



THE BENEFICE of ST LUKE'S, ENDON with ST CHAD'S, BAGNALL and ST MICHAEL'S, HORTON



Encounter, Encourage, Enable ...Committed to Sharing God's Love
www.endonstlukes.org.uk

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February 2026

LENT

Feb 17th SHROVE TUESDAY

3.00pm Pancakes at the Methodist Church



Feb 18th ASH WEDNESDAY

**9.15am Ecumenical Holy Communion at
St Luke's with Imposition of Ashes
LENT LUNCH 12.00noon to 2.00pm in
St Luke's chapter house (last orders 1.30pm)**

As Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent the meal is a simple menu consisting of homemade soup and bread roll, cheese and biscuit and fresh fruit. The cost will be a minimum of £7.50 and all donations will go to the Leek Food Bank.

We look forward to welcoming back our regular customers and if you haven't tried it before why not join us this year?

7.00pm HOLY COMMUNION with Imposition of Ashes at St Luke's

2026 LENT COURSE

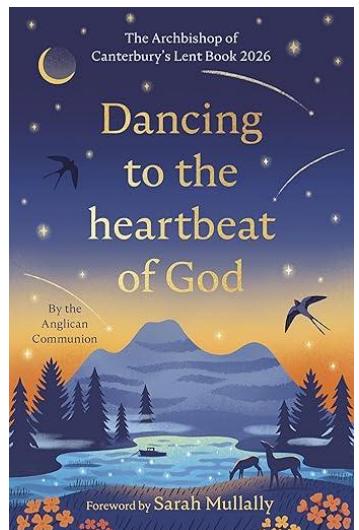
Rev Debbie writes...

Throughout Lent it is a real delight to be alongside my Methodist colleague, Reverend Denise, and Endon Methodist Church, as we meet in the Chapter House on Tuesdays at 2pm or 7pm to explore some of the "Stories of Discipleship" from *Dancing to the heartbeat of God*, The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2026.

This Lent course is open to everyone in the Benefice.

Please sign up so I know how many copies of the book to order. (The price at the time of writing ranges from £8.43 to £11.99 – I'll order the cheapest!)

**The Chapter House, Tuesdays throughout Lent from Feb 24th
at 2pm or 7pm.**



CANDLEMAS in 2026 falls on **Monday, February 2nd**, marking the traditional end of the Christmas season 40 days after Christmas, celebrating Jesus' presentation at the Temple and Mary's purification, with Christians often bringing candles to church for blessing as a symbol of Christ as the Light of the World. It's known by several names, including the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus Christ.

HEARTEDGE

On Tuesday **February 3rd at 2pm** (only) those who attended the *HeartEdge in Rural Communities* course will meet to discuss some of the ideas the course generated. There were a lot! We hope to come up with a few we'd like to implement, and will be communicating these across the churches so that you know what's happening and can get involved if you would like to.

February 2026: ST LUKE'S CHURCH DIARY (ESL Endon St Luke's; EMC = Endon Methodist Church)		
Su	1st	9.15am HOLY COMMUNION 11.00am CONNECTIONS
M	2nd	CANDLEMAS 2.30pm ROCK COTTAGE visit
T	3rd	10.30 -12.00 COFFEE & CHAT Chapter House 2.00pm only – Final HEARTEDGE discussion at The Vicarage
W	4th	9.15am MIDWEEK HC at ESL
F	6th	10.30am – 12.00 noon COFFEE & CAKE Chapter House
Sa	7th	8.30am – 10.00am PRAYER BREAKFAST Chapter House
Su	8th	9.15am HOLY COMMUNION 11.00am CONNECTIONS
T	10th	2.00pm or 7.00pm BIBLE COURSE at The Vicarage
W	11th	9.15am HOLY COMMUNION at EMC 1-3pm FLOWER CLUB
Su	15th	9.15am HOLY COMMUNION 11.00am CONNECTIONS
T	17th	SHROVE TUESDAY 10.30 – 12.00 COFFEE & CHAT chapter house 2.00pm or 7.00pm BIBLE COURSE at The Vicarage 3.00pm Pancakes at EMC
W	18th	ASH WEDNESDAY 9.15am MIDWEEK HC with Imposition of Ashes at ESL 11.00am HILLSWOOD LODGE 12 – 2 LENT LUNCH 7.00pm HOLY COMMUNION with Imposition of Ashes
Su	22nd	9.15am HOLY COMMUNION 11.00am CONNECTIONS
T	24th	2.00pm or 7.00pm Ecumenical LENT COURSE Chapter House
W	25th	9.15am HOLY COMMUNION at EMC 7.00pm PCC meeting Chapter House



