

PARISH LETTER

It was with heavy hearts that the packed church said our farewells to Neil on Sunday January 8th. Neil gave a very touching sermon thanking everyone who had contributed to the life of the church and summarising his ministry here in five objects.

Jigsaw Club, led by Joanne Lander, performed a lovely goodbye song, the words written by Joanne.

Anthony and Mark thanked Neil for his work in the Parish and presented him with a Cumbrian Crystal vase, two whisky glasses and a bottle of whisky. His wife, Susan, was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

The Mothers' Union had previously presented Neil with a beautiful water colour painting of the church kindly painted by our own artist, Kevan Thompson, and this was on display near the altar.

Light refreshments, organised by Penny Thompson and made by parishioners, were served after the service.

Neil has made a real difference to the life of St. Michael's. His humility, compassion, kindness and ability to touch our hearts through his engaging and thought-provoking sermons will be sorely missed.

A fond farewell.

I think I have said nearly all I can upon my departure from the parish, both in the last magazine and at my final service on 8th January, but I would like to just add my sincere thanks to everyone for the kindness shown to me on that last Sunday. It was very humbling to receive so many expressions of good wishes as I shared in worship at St Michael's for the last time.

Thank you so very much for the wonderful gifts received: the Cumbrian Crystal vase and whisky tumblers, along with the bottle of malt to pour into those glasses! Thank you also for the flowers for Susan and the many other gifts and lovely cards received. Despite all the accolades received, I am very conscious of my inadequacies too, so to anyone who I have disappointed or let down in any way, I offer my sincere apologies.

It has been a very special period in my 34 years of ordained ministry so far and I am immensely grateful for all that we have shared together over the last five years. I shall certainly be giving thanks for you all in my prayers and continuing to pray for the parish as you make your way through this period of vacancy. As a family we have enjoyed our time in Grimsargh and will remember you all very fondly as we move on.

Remain firm in your faith in Christ, and remember that YOU are the body of Christ..! If ever you feel unsure of your place in the Body, or if your faith is flagging, take up your bible and have a look at what St Paul says about being members of the body, in Romans 12.

With my prayers and good wishes,

Neil.



Bishop of Blackburn

On the 10th January it was announced that The Right Reverend Philip North (Bishop of Burnley) is to be the tenth Bishop of Blackburn.

Bishop Philip will formally take up his new role in May or June 2023.

Speaking about the announcement Bishop Philip said “I believe with all my heart God has called me to carry Jesus across Lancashire, to bear witness to his love and peace in this county.....”

“There will be three things for which I will be labouring tirelessly in the years to come.....”

“Firstly, I am committed to continuing the growth of the Church in Lancashire, helping to build joyful Christian Communities.”

“Secondly, I would love to see the Church of England in Lancashire being an ever-strong voice for justice, especially for the poorest.”

“Thirdly, I believe children and young people need to be at the heart of all we do.”

Bishop Jill wrote

I have found much joy in serving alongside Philip as a fellow suffragan bishop for the last five years. He has inspired me, encouraged and greatly supported me. I believe that Philip is called for such a time as this to lead the Diocese of Blackburn, cherishing the diversity of opinion, theology and background that our county has always welcomed.”

“He loves to see others flourish and find their voices, especially young people and those on the margins.”

“I am delighted and relieved that he will succeed Bishop Julian as the tenth Bishop of Blackburn. May he serve our county with joy.”

World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer service is to be held at Christ Church, Berry Lane, Longridge on Friday March 3rd at 11am. Three of our own parishioners will be involved and we hope that you will support.

This years service is written by the women of Taiwan, a country that has, for many years, been caught in a superpower struggle.

Food Bank and The Salvation Army

Thank you all for your support for the church food bank. Following is

a letter from the Salvation Army thanking you for your support over Christmas.

Dear Friends,

We would like to say an extremely big thank you for your help and support this year with our Annual Christmas Appeal & Emergency Food Provision.



This year we helped 262 families with toy/gift hampers. We provided toys for 260 0–10-year-olds, and gifts for 254 10–19-year-olds. A total of 514 children. On average each child was given about 15 items making the total around 7710 toys/gifts that were given out.

