishop asked pupil Charlie what the school needed - he replied, "footballs".*

# SCHOOLS

## Bishop Phillip spends the morning in the Incumbency



*Fr Mark, Bishop Phillip, Miss Jess Rowe, Colin Pye (Chair of Governors) and Iain Parks (Director of Education).*

During the morning the Bishop Commissioned Miss Jess Rowe as Headteacher of Tarleton Mere Brow CE School and Mrs Sarah Cookson as Headteacher of Rufford CE School.

The new Heads were presented with a Bible by the Director of Education, a Cross from the Rector, a Candle by the Head pupils, along with keys, computer and school uniform by a Governor, a teacher and a parent .

While with us the Bishop marked the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham at Mass in Holy Trinity Church, Tarleton. Bishop Phillip is a Guardian of the Shrine of our Lady of Walsingham, a former Master of Guardians and Priest Administrator of the Shrine.

*Bishop Phillip Celebrating Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham at Holy Trinity Church.*



# SCHOOLS



*Bishop Phillip shared with the pupils at Rufford CE School the advice of St Paul to the Philippians. This, he says, is good advice to new Heads: To offer service, to worship and to hope as they lead their new schools. The Towel represents service and the Candle worship.*



*The Head Pupils at Rufford CE School present a Candle to Mrs Cookson, while Mrs Fi Claque (Chair of Governors) and the clergy look on.*

*The Laying on of hands at Mere Brow School*





# Rufford C. of E. Primary School

Together in Faith and Learning  
A Review of our first term!



We have had a very busy and exciting first half term. Our infant classes have been immersed in learning all about our local area with a trip planned to Rufford Old Hall. Our KS2 classes have been learning all about the Romans and had an amazing trip to Chester! School Council held our first ever Macmillan Coffee morning which raised over £100 for a great cause.

## Harvest:

At harvest time, Maple Class led their own harvest worship here in school and performed part of that in the church service on Harvest Sunday. We also made prayer pumpkins and scarecrows to share with the congregation.



## Author Visit

On National Poetry Day, we were very lucky to have a visit from author Lisa Thompson, who shared with us her experiences as a writer. Currently in school, we are enjoying non-fiction November. sharing our favourite facts!

## The Second Half of Autumn Term

We remembered those who gave their lives for us in war at our Community Service led brilliantly by Rowan Class. We were also lucky enough to have Iain Parks, Director for Education at the diocese, to share this occasion with us. We also made pebbles to hide around the village to form part of a remembrance tree at church.

We have also held our stay and play open days for our new reception and Little Squirrels pre-school. They were a great success and parents enjoyed the chance to experience a morning here in school.



Getting our signed books from the author: Lisa Thompson!

We have supported Children in Need once more with our all you can challenges! We timed ourselves for one minute doing lots of crazy things such as how tall can we build a penny tower. We had fun and raised money too! Maths Week England is our next focus before the glitter comes out! Christmas is on the horizon. Look out for our choir at various light switch ons and of course at the Christmas Fair on the 6th December.

We are also looking forward to our infant nativity, carol service in church and our brand new Polar Express week to finish the year! From all of us here at Rufford, we wish you all a Merry Christmas and our very best wishes for a happy and healthy 2026. **Sarah Cookson, Headteacher.**

*Pupils from Rufford CE School painted these stones which were to be hidden around the village Remembrance weekend. Each one has the name of a local soldier on the back. They were later laid in the church.*



# SCHOOLS

Tarleton - Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

As always – it has been a very busy term so far... THT has entered many Sporting Competitions and has come away with quite a few medals. In the local cluster's Composite relay competition, we won 2 Gold medals and a Silver and a Bronze, across the competitions – Gold, Silver and Bronze for 3 out our 4 Girls teams and Gold one of the boys teams. Our Girls football team also did amazingly well, being knocked out on Penalties in the semi finals to the team who went on to win. Well done Girls.

