

 **July 2024 newsletter**

Well, what a Joy it is to be able to write my first introduction for the Ellesmere Port Parish Newsletter. I can hardly believe it has been over a month since I was licensed!

I want to start by saying a great big thank you to all of you for the warm welcome received by myself, Matt and Florrie. From the wonderful welcome gifts as we moved into our new home. From the many of you who popped by with cards and gifts to the lovely conversations we have had with many of you, thank you! We are already feeling at home in our new church community.

As you can imagine I have been reflecting on change quite a lot over the last few months. As I have moved house and role. With lots of things to learn and embrace as well as the unknown which I am yet to discover.

I am also aware that naturally, this will mean change for our churches as you get used to me and the ways that I work. It is a new season in the chapter of Ellesmere Port Parish as we discover together what God has for us. It is a real privilege to be part of that!

As I write this it has also just been announced that we have a change in government, which will mean change and transition for our country. I guess that’s life though isn’t it, things are always changing for each and every one of us.

For some change is exciting for others it is hard, but no matter what as Christians we hold onto a God who is constant always loving, always caring, always trustworthy, but who also has always led his people through times of change. So, in a season that feels very changeable may we hold onto God as he leads us, and as we do so may we learn more about ourselves and all he is calling us to.   *Rachel*

**The tech team at St Thomas** are a huge blessing to those leading and preaching at our services, knowing that someone is looking after that side of things is brilliant. We could do with a few more folk to join the team, so if you feel you could help and join the rota then please do have a word with me. There is training available!

**Christmas Fair!** Date for the diary – Saturday 7 December 2024. We shall be needing a small team to oversee this so have a think – could this be you??

**West Cheshire Foodbank.** We continue to host collection boxes for donations for the foodbank. Currently, they are asking for donations of pot noodles, pasta n sauce and tinned vegetables as the stocks are running low for these products.

**ECO Church** – this is very high on the PCC agenda at the moment, and to that end we now have an ECO church working group. There are lots of small things we can do to make a difference and help care for our world. Watch this space as to how you can do your bit in church! Perhaps this would be a good time to remind folk to ensure that lights are turned off when leaving the building and taps are not left running. Thank you

**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**.** July 2024 requested items – small musical instruments, a soft toy, small ball and sweets (use by date from June).

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

**News from Gemma**

Didn't June fly by quickly. Yet we managed to pack so much in. Starting with a community litter pick with our Beacon group from Christ Church School, and our Community Champion from Asda, Adele - all part of 'The Big Help out', which takes places every year, and gives people the opportunity to volunteer and support their community. What a fantastic group of young people we got to work with, and the streets near the school, plus Whitby Park looked much better for it!

It was also wonderful to spend time with some youngsters celebrating D-Day over at Rivacre Valley School - and what an event they hosted! Singers, a band, dancing, costumes, there was something for everybody. The whole school was involved and all had a fantastic day. It was great to see the enthusiasm and creativity in how the children were being taught about something so important.

We then took our 'Tea at Two' service out on the road to an event called - Living Well Together, which was held at the Civic Hall. The aim of this event was to bring people within our community together, to share information with them about what is happening in our community for them to be involved in, so that they do not need to feel isolated.  As a result of this, we saw some new faces at our next 'Tea at Two', so it was lovely to welcome new people through our doors.

Looking forwards now to our summer plans - we have our brand-new initiative beginning on the 5th July - COG on the Move!  We are very excited about this and ask for your prayers to surround this initiative as it is all about taking our parish out to the community.  We pray our prayer for growth with intent, hoping to grow in numbers. Well, this initiative is about evangelism in a whole new way. We often look at how we bring our community into us, but this changes things and takes church out to the community instead. It is a different and exciting approach to our community work, and we welcome all support from the whole parish with this, so please do come along, invite family and friends, share the information, but above all pray a blessing over this please.



Don’t forget our CAR BOOT sale – Saturday 20 July open 7am for sellers and 8am for buyers. £12 CARS, £15 CAR + TRAILER £20 VAN £1 PUBLIC ENTRY

CONTACT Charmaine in the parish office to book 0151 245 3599 OR SAINTTHOMAS@ HOTMAIL.CO.UK TO BOOK. Refreshments etc will be available. Extra car parking available at Ellesmere Port Church of England College – just over the road. Please do share this amongst your friends.

**Dates for July 2024**

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| Saturday 6  | 11am | Scout Summer Fair at St Thomas |
| Sunday 7 | 10.45am | Café Church – ‘Who are ya?’ |
| Monday 8 | 7.30pm | PCC meeting in church hall  |
| Wednesday 10 | 2pm | Tea at Two in coffee lounge |
| Sunday 14 | 4pm | ABC at St Lawrence |
| Thursday 18 | 3.30pm4.30pm | Setting up church ready to receive food collectionCollecting food from Aldi |
| Friday 19 | 9am | Food delivery to local schools |
| Saturday 20 | 8.30am | Car Boot Sale at St Thomas |
| Tuesday 23 | 10am | Christ Church Leavers service at St Thomas |
| Friday 26 | 1pm1pm | PALS lunch in St Thomas Church HallWedding at St Lawrence |
| Tuesday 30 |  | Family Fun Day at Welsh Mountain Zoo and Colwyn Bay |

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

I think that is it for now.

Take care & God bless

Gill, Rachel & the staff team

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