The food bank was also extremely busy in December which saw us giving out 1196 bags of food & 236 bags of toiletries to people in need.

This year we requested feedback for the support we provided. Here are a couple of snippets:

“After losing my partner last year, I was not looking forward to Christmas at all. Having this help took so much pressure off and made me feel less alone”

“I was extremely worried about giving my children a Christmas, but thank you to The Salvation Army, they really did think of everything for my children. They took away the stress”

Without all the wonderful donations we received we would have been unable to help as many families as we did. Your giving enabled The Salvation Army, Preston, to serve others across the city and beyond.

Thank you all once again, and may we wish you all a very Happy New Year!

Kind Regards,

Claire Bowerman

Community Centre Co-Ordinator

News from FAF

This year we are hoping to have more fun and raise more funds for our Church. Our first meeting was on Monday January 30th. We have many exciting ideas for 2023, not least a repeat of the “Big Raffle”, which will be drawn in the summer.

While one of our objectives is to raise money for Church funds, we also enjoy meeting together and arranging social events for our Church community, which are not necessarily profit making.

Last year we organised a Family Quiz, a Lancashire Night, a Wine Tasting Evening, as well as the Garden Party and Christmas Fair. In December we raised £246.00 carol singing in local pubs and restaurants.

If you would like to get involved, please contact any FAF member.

Bible Study – “We Love the Word”

If you would like to read and discuss the Word of God, you are very welcome to join our small Bible Study Group which meets once a month. Our next meeting is on **Thursday 23rd February, 7.30pm** at 204 Preston Road. If you have any queries, please contact Jayne on 07749 934 208. Everyone welcome.

Refreshments in church

We are offering refreshments after the 10am service. Thank you to all those who are already helping on the rota, but more helpers would make it an easier task for all concerned!

If you would like to assist on the rota, please speak to Penny Thompson: 01772 651850

Your Magazine

If you wish to contribute items for the magazine, please send them to Bernard Mackley or Nellie Cowell. Anyone willing to help with the distribution of the magazine, please speak to Nellie.

It's all Greek to me! (cont)

It is now time to summarise the Greek prose writers, starting with the historian and geographer Herodotus. He wrote in the 5th century BC, on his travels round the eastern Mediterranean, bringing exotic phenomena such as crocodiles in the Nile to the attention of his countrymen. The other leading historian of the classical period (c500 – 400BC) is Thucydides. Both men have been called “the father of history”. Thucydides probably merits the accolade more in that he was the first writer of history to report history by being trying to be objective. So that even though he himself was Athenian and once held high office as a general, he could describe events of the bitter and prolonged struggle of the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta in the latter 5th

century BC, describing the catastrophic defeat of the Athenian expedition on Sicily ending at 413BC as a neutral observer. The war was a disaster for Greek culture because it destroyed both cities economically. The Spartans were a land-based power, repeatedly invading and devastating Athenian territory, without being able to conquer and occupy Athens, while the Athenians were a naval power but without the means to isolate and conquer the Peloponnese (literally “the island of Pelops” a mythical figure who met a dire fate), the land mass with the distinctive 3 prongs of land at the south of Greece where Sparta was the principal city. The Peloponnese is not in fact an island but a peninsula with a narrow isthmus joining it to mainland Greece, thus affording the Spartans the means of invading Athens’ territory. So the bitter struggle played out over some 30 years until the Athenians took on Spartan colonies in Sicily. But their navy was there defeated by a combination of Sparta in alliance with the Persians, who popped up again, this time to defeat the Athenians in a naval battle off the Sicilian coast. Thucydides has a vivid and moving description of the Athenian soldiers on shore anxiously watching the battle, to its unfavourable outcome, and their then certain knowledge of inevitable starvation and defeat. This came upon them as they were bottled up in a quarry on the island, without food or the means to resist, followed by surrender and humiliation. It brought the relatively short period of Athenian dominance to an end, and Greek culture as a whole did not much longer outlast it into the next century BC.