CONFIRMATIONS

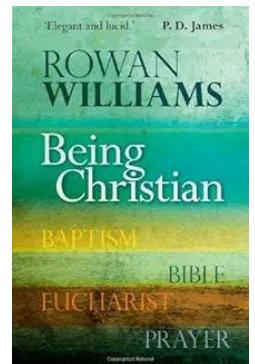
Sunday, 18th January was a special day for young Malachi Millins who was confirmed by Matthew, Bishop of Stafford at St Chad's church. Malachi is a regular attender at our Connections service at St Luke's CE Academy on Sunday mornings. There were also four candidates from St Chad's...Karen, Fred, Alexandra and Mary all prepared for confirmation by Rev Carrie.



Rev Debbie writes...

St Michael's, Horton, has a Confirmation date: **Sunday 26th April, 11.30am.**
Please do let me know if you know anyone who would like to be confirmed or baptised (Christened).

In view of the confirmations, I will be using my sermon slot to teach about some of the aspects of our Christian faith. I will be basing this on Rowan Williams' book "Being Christian" which is a short four-chapter book looking at Baptism, Bible, Eucharist, Prayer.

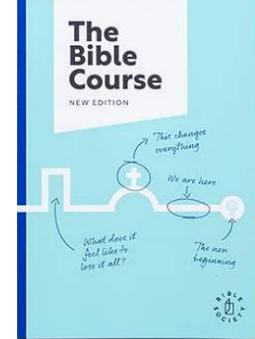


THE BIBLE COURSE

The new course, **The Bible Course**, from The Bible Society began on Jan 20th. It's an eight-week course, but I'll divide it into two parts to make space for Lent and Easter.

We'll meet at The Vicarage on **20th and 27th January, and 10th and 17th February**. Like before, you can choose whether to attend at 2pm or 7pm, and you're free to mix and match.

The book that goes with the course is £9.99.



BREAK-IN at St Luke's

Our vestry was broken into via one of the small windows on the west wall some time between the evening of Friday 16th January and the afternoon of Saturday 17th January. There was much broken glass but nothing appears to have been taken. The police have been contacted as well as Ecclesiastical Insurance. Thank you to everyone who said they would like to donate towards the repair. We are insured but there is an excess charge of £500. The church is happy to receive donations by cheque to Endon PCC. Alternatively cash or card donations can be received at church during our 9.15am Sunday service or just before or after this service - join us for refreshments in the Chapter House from 10.15am. Thank you in advance. And thank you to all involved in clearing up the mess and to Rev Philip with his experience of being a police "special".

PASTORAL TEAM EVENTS...



THIS MONTH OUR COFFEE, CAKE & CHAT MORNINGS will be from 10.30 to 12.00 on Tuesdays February 3rd and 17th.

Thank you to all who work hard to make these events happen. If you missed the last one, make sure you come along to our next one. If you need a lift there is bound to be someone who can help to get you there! Bring a friend or two!

HILLSWOOD LODGE & ROCK COTTAGE CARE HOMES:

Our next visit to Rock Cottage will be on Mon Feb 2nd at 2.30pm and to Hillswood Lodge on Wed Feb 18th at 11.00am.