Our School's Harvest Service in Church was amazing!! And the children were so respectful this week as we all stood around the War Memorial on Armistice Day. It is always moving to see how respectful over 200 children can be to remember those who dies or were injured during some wars which took place over 100 years ago. I always think that the Falklands War took place relatively recently – as my brother was there aboard HMS Newcastle – but 'google' says it was 43 years ago!! Time really does fly!!

Also, in November, we were again awarded the Platinum School Games Sports Award. This is due to the fact that nearly 100% of our children have the opportunity to take part in Sporting Activities which are either competitions against other schools – or festivals where they work alongside children from the local cluster of schools. Mr Skinner is the main teacher behind all of our teams – but ably assisted by some of our Teaching Assistants and parents.

Hopefully the run up to Christmas at THT will be as smooth as it always is!! This Year our Infants are performing a Nativity called 'Inn Spectors' - a lovely production which mentions the word 'Ofsted'!! We've also got the Christmas Disco booked, the Christmas Lunch, Village Carols, a visit to the Pantomime at the Atkinson Theatre and of course, our End of Term Service in Church – please join us if you can (Monday 22nd December at 1.30pm).

For the second year running - we are also running a Christmas Fair, to take place after school on 12th December – please come along if you can!! It is to precede the Cock and Bottle Christmas Fair which takes place on 13th December. Sean, the manager at the Cock and Bottle, is generously hosting the fair which will raise money for THT school. We are in the process of upgrading the teaching screens in each classroom and need 3 more which will cost in the region of £5,000. So as a famous supermarket advert says – every little helps!!

My wife Sandra and I were discussing what a different Christmas it will be in our house this year. We will be decorating the house on our own – for the first time in 28 years – and we are trying to work out the best way to tackle the Smith Household decorations. Do we tackle it all at once – or spread it over a few weekends??

It will also be different Christmas as we will be opening presents with our Granddaughter Paige for the first time (she was too young to understand what was going on in 2024), and Adam, our son, will be travelling back from University in York to spend Christmas.

I am writing this in the middle of November and we still need to make our Christmas Cake and Christmas Pudding. My Gran would always make hers during the first weekend in November to allow for 'maturation' and we would see her Christmas pinny for the first time in the year!! She usually wore a pinny when at home – I think it was a bit like wearing slippers for her and even wore one on Christmas Day when opening presents.

I remember that on Christmas Day, she would lovingly take off the bows and ribbons which were on her presents and gently 'decorate herself' with them – like extra broaches, necklaces or bracelets. Whilst my Grandad (called Gramps) would carefully cut the Sellotape with his pocket knife on his presents – so he could then reuse the paper the following year.

# SCHOOLS

Unlike me and my sister who would rip the whole thing open as quickly as possible in sheer anticipation of what was going to be inside!!

However you open your presents – and whatever you get up to... all of us at THT hope that you a safe and Happy Christmas and we hope that 2026 brings you peace, joy and happiness!!

Stephen B Smith (Head teacher)

## Rose Queen Fundraisers

As we begin the festive season Isabelle and her retinue have the following fundraisers planned to raise money for her chosen charity - St. Catherine's Hospice.

Firstly, Isabelle will have a stall selling handmade gifts and treats at the Sip & Shop Christmas Fair being held at Mere Brow Village Hall on Thursday 4th December 6 - 9pm.

Throughout December Isabelle & Hannah (retiring Rose Queen) will be running the local Christmas Lights Competition again. Further details of how to enter and when judging will take place, will be available in Church at the beginning of December.

And finally, please join us after the 10.45am Church Service on Sunday 7th December for Hot Chocolate and Mince Pies.



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## Renewal

Come along to Tarleton Holy Trinity Church once a month on a Friday evening for 'renewal' – a space to gather and be refreshed. We will start at 7.30pm and finish promptly at 8.30pm. Hot and cold drinks will be provided. Each session will conclude with a short Christian meditation.