Mark

Ash Wednesday

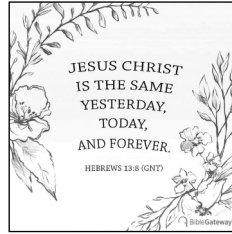
There will be a service for Ash Wednesday at St. Paul’s, Longridge at 7.30 pm. All are welcome.

Churches Together - Lent Lunches

The Lent Lunches have moved from Friday to Wednesday. The first one is on Wednesday March 1st at St. Paul’s Centenary Room.

MOTHERS' UNION

People change
Seasons change
Relationships change
Things change
But God remains the same
Yesterday, today and for ever!



We finished 2022 with a special Christmas Communion with Neil, followed by mince pies & mulled wine. Then we moved into 2023 with a Fish and Chips lunch at the Plough. (Is food always present at MU meetings?) This was the starter before the AGM report from Nellie, she gave a detailed account of the past year's activities, the varied programme and new members being enrolled, and sadly the passing of 2.



We are proud to be the largest group in the Deanery. She also invited members to join the committee in carrying out the many aspects of the Mothers Union in church life and the Grimsargh community from home visits to the older members to the welcoming babies and their families at Baptism.

Looking forward—everyone received next year's programme, again very varied topics from Mountain Rescue, walking the Lancaster canal, life as a vicar's daughter to travelling from Pakistan to Preston via China, also a couple of meals as well as quiet reflective services within the year to help members draw closer to God. We all need spiritual feeding as well as physical!

Finally, a big thank you to Neil, for his support for the Mothers Union. I loved his final sermon with his summary of his memories of St. Michaels. He used 5 objects :-

1. **Ben**—represented our worship—the variety, the willingness to try new & embrace quiet meditative services.
2. **His stoles**—made by every child in the school,





reminds him of the blessings of the strong links with school, families, staff with church.

3. A dog collar – but not his! The dog, Buster! Reminds him of all the new people he has met on his walks round the village, all the new housings, and the beautiful area we are blessed to live in

4. A face mask—Covid and all the disruptions it caused, but on the plus side—the quietness, health, good

weather, new skills learnt,

appreciation of each other and stepping aside from normal routines.

5. You—the whole church family. The welcome and friendliness, working along-side everyone at every different levels and area. He gave thanks for you all.

We thank him for his ministry here and wish him (and Susan) God's blessing on their new ministries in Halsall and Lydiate

SCHOOL REPORT

On behalf of all school staff at Grimsargh St Michael's, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very happy new year. It was great to welcome our wonderful children back into school after the Christmas break and we are excited about what this term has to offer.

On Friday 6th January, we celebrated the Epiphany. As the children gathered to celebrate, they listened to an animated version a well-known carol, 'What can I give Him?' and enjoyed the story of the wise men visiting the baby Jesus.

We are again extremely proud to be able to offer a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs to all our children. Our clubs have again proved very popular with full take up on those with limited numbers. We have many different sports clubs. These include, a Athletics club, Bible fun club, Reading clubs, Choir among many others.

Our PTFA continue to be active and have plans in place for an exciting spring term. Events on the calendar include the extremely popular, 'Break the Rules Day' and an Easter Bingo.

We have continued to enter all events on the sporting calendar. The most recent event was the 'New Age Kurling' for which we entered a

team of year 3 and 4 children. Our children were a credit to our school and thoroughly enjoyed the event. We look forward to the events in the coming days and weeks which include the year 3/4 football competition, the swimming gala and tag rugby fixtures.

On Wednesday 18th January, our KS1 classes celebrated Winnie the Pooh Day! It is a special day celebrated on the birthday of author A A Milne. Each class marked the occasion with a range of Winnie the Pooh themed activities that the children enjoyed. This included honey tasting in reception- Mr Booth even had a taste! KS2 are excited about the upcoming Harry Potter night on Thursday 2nd February!

It has come with a heavy heart that we have had to say goodbye to Reverend Neil. It was great to see St Michael's Church full on Sunday 8th January as Reverend Neil lead the congregation in worship for the final time and talked about the import role we all play in ensuring that our St Michael's Parish and our Grimsargh Community continue to thrive. On behalf of our school community I would like to thank Reverend Neil for his time, supporting our children with their learning, both in school and at St Michael's Church, for his support, guidance for and calmness towards our children, our staff and for our school families and for ensuring that we continue to develop our strong links between school and Church. Reverend Neil, you will be missed- we wish you all the best for what the next chapter in your life holds.