Volunteers are welcome to help boost the singing. There is room for 6 or 7 of us. Please inform Shirley or Rev Patricia if you are able to come.

HOME and CARE HOME VISITS: Pastoral team members regularly visit folk who are no longer able to attend church. Contact Shirley if you know of anyone who would like a visit.

NEXT ST LUKE'S PCC will be held on **Wednesday February 25th** in the chapter house at 7.00pm. PCC members please make every effort to be there.

Registered Charity No. 1153990 in England and Wales



NEWSLETTER

Thank you St Luke's for your December donation of 43kg. So here we are in 2026, and may I wish you all the best for a happy and healthy New Year. We had a very busy Christmas period but were very gratified to be able to offer such a broad spectrum of support to our clients, thanks to the generosity of all our donors.

Here are the figures for December 2025 usage, with December 2024 figures in brackets:

Total vouchers fulfilled	=	118	(127)
No. of Adults fed	=	166	(185)
No. of Children fed	=	95	(121)
Total no. fed	=	261	(306)

So, as you can see, an improvement on the previous year.

Below, I give the figures for the calendar year of 2025 compared to the year 2024:

Total vouchers fulfilled	=	1029	(1118)
No. of Adults fed	=	1450	(1558)
No. of Children fed	=	802	(878)
Total no. fed	=	2252	(2436)

This shows a decrease in usage of 7.5%, which is very pleasing for us to see, and indicative of both the input from external support services, but also the direct support we provide to our clients.

So, Christmas 2025

- We were delighted to work with Meakins butchers to provide Christmas meat hampers to those of our clients most in need. Our clients were able to choose for themselves which items they would like for their festive treats, and we would like to extend our huge thanks, and those of our clients, to Ian and the staff at Meakins for assisting us with this project.
- We purchased a number of children's gifts for distribution to our client families and were given some beautiful "grown up" gift bags by Trinity Church, whilst also working alongside the Salvation Army to provide further presents for families. Again, thank you so much to everyone involved, notably our financial donors, without whom we would not be able to offer this type of extra support.
- We had so many Christmas non-perishable food items donated to us, our usual one Christmas trolley had to be expanded to two, and they were refilled many times over. Thank you again on behalf of us all for such wonderful generosity.
- We were able to provide a wonderful post-Christmas treat for some of our clients, thanks to Maureen and the team at Trinity Church, cooking up a beautiful chicken casserole on 30th December. One of our clients who was in receipt of a meal for the first time said the following :- "you can see the love and care gone into the making of this, compliments to the chef".
- **The village of Endon came up trumps with Endon High School and St Luke's Primary School donating a massive 827.6kg between them, requiring the services of 5 volunteers and their cars to transport everything back to the Foodbank. The High School pride themselves on beating their previous year's total, so next year may well be the year we have to hire a van**!
- Our festive season kicked off on 8th December with a quiz at The Knot Inn, Rushton Spencer, proceeds from which were given to the Foodbank. Twenty of us from the Foodbank went along to pitch our brains against the locals, with one of our teams managing to come 3rd, but irrespective of how many points we scored, a great night was had by all, so thank you to the lovely team at The Knot for this event.
- We also acted as a collection point for shoeboxes for One Project Ukraine. These are shoeboxes filled with gifts for children between the ages of 2 and 14 which are shipped over to Ukraine for Christmas. This year they were able to send over a staggering 1817 shoeboxes, which will have made such a difference to so many young lives. It was incredibly touching to see the love that had gone into choosing the contents for these boxes and we felt privileged to be able to help in a small way.
- Early in December we hosted Staffordshire County Council to film a short video for distribution via their social media channels. The rationale for this as follows – "As part of our December social media campaign, we are looking to share positive Christmas stories. However, we also recognise that the Christmas period can be a challenging time for some people. To address this, we would love to create a post highlighting the support available for those in need, including the invaluable services provided by foodbanks such as yours." A very important message to get across at a particularly difficult time of year. I used the opportunity to emphasise the fact that we are open to everyone, not just those who are on benefits, and also to highlight the additional support that is available to our clients in trying to address their financial issues.

