



Ellesmere  
Port  
Parish

February 2024 newsletter

As I write this newsletter, we are preparing for the interviews for the post of Rector which are due to take place on Friday 2 February. We continue to pray over the process and pray particularly for Helen and Judith who are our parish representatives and pray for God's wisdom and discernment for Friday. A huge thank you to those who have given the buildings and grounds a 'top up' with regards to cleaning and tidying and ensuring that our buildings are inviting and welcoming to those who will be visiting us. May God's will be done.

February means another thing – we are moving onwards towards Lent which begins on 14 February. We will be having a short service for Ash Wednesday at St Thomas at 11am followed by a light lunch in the coffee lounge followed each week by a lent bible study and lunch. I attach a flier setting out dates and times for this which also notes dates and times for other services and events in Lent. Please do take a look at this and mark the dates on your calendar/diary. If you are planning to join us for the lunch, would you please sign up on the list at the back of church as this will assist with the catering arrangements. Thank you.

**Experience Easter – 11 – 14 March 2024 – further to my recent email please do let me know if you can help in any way – craft, refreshments, welcoming.** It will be a great week working together as the Body of Christ and sharing the Easter story with over 300 primary school children! How exciting is that??

### **2024 Christmas Shoebox appeal**

We are continuing to support the T4U shoebox appeal this year and so we shall be requesting various items over the next months. There is a donation box at the back of St Thomas Church. February 2024 requested items – socks/underwear, stationery & paper & small toy – rubber ball, cars.

We are also collecting empty shoeboxes for use in this project – would you please let Doreen have any girls/ladies shoeboxes – not want men's shoeboxes thank you as they are too big! Thank you for your continued support.

Message from our finance team – if you need reimbursing for expenses then would you please send your BACS request and invoice on a PDF document to Diana Burton via email [diana.burton@talktalk.net](mailto:diana.burton@talktalk.net) copied to Gaynor via email [gaylyth15@gmail.com](mailto:gaylyth15@gmail.com).

Re-launched website – please do take a moment to have a look at our website – <https://ellesmereportparish.org.uk/>. There is still some work to be done on it but we wanted to go live as soon as we could. A big thank you to everyone who has worked on this project.

**BBC Podcast - "Black Gold - the story of Stanlow's oil"** is going live on 2 February 2024. 6 podcasts focussing on the past, present and future of Stanlow. Gemma was interviewed extensively about the churches work in the community and Charmaine about her art. This podcast will be of interest to most but definitely with those with an interest in the history of Ellesmere Port.

News from Gemma –

Hasn't January flown by! Yet we have still managed to fit so much in already.



What a wonderful time we all had at the Epiphany party. Fun and fellowship, without any washing up! I think we were definitely on to a winner there. Same again next year?

We also had a wonderful time gathering all of our Ignite and ABC children together, for a lovely lunch, followed by a trip to the Panto! (Oh no we didn't.....Oh yes we did!)

Not only did we have great fun, but I have to say, what a pleasure it was to spend time with the most beautifully behaved and well-mannered children. We are so blessed to have such wonderful young people in our churches, so thank you to the cell group who organised the fundraising to allow this trip to take place.

Speaking of blessings - we have mentioned before how we have been mightily blessed by the funding we have received from The National Lottery towards our FIG project, not just one, but twice now, as we continue to develop the work this project does, and the lottery recognise the impact this work has upon our community. As a result of being recipients of 2 lottery grants, we were invited to attend the National Lottery Big Night of Musicals - so 3 keen representatives went along from the Parish on the night of filming. The show is still available on BBC iPlayer - can you spot anyone on there you may know?!?

As February approaches, we start to think of reaching out - it will be a busy time so can you lend a hand? There are so many opportunities, and every little helps! Please do let me know if you feel you could get involved, half an hour of volunteering throughout a long day of community activity really does go a long way. We have our hamper packing, family fun day and cinema night all during February, so if you feel you can support in anyway at all (washing up, moving furniture, making craft, greeting. preparing food, driving etc) please do contact me. We are all COGs in our wonderful system of Ellesmere Port Parish!

Finally, from me - don't forget that we are concentrating on our 'extended welcome' at the moment. The Community Outreach Team 'COG' have placed COGs at the back of each church for you to take and challenge yourself to engage just that little bit more for the next few weeks with that welcoming feeling within our Parish. Our welcome does not need to end at the front door, we need to ensure that everyone feels welcome within our churches whether they are attending for the 1<sup>st</sup> time or the

181<sup>st</sup> time. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God (Romans 15:7).  
*Gemma*

Pastoral matters – please do let me or the churchwardens know of any church family members that are sick in hospital or at home and would appreciate a visit.

### **Dates for February 2024**

Sunday 4	10.45am	Café Church – welcoming our wedding couples – 'Love is in the air'
Sunday 11	4pm	ABC service at St Lawrence
Monday 12	pm	Setting up church ready for food delivery – time tba
	4.30pm	Food collection from Aldi, Ellesmere Port
Tuesday 13	9am	Food delivery to local primary schools
Wednesday 14	11am 2pm	Ash Wednesday Service at St Thomas followed by a light lunch – please sign up if you are attending lunch Tea at Two in coffee lounge
Wednesday 21	12pm	Lent course & light lunch in coffee lounge
Thursday 22	11am – 1.30pm	Fun Day for families in the community in St Thomas Church – please let Gemma know if you can help
Friday 23	1pm	PALS lunch in church hall
Monday 26	7.30pm	PCC meeting
Thursday 29	12pm	Lent course & light lunch in coffee lounge

I think that is it for now.

Take care & God bless

Gill & the staff team