On Friday 5th December 2025 bring along any craft activity you are doing at the moment. Don't worry if you don't have any craft to bring; some jigsaws and 'mindful' colouring pages will be available. You would also be most welcome to just come along and simply be with the group. There will also be some Christmas card making materials available.

On Friday 2nd January 2026 we will follow the same format, bring along whatever craft activity you are doing at the moment, or join in with jigsaws or 'mindful' colouring. There will also be chance to make some origami birds.



He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.  
Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted;  
but those who wait for the Lord will renew their strength.

Isaiah 40: 21-31a

For further information, contact Helen Hindle (Anna Chaplain)  
hmhindle@googlemail.com 01772 815738

# REMEMBRANCE 2025



On Remembrance Sunday, Rufford School's Head Boy and Head Girl laid the wreath made by school. This year they made a Black Poppy Rose wreath to commemorate those soldiers from Africa, the West Indies and the Caribbean, who gave their lives for our communities of today.

Tarleton WI's knitted Poppies at Holy Trinity Church for Remembrance Day.



Red Admiral Band's Remembrance Concert at Tarleton

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Could you help at Southport or Tarleton Food Pantry as a volunteer? Get in touch!

## DESCRIPTION

- Welcoming and chatting to members
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- Assisting with Pantry shop
- Signposting to other local services
- At least fortnightly

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Tuesday mornings: Southport Pantry  
(Grace Centre)



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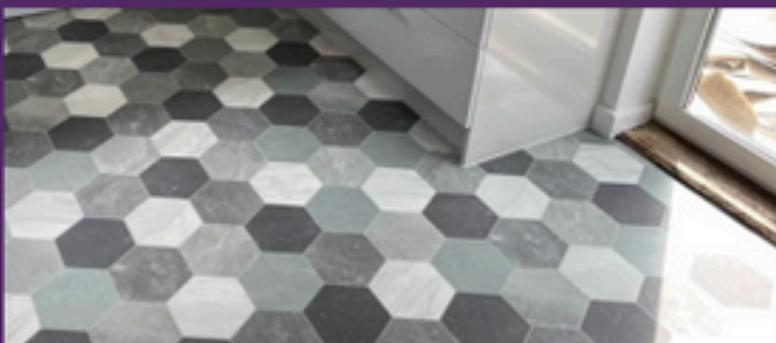
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# SAINTS

## 7th December St Ambrose of Milan

Born in 340CE in Trier, Belgic Gaul (present-day Germany) though disputed by Aries & Lyons. It is believed by many that when Ambrose was just an infant, a swarm of bees landed on his face and left behind a drop of honey. His father is said to have considered this a sign of his future eloquence and honeyed tongue. Ambrose was educated in Rome, where he studied law, literature and rhetoric. Like his father, he was made consular prefect, or the Governor, of Northern Italy around 372CE. On the death of the then Archbishop of Milan the Diocese being fought over by rival factions, an election was held during which it is said a child was heard crying out "Ambrose for Bishop," this was endorsed by the Emperor Valentinian III. Ambrose, however, was yet only a catechumen, he was quickly baptised, confirmed, ordained priest, and consecrated Bishop (7th Dec 374CE). He experienced many a fierce and bitter struggle against Arianism and those who wanted to remove the church's authority. Ambrose is credited with advising Augustine of Hippo to follow local liturgical customs, this was paraphrased to

"When in Rome, do as the Romans do." His writings are still referred to on matters of religious doctrine. Ambrose died on 4th April 397CE and buried at Milan. Ambrose is considered as one of the four great Fathers and Doctors of the Western Church. Patron: of Beekeepers, beggars, learners and Milan.