So, a really busy and productive festive period and I would like to extend a huge thank you to our volunteers and Trustees for all their hard work throughout the buildup to Christmas. There were some days when we really had very little idea of what was going on but we just about managed to keep smiling – although I was grumpy elf on a few occasions!

One other thing I would like to mention is the granting of £2000 towards our work from the Leek Building Society Charitable Foundation. I had applied for £1000 to be used specifically for the purchase of butcher's and supermarket vouchers to enable us to help our clients access fresh food, but they were so impressed by our application they doubled the amount! We feel really honoured to be recognised in this way by a much respected local business. Despite receiving hugely generous donations in the run up to Christmas, we know that the early part of the year is often a difficult time financially for people when donations drop quite dramatically. So, I list below those items which we remain grateful to receive if you feel able to give:

Longlife semi-skimmed milk

Fruit squash

Tinned carrots/corn/peas

Instant mash (single/family) Noodle snacks

Tinned custard

Rice – 500gm/microwave pouches

Tomato ketchup

Tinned soup

Dog and cat food – wet and dry

Tinned rice pudding Coffee-100/200gm

Longlife sponge puddings Pasta

Tinned meat Tinned fruit

Pasta n sauce / instant noodles

Chocolate – single bars and multipacks

Tinned potatoes

PLEASE NO BAKED BEANS OR TINNED TOMATOES, THANK YOU

Household cleaning products:

Washing up liquid

Multi surface cleaner (no bleach)

Cleaning cloths/sponges

Laundry liquid/capsules/powder

Toiletries:

Shampoo and conditioner

Toothpaste and toothbrushes

Razors and shaving foam

Toilet rolls

Soap

Deodorant (male and female)

Nappies



And please, if you have any good quality carrier bags to spare they would be very gratefully received.

On a recent visit to Leek Food Bank Sue was invited to take a look at the store and distribution rooms.

CHALKING THE DOOR:



To mark Epiphany and the start of the new year, Rev Philip chalked the letters 20 + C + M + B + 26 on the stonework by our church door:
“May Christ bless this dwelling!”

Please see the January newsletter for more details of this tradition.

Thank you to Joe for the photos.

Come follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad

DRAW NEAR IN LENT

Helen Emery, the diocese's Whole Life Discipleship Officer is excited about ways of adding meaning to Lent this year.

- Opening the curtains each morning and seeing the light which floods the room as God flooding my day with His light of love.
- Savouring the first sip of coffee I take, thanking God for the joyful flavour and asking to be shown joy in whatever the day has ahead.
- Seeing my shower as a mini – baptism preparing me for the day head.
- Using my commute to work or my drive to the supermarket as an opportunity to pray for those I will encounter there.
- Asking God to take away any rubbish which is not helpful in my life as I take the bins out each week.

These are all ways of infusing our everyday habits with deeper, life-giving meaning. It is nothing new – these are all suggestions I have heard over the years from fellow disciples on the faith journey. I am sure you have similar habits which can turn into tiny yet significant rituals.

The challenges for me – as a disciple and in my role as Whole life Discipleship officer for Lichfield Diocese – is to take the big picture of what I believe about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, the mind-blowing, eternal significance of it, the heart-swelling enormity of it – and ensure it makes a different to the tiny detail of my every day, ordinary, here and now life. However you do that – whether it be through actions and re-actions, prayers and practicalities – I believe it is the essence of lent. Self-examination, repentance and sacrifice.

For Lent 2026, resources published from Church House will be under the banner of “Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent”. So this theme of building our ‘rhythms of life’ – habits and patterns which help us grow as disciples of Christ day by day – is particularly current.

The booklet and app will focus on 6 aspects - worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, sharing communion, offering service and sharing the good news with others.