Search '**grimsarghstmichaels**' on Instagram and '**Grimsargh St Michael's C of E Primary School**' on Facebook to have a snapshot of some of the things our children have been doing.

On behalf of our school staff, I wish everyone within our Grimsargh community well and hope you all continue to support each other and stay safe.

Kind Regards

Mr Stuart Booth
Headteacher



For the children of Michael's, Grimsargh.

Jesus

Is

Great

Special

And

Wonderful

For children of Primary School age.

For more information

Or to register

Please contact Joanne Lander

joannelander@hotmail.co.uk

CHURCH COLLECTIONS

Nov 20th	£187.70	Dec 21st	£89.50
Nov 24th	£92.00	Dec 22nd	£43.00
Nov 27th	£93.50	Dec 25th	£315.00
Baptism	£30.00	Dec 29th	£109.00
Dec 1st	£57.00	Jan 1st	£156.00
Dec 4th	£164.35	Jan 5th	£62.90
Dec 8th	£54.65	Jan 8th	£288.22
Dec 11th	£251.40	Jan 15th	£131.00
Dec 15th	£40.00	Jan 19th	£53.00
Dec 18th	£45.50	Jan 22nd	£85.00

FLOWER ROTA

Feb	5th	Jenifer Aldridge
Feb	12th	Vacant
Feb	19th	Vacant
Feb	26th	Vacant

SIDESPERSONS, READERS AND COFFEE ROTAS

	8.30am	10.00am	Communion Assistant	Readers	Coffee
Feb 5th		R Woollam		L Wood J Eccles	
Feb 12th		K Thompson	S Cowell	N Cowell Vicar	
Feb 19th		R Buckley		Youth Reader	
Feb 26th		James Cowell	N Cowell	B Holt D Rusling	

FRIDAY MORNING COFFEE ROTA

	Leader	Duty		Welcome
Feb 3rd	Nellie	Eileen	Maureen	Janet
Feb 10th	Marlene	Kate	Christine	Jean
Feb 17th	Jean	Helen	Eileen	Linda
Feb 24th	Jenifer	Maureen	Kate	Marlene

Holy Baptism **Jesus said "Let the children come unto me"**

Jan 8th Emily Elizabeth Maddern

Funeral **'I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord.'**

Dec 22nd James Clement (Clem) Leach, 93 years.

Burial of Ashes: **'In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to new life'**

Dec 1st Doreen Hall, 91 years

Dec 4th Albert Masheter, 97 years

Dec 11th Frances Gornall, 85 years

Jan 6th June Hutchinson

ST MICHAEL'S DIARY DATES FOR FEBRUARY

- 3rd** 9:30 - 11.30am Coffee Morning in Grimsargh Club
- 5th** **3rd Sunday before Lent**
10.00am Morning Worship
- 10th** 9:30 - 11.30am Coffee Morning in Grimsargh Club
- 12th** **2nd Sunday before Lent**
10.00am Holy Communion and JIGSAW club
- 15th** 7.30pm Mothers' Union - Mark Aldridge - Mountain Rescue
in **Church**
- 16th** 11.00am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
- 17th** 9:30 - 11.30am Coffee Morning in Grimsargh Club
- 19th** **Sunday next before Lent**
10.00am Family Service
- 22nd** **Ash Wednesday**
7.30pm Service at St. Paul's, Longridge. All welcome.
- 23rd** 7.30pm Bible Study, 204 Preston Rd (Jayne Woollam)
- 24th** 9:30 - 11.30am Coffee Morning in Grimsargh Club
- 26th** **First Sunday of Lent**
10.00am Holy Communion and Jigsaw club

Wednesday 1st March

Lent Lunch - St. Paul's Centenary Room, Longridge

Friday 3rd March

11.00am World Day of Prayer Service
Christ Church, Berry Lane, Longridge

**DEADLINE for the March magazine is 15th February.
Articles to be sent to Mrs Cowell and/or B Mackley**