## 11th December St Peris

A little-known Welsh saint of the early Christian period, possibly 6th century. He is referred to in the Bonedd y Saint (Descent of the Saints) as a 'Cardinal of Rome'. However, he may have been one of the many children of Helig ap Glannog of Tyno Helig. He is believed to have retired to the solitude of Nant Peris in North Wales, and the church in the village is dedicated to him. Ffynnon Peris (or Ffynnon y Sant) is a well in Nant Peris named after the saint, who according to tradition, kept two fish there and drank from it daily. The nearby village of Llanberis is also named after Peris, as is Llyn Peris, a lake between Nant Peris and Llanberis. Saint Peris is the patron saint of Llanberis.

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# SAINTS

## 17th January Charles Gore (Commemoration)

Charles Gore was born in Wimbledon in 1853CE (his brother Spencer was England's first National Tennis Champion). He attended Harrow Prep School (during which time he became dedicated to weekly Communion), and Balliol College, Oxford (where he became a supporter of the trades-union movement). He was ordained to the priesthood in 1878CE. In 1880CE he became Vice-Principal of Cuddesdon Theological College. In 1883CE he became the first principal of Pusey House, a library and study centre, a position he held until 1893CE. His appointment raised some eyebrows, since Gore was known to be friendly to what was called the Higher Criticism, favouring non-traditional views on the authorship of some books of the Old Testament, which Pusey had firmly opposed. In 1889CE, he helped to found the Christian Social Union, demanding reform along trade-unionist and moderate socialist lines. Early in 1887CE, Gore had founded the Society of the Resurrection, aimed at a deepening of the spiritual life. In 1898CE it moved to its present headquarters in Mirfield, Yorkshire. He was made a canon of Westminster late in 1894CE, where his preaching attracted great crowds. Gore then held bishoprics at Worcester, Birmingham, then Oxford. As a bishop he travelled widely and preaching to as many congregations as he could. In 1919CE Gore retired but took up many positions on charity and society boards. He continued writing and lecturing on doctrine and theology often causing controversy by challenging traditionally accepted views. In November of 1930CE, he began a six-month tour of India. He returned home totally exhausted with pneumonia which caused him to fall into a coma and died on the morning of Sunday 17th January 1932CE.

# HYMNOLOGY

## THE OLNEY HYMNS

The Olney Hymns were first published in February 1779 and are the combined work of curate Rev. John Newton (1725- 1807) and his poet friend William Cowper (1731-1800). The hymns were written for use in Newton's rural Parish, which was made up of relatively poor and uneducated followers. Olney had a population of about 2,000. 1,200 of these were employed in its lace-making industry.

By 1836 the Olney Hymns were very popular in both Britain and America. Today around seven of the original 348 Olney hymns regularly feature in modern church worship, the most famous of which is 'Amazing Grace'.

Although 'Amazing Grace' has its roots in England it became an integral part of the Christian tapestry in the United States due to the tune 'New Britain',

based on American folk music by American composer William Walker. As the population of America moved westward it became one of the most sung Evangelical hymns. It also became the hymn of the Southern States Christian Movement. In the twentieth century with the development of radio, television and record sales it became a 'pop' hymn and also became part of the American folk festival scene. The hymn because of American pop music, television and show business influences, in Britain it also became part of British culture.

The hymn first appeared in British hymn books in the 1980's, when people were surprised that it was a 1779 hymn by the English hymn writer Rev. John Newton and not by a modern American hymn writer.

When the Olney Hymns were published in 1779 hymn singing, was not without controversy, particularly, within the Church of England. Hymns

other than metrical psalms were of questionable legality until the 1820's as they were not explicitly sanctioned by the Book of Common Prayer. As a consequence many church leaders prior to 1820 reserved hymn singing for meetings other than the main Sunday services, and for private or household devotions.

## **William Cowper (1731-1800)**

The following hymns should be read in conjunction with this article. The hymn numbers quoted are in the current edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern.

131 O for a closer walk with God  
519 Sometimes a light surprises  
647 God moves in a mysterious way  
654 Hark, my soul, it is the Lord

Had you met William Cowper during one of his melancholy periods, you would never have imagined him to be the writer not only of most delightful hymns of the deepest spiritual character, but also of the humorous poem,

John Gilpin was a citizen  
of credit and renown,

which at one time enjoyed immense popularity.