So I invite you this lent to join me in striving to bring our discipleship that little bit more into the ‘whole of life’ - and seeing the transformation it can bring to our relationship with God, ourselves and each other.

Look out for the ‘Draw Near’ resources on the Church of England’s various channels: www.cofe.io/DrawNear and join in individually or as small groups on social media channels (@thechurchofengland and the ‘Everyday Faith’ app on smartphones.

If you’re considering running a small group during Lent and want ideas, do talk to Helen who has scoped out a large number of options and can make suggestions appropriate to your setting: helen.emery@lichfield.anglican.org





Spring Messenger

As winter starts to draw to a close and the days are getting noticeably longer we all start to search for signs of spring. One of the first spring flowers is the Lesser Celandine. This little plant, often viewed as a garden weed, lights up our churchyards with bright, shiny, yellow stars set off beautifully by the surrounding dark green heart-shaped leaves. An old name for Lesser Celandine was 'Spring Messenger' and, like the Snowdrop, it can lift the spirits with the message that spring is coming.

Another old name is Pilewort, suggesting that this plant was used to treat haemorrhoids. Richard Maybey in his *Flora Britannica* considers this prescription to have been due to the Doctrine of Signatures, a belief that similar shaped plants could cure specific ills. In the case of Lesser Celandine it is the knobbly tubers that were thought to resemble piles!

Lesser Celandine is a common plant which can spread fast and likes shady damp areas, but it is not fussy and can be found in grassland, at the base of walls or monuments, on banks, verges and along path edges and is always to be found within churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries. The cheerful yellow flowers can carpet the ground offering an important early nectar supply to emerging insects such as queen bumblebees, beetles and other pollinators.

Although small, the Lesser Celandine has attracted the attention of the famous. Wordsworth wrote three poems about it and the naturalist Gilbert White of Selborne in Hampshire recorded when he saw his first Lesser Celandine each year, the average date being the 21st February. This date has been known as Celandine Day since 1795. Now, due to climate change, the flowers can be seen earlier in the year with some coming into bloom in late January.

Enjoy the Lesser Celandine in February, its flowers and leaves both die back in late spring so please make a record of it using iNaturalist, as anyone looking at plants later in the year may not find any remaining traces of it so it can easily go unrecorded. Although a common plant it is an important one and one on which our early pollinators rely.

All the best, Harriet

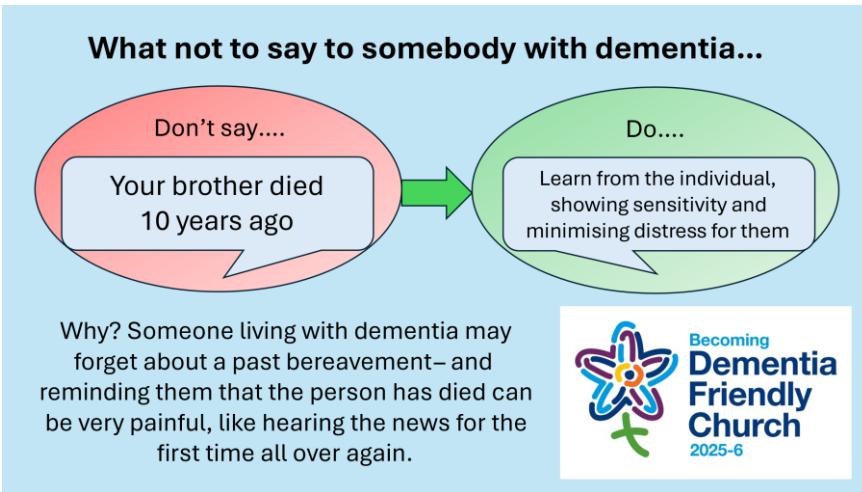
Harriet Carty, *Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor*, harriet@cfa.org.uk,
www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk - individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials.
Use the discount code diomem22

Shirley shares...



MAGAZINE ARTICLE SERIES –
What not to say to somebody with dementia
This is the third in a series of articles where we are sharing some words and questions to try to avoid when talking to a person with dementia.

*This material is based on and taken from an Alzheimer's Society blog,
<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/blog/language-dementia-what-not-to-say>*



The Alzheimer's Society blog explains...

"Consider whether to remind the person of a death: 'Your brother died 10 years ago'

A person living with dementia may forget about a past bereavement or ask for somebody who has died. Reminding them of a loved one's death can be very painful, and they may react as though hearing the news for the first time all over again.

How to respond to these types of difficult questions will vary for different people in different circumstances, however, it's always important to show sensitivity and minimise any distress.

Try this instead:

For some people, encouraging them to talk about the person they are asking about can be comforting. Distraction techniques can be useful, although try not to avoid the question if they keep asking, as this can cause the person to feel more anxious.

Find out how the person is feeling, sometimes asking about a particular family member or friend is due to the person having an unmet need, such as wanting comfort or reassurance.”

For a conversation about dementia or memory loss, or for more information about dementia and dementia-friendly church, you are welcome to contact Shirley Brindley or Rev Patricia Robinson.



ART CLUB NEXT MEETING:

Please contact Sue Forrester for February date.

FLOWER CLUB NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, 11th February in the chapter house from 1.00pm to 3.00pm.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER:

"I will give you rest, come..."

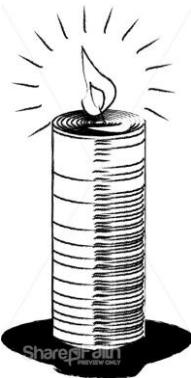
This year's service has been prepared by the Christian women of Nigeria.

2pm on Friday 6th March 2026 at Endon Methodist Church.

Refreshments will be served following the service.

The World Day of Prayer is a women-led, global, ecumenical movement.

Please contact Rev Patricia for more details.



CANDLE DEDICATIONS for FEBRUARY

For £2.50 you can keep the Candle of Hope or the Sanctuary Light burning for a week with a dedication. Thank you to all who have supported the candle dedications this year. **Shirley is now taking dedications for 2026.**

Contact Shirley on 01782 504089 if you would like a particular date.

You can also have your loved one's name written in the Book of Remembrance for £15.

Feb	CANDLE OF HOPE	SANCTUARY LIGHT
1 st	Shirley Brindley in loving memory of Sue Barber (a very dear friend)	The candle is kept burning by Lyn Pickering
8 th	The candle is kept burning by Marilyn Plant	The candle is kept burning by Lyn Pickering
15 th	Ann Boulton to celebrate the birthday of her grandson Alfie (16 th)	Ann Boulton to celebrate the birthday of her daughter-in-law Helen (26 th)
22 nd	Sheila and Stan to celebrate the birthday of their grandson William (March 1 st)	Sheila and Stan to celebrate the birthday of their daughter Clare (March 4 th)



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS to

Robert Harrison (2nd), Amber Woolliscroft (10th), Jean Brough (11th),
Sheila Hurst (17th), Bertie Thomlins (21st), John Bradshaw jr (24th),
Rev Alan Betts (27th)

If you would like your own or a family birthday included here
please contact Ros 01782 504137

ALICK BROWN:

Friends, family and those who knew him in our community were sad to hear of the death of Alick Brown on Christmas Eve. Alick had been a member of St Luke's church choir in his younger days. Later on he was involved for many years training the children for the maypole dancing at our annual well dressing. He lived in the old village near the well for most of his life and was well known locally. He was of course brother-in-law to Barbara Brown who was married to his brother Harry. The last few years of his life were spent in care at Hillswood Lodge and we were pleased to have him join the hymn-singing quite often in the lounge during the monthly visits of the pastoral team.

The funeral will take place at St Luke's on **Wednesday, 28th January** at 11.30am.

Thank you Lord for Alick.