As one has said: 'A life of more pathetic charm, and of deeper gloom, it would be hard to find.' Poor William was pursued nearly all his life by the dismal spirit of melancholy. Indeed, at times he went actually insane. And yet in his lucid intervals he produced some of the most beautiful hymns in our language.

William Cowper, born in 1731, was the son of Dr. John Cowper, Chaplain of George II and Rector of Berkhamsted. He had the great misfortune to lose his mother at the early age of six years. This was a terrible blow to the young and very sensitive boy, and had a lasting effect on him.

Upon leaving Westminster school, where he obtained most of his education, he entered the office of a solicitor to be trained for the Bar. But although he resided for eleven years in the Middle and Inner Temple, he never practised, preferring rather to follow his literary bent.

Becoming financially embarrassed, a kinsman, Major Cowper, offered William an appointment as Reading Clerk and Clerk of Committees of the House of Commons. This necessitated an examination, and he so dreaded the prospect that it brought on the first attack of insanity. Upon his recovery he was looked after by his family, who made him an annual allowance.

Wishing to be near his brother, a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, he went to live at Huntingdon, where he met a clergyman and his wife, the Rev. and Mrs. Unwin. The acquaintance quickly ripened into friendship, and finally Cowper persuaded the Unwins to let him live with them. Not long afterwards, however, the Rev. Unwin lost his life in a riding accident, but Cowper continued to live in the Unwin's house.

Amongst the many people who came to console with the widow was the Rev. John Newton, Curate of Olney, Bucks, and it was in this way that Cowper and Newman first met. At the curate's suggestion, Mrs. Unwin and Cowper went to live at Olney; and so was formed the association of Newton and Cowper which added so much to the enrichment of our psalmody by the production of the famous Olney hymns, three hundred and forty-eight of which were written by these two friends, many becoming very popular.

Not long after taking up his new residence Cowper was seized with another attack of insanity, aggravated mostly by the death of his beloved brother. He recovered, and in 1771 the Olney hymns were commenced at the suggestion of Rev. Newton. But a further attack intervened, and by his autobiography, one realises how awful was Cowper's

state of mind under this affliction.

Years of intermittent insanity followed, but in his sane periods Cowper was inspired to write hymns of the deepest emotion and spirituality. It is indeed strange to think that such hymns as ' God moves in a mysterious way – Hark, my Soul, it is the Lord – There is a fountain filled with blood - Sometimes a light Surprises – and O for a closer walk with God were written by one who suffered so much from the worst mental distress. And yet there is a noticeable touch of pathos in more than one of these hymns. For instance, in the last verse of 'Hark my soul:

Lord, it is my chief complaint  
That my love is weak and faint;  
Yet I love Thee and adore -  
Oh, for grace to love Thee more.

The last hymn Cowper wrote for the Olney collection was composed after a particularly grievous visitation of mental disturbance.

At its worst stage he believed it was necessary to take his own life as an offering to God. He gave the coachman orders to drive to the River Ouse. Either by accident or design – or shall we say by Divine guidance? - the coachman lost his way, and after driving about for some while they eventually found themselves back at Cowper's house; by which time he had recovered his reason.

It was once thought that as a result of this experience the hymn, ' God moves in a mysterious way' came to be written. The hymn, composed in June 1773, has been described as the greatest on Divine Providence ever written; and it cannot be estimated to how many hearts it has brought peace and salvation.

Cowper died in 1800 at the age of sixty-nine.

A humorous incident in connection with another of his hymns is worth relating: A mother was in the habit of singing to her little girl, aged six, in order to

coax her to go to sleep. One night the child particularly wanted a certain hymn to be sung, but had great difficulty in explaining what the hymn was. Finally, she said it was about a 'she-bear'. After much cogitation her mother at last realised it was 'Hark, my soul', the third verse of which commences;

Can a woman's tender care  
Cease towards the child she bare?

## **John Newton (1725-1807)**

587 Amazing Grace  
641 Glorious things of Thee spoken  
664 How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

A one-time atheist and captain of a slave-ship became the author of some of our dearest hymns, hymns greatly beloved throughout Christendom.

John Newton was the son of a sailor, and, on his own confession, spent the life of a reckless and profligate man. At one time he was actively engaged in the African Slave trade.

He admitted committing every kind of wickedness known, and yet his mother was a devout Christian and hoped some day her only child would enter the ministry. His father, too, was a godly man. But their son, misled by one of his aesthetical associates, disregarded the lessons taught him by his parents and grew into an abandoned and godless sailor. So atrocious became his behaviour, that, as a deserter from the navy, he was degraded from his rank of midshipman, put into irons, brought back to Plymouth as a felon and publicly whipped. Then followed his shameful occupation under a slave-dealer.

While so engaged he happened to come upon a copy of Stanhope's 'Thomas a Kempis' which set him thinking seriously of spiritual matters. So much so that during the next six years, although then in command of a slave-ship, he continued to meditate upon the things that matter most. Then in 1748

# HYMNOLOGY

came a terrible experience at sea, when, on a water-logged vessel during a great storm, he was brought face to face with death. This had the effect of deepening his convictions and bringing him to a decision.

He gave up the slave business and, returning to England, managed to obtain the post of tide surveyor at Liverpool. During his residence in that city he came under the influence of John Wesley and George Whitefield. They completed his conversion, and he decided to take Holy Orders. After the necessary preparation he was ordained as curate of Olney, a small village in Buckinghamshire, where for sixteen years he worked zealously. Then he became rector of St. Mary Woolnorth, in the city of London, where eventually he was buried.

While at Olney Newton met the poet William Cowper, and a close friendship resulted. Together they compiled the collection now known as the famous Olney Hymns. Every Tuesday the Rev. John Newton and his people met for a prayer meeting, and the influence of this has permeated the whole Christian Church; for a new hymn was written by Mr. Newton for each meeting, and so were preserved some of our lovely hymns, including 'Glorious things of Thee are spoken', considered by many to be the finest hymn he wrote.

Newton continued to preach until he was over eighty. So poor, however, was his sight during latter years, that a servant stood behind him in the pulpit, and with a pointer traced out the lines on the manuscript of his sermon. On one occasion Mr. Newton spoke the words, 'Jesus Christ is precious,' and then repeated them. His servant, thinking he was getting confused, whispered, 'Go on, go on; you said that before'. Newton, looking around, replied loudly, 'John, I said that twice, and I'm going to say it again', then with double force he thundered out; 'Jesus Christ is precious!'

He was greatly loved for his kindness and sympathy, and Leck, the historian, called him 'one of the purest

and most unselfish of saints'.

Newton, who was born in 1725 and died in 1807, wrote his own epitaph; here it is:

JOHN NEWTON, Clerk,  
Once an infidel and libertine;  
A servant of slaves in Africa:  
Was by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour  
Jesus Christ,  
Preserved, restored, pardoned,  
And appointed to preach the Faith  
He had longed laboured to destroy.  
Near sixteen years at Olney in Bucks,  
And twenty-seven years in this Church.

## MOTHERS' UNION

- Wednesday 8th October Speaker: Custom Officer Brian Topping. This excellent speaker will return next June.
- Saturday October 11th Mother's Union window was dressed with fruit for Harvest Festival. On Monday, Harvest gifts were given to people in the Village and to the Queens Court Hospice.
- Wednesday October 22, Five Mother's Union members attended quiet hour at St Margaret's Ingol for quiet hour.