February Prayer Focus

- Rev Debbie
- Our Royal Family
- Decisions made at The World Economic Forum in Davos
- Those killed or injured following the landslide in New Zealand
- The families of those killed or injured in the train crashes in Spain, the rescue workers and the accident investigators
- Everyone affected by the fire on New Year's Day in Switzerland
- The political turmoil around the proposed take-over of Greenland by the US
- The current unrest in Iran and all involved
- Residents of Sumatra and Sri Lanka and others seriously affected by floods
- The latest government budget and all affected
- An end to the war and for a lasting peace between Ukraine and Russia
- The appalling situation in Sudan which has been largely unreported
- For the ceasefire to hold and for a lasting peace between Israel and Gaza and for restoration of war-damaged cities and people
- The homeless and those forced to live in very inadequate accommodation especially young children
- The released hostages and their mental and physical health after traumatic experiences in captivity
- All journalists, warzone correspondents and cameramen who daily risk their lives in bringing news to the rest of us
- The serious nature of climate change and its consequences
- The new regime in Syria and the future
- An end to people-trafficking and the ongoing problem of refugees and asylum seekers crowding into unsafe boats to cross the Channel
- The desperate plight of the people of Afghanistan under harsh Taliban rule
- The wife and family of opposition leader Alexei Navalny and the repercussions of his death in Russia and around the world
- Safety for shipping in the Red Sea and the financial consequences of longer journeys around the Cape
- Those taken prisoner
- All aid agencies and volunteer recovery teams
- Those seeking justice for women in Iran and regime change
- All hostages in Iran awaiting release especially Morad Tahbaz and Mehran Raoff
- The huge problem of loneliness
- Loved ones and all in our parish who are currently unwell
- Our NHS
- Improvements in the treatment of cancer, heart disease and neurological conditions
- Our church wardens and worship leaders
- Those affected by the recent upsurge in knife crime
- The widespread drug problem especially in Stoke-on-Trent
- Lou Macari's hostel for the homeless
- The problem of the millions of plastic bottles afloat in our oceans and the tons of 'space junk' orbiting our planet
- The problem of river pollution brought about by discharge of sewage
- All who have lost loved ones recently
- The Trussell Trust food banks still needed as much as ever

Rev Debbie Lovatt, vicar	07359 893424
Roger Simpson, St Luke's warden	01782 502006
Rev Philip Robinson (minister w Permission to Officiate)	07983 863372
Rev Patricia Robinson (organist, also minister w PtO)	07854 418488
Sue Forrester, Flower & Craft Club / Foundation gov / Safeguarding Officer / St Luke's Facebook / Art Club	07854 043187
Deb Podmore, Connections / school chaplain	07508 959637
Sheila Simpson, St Luke's Electoral Roll Officer	01782 502006
Shirley Brindley, candle dedications / pastoral team	01782 504089
Steve Dale, St Luke's treasurer	07894 098011
Sheila Hurst, St Luke's Gift Aid Sec / MU rep	01782 503622
Ros Benson, newsletter / St Luke's website / PCC Secretary	01782 504137
Kath Howell, St Chad's PCC chair / warden / worship leader	01782 304616
Rev Caryl Siegertsz, St Chad's Asst Minister	07973 513128
Julia Podmore, St Chad's warden / treasurer	07980 802121
Pat Saul, St Chad's PCC vice-chair / secretary	07973 863930
Peter Millard, St Chad's buildings / warden's team	01782 505338
Emma Ashworth, St Chad's warden's team	07861 730806
Claire Houston-Brown, St Chad's Safeguarding Officer	07779 667470
Sheila Tipper, St Chad's news contact	01782 534647
Jim Hudson, St Michael's warden	07871 958886

The newsletter is available on-line as a PDF attachment and on the church website.

Paper copies are available for those without internet access.

Please submit notices for our next newsletter to Ros Benson

by **Tuesday, February 17th 2026**

either by e-mail jandrbenson@btinternet.com or phone 01782 504137.

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