## Forthcoming Events

- Monday 1st December prayer meeting led by Eric
- Wednesday 10th December - Mother's Union Carol Service lead by Fr Mark and Fr Joe, followed by tea and mince pies and biscuits. Hope everyone has a wonderful Christmas and a great New Year

# PARISH REGISTERS

*Baptisms* **Millie Collier, Joseph Webster, Margot Webster, Jude Davies Fairbrother**

*Funerals* **Jean Rawsthorne, Benjamin George Williams, Marjorie Riley, Sue Wells, Gwendoline Taylor.**

## KEEP IN TOUCH

Follow us on **Facebook** - Search for **Rufford St Mary's & Tarleton Holy Trinity Church**

View our website: **www.rsmtht.church** or simply type in **tarleton.church** or **rufford.church** into your browser

We're also on **X @smrhtt** and Bluesky **rsmtht.bsky.social**

Deadline for the next magazine is **THURSDAY 15<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2026**

Please e-mail to: **editor@rsmtht.church**

Sign up for parish updates, direct from the rectory - Subscribe at **rsmtht.church/newsletter/**

Both our PCCs are now registered charities and they have been entered onto the Register of Charities with the following names and numbers:

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Rufford in the Diocese of Blackburn (Rufford PCC) : 1215289.

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Tarleton in the Diocese of Blackburn (Holy Trinity Church, Tarleton) : 1214834.

# WHO'S WHO

| Role                         | Name  | Contact                            |
|------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>Rector</b>                | <b>Fr Mark Soady</b>  | <b>(01772) 814 431</b>             |
| Curate                       | Fr Joe Kochanski<br>(5 Fairclough Drive, Tarleton, PR4 6EX) | 07975 686 552                      |
| <b>Youth Coordinator</b>     | <b>Hattie Boak</b>  | <b>07496 425 953</b>               |
| ANNA Chaplain                | Dr Helen Hindle   | (01772) 815 738                    |
| <b>Rufford Churchwardens</b> | <b>Mr Graham Langley</b>                                    | <b>(01772) 224 036</b>             |
| Tarleton Churchwardens       | Mrs Victoria Rimmer<br>Mrs Shirley Gornall                  | (01772) 812960 or<br>07876 593 815 |
| <b>Organist</b>              | <b>Mr Christopher Hartnett</b>                              | <b>07896 107 684</b>               |
| Secretary - Rufford          | Mrs Alex Garden   | (01704) 821 303                    |
| <b>Secretary - Tarleton</b>  | <b>Mr Andrew Mills</b>                                      | <b>(01772) 811 893</b>             |
| Treasurer - Rufford          | Fr Joe Kochanski  | 07975 686 552                      |
| <b>Treasurer - Tarleton</b>  | <b>Mrs Debbie Williams</b>                                  | <b>07729 550 815</b>               |
| Rufford Sunday School        | Mrs Chris Whittingham                                       | (01704) 822 878                    |

| Role                         | Name                       | Contact                |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Rufford Safeguarding         | Mrs Rosemary Lyon          | (01257) 464 541        |
| <b>Tarleton Safeguarding</b> | <b>Mrs Shirley Gornall</b> | <b>(01772) 811 114</b> |
| Rufford Verger               | Mrs Pam Hall               | (01704) 821 885        |
| <b>Tarleton Verger</b>       | <b>Mr Michael Gray</b>     | <b>(01772) 814 024</b> |
| Tarleton Tower / Bells       | Mrs Debbie Williams        | 07729 550 815          |
| <b>Rufford Church Hall</b>   | <b>Mrs Alex Garden</b>     | <b>(01704) 821 303</b> |
| Holy Trinity CE School       | Mr Stephen Smith           | (01772) 812 662        |
| <b>Rufford CE School</b>     | <b>Mrs Sarah Cookson</b>   | <b>(01704) 821 300</b> |
| Mere Brow CE School          | Miss Jess Rowe             | (01772) 812 689        |
| <b>Magazine Editor</b>       | <b>Mr Colin Hill</b>       | <b>07791 870 740</b>   |
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