

## Prayers by our Vicar, Rev. Alan Saunders

### An Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus,  
Master of both the light and the darkness,  
send your Holy Spirit  
upon our preparations for Christmas.  
We who have so much to do  
seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.  
We who are anxious over many things  
look forward to your coming among us.  
We who are blessed in so many ways  
long for the complete joy of your kingdom.  
We whose hearts are heavy  
seek the joy of your presence.  
We are your people, walking in darkness,  
yet seeking the light.  
To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"  
Amen.



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St Peter's Halliwell



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HalliwellParish

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PARISH OF ST. PETER'S  
HALLIWELL, BOLTON  
Transforming Bolton together in Jesus' name



**Welcome to St. Peter's. We are 4 churches:**  
**St. Peter's, St. Andrew's, Barrow Bridge and Smithills Fellowship**  
**One Parish—One Church—One Vision**

**Sundays 24th and 31st January 2023**

**Rev. Alan writes...** Advent Week 4 saw a wonderful array of activities as we continue our journey towards Christmas. The Lighthouse takeover nativity at St. Peter's was fabulous with some outstanding performances from the children. The children from Johnson Fold Primary did themselves and their school proud singing beautifully at St. Andrew's carol service. And the Nine Lessons and Carols raised the roof at St. Peter's last Sunday evening! Thanks and well done to everyone involved in these and a whole host of events across the week. I'm so proud of you all.

Looking ahead to Christmas Eve - the final Sunday in Advent - we have a focus on Peace in the morning services as we light the fourth Advent candle known as the "Angel's Candle", to remind us of the angels' message: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Humankind". At 4pm at St. Peter's we have our parish-wide Christingle service where we will be building our own Christingles and singing by candlelight – a joyful occasion for children and adults alike. At 11.30pm at St. Peter's we bring in Christmas Day with a reflective Communion service. Then on Christmas Day we finally light the centre candle in our Advent crowns as we celebrate the day that Jesus came as the light of the world.

The theme of this year's verse for the year from Isaiah 40:31 has been about how our hope strengthens us in our service to God. I know this has been a guiding verse for many of us throughout 2023. I'm delighted to launch our Verse for the Year



2024 (drumroll!) – it is a call from Hebrews 10:24 for us to motivate each other as we step up and step out in our mission to the world. Cards will be available at all our services.

Ruth and I both thank you for your love and commitment, we wish you a joyful and spirit-filled Christmas, and every blessing for the New Year!




**Christmas Services Across the Parish:**

All welcome so please do join us and invite your friends and family too.

**Sunday 24th - Christmas Eve:** St. Peter's Church 8.30am Service of the Word, 10.30am Worship for Everyone - Livestream: <https://youtube.com/live/uEL0MWg-fLA>; 4pm Christingle, 11.30pm Midnight Communion. **Smithills Fellowship** 10am. **Barrow Bridge** 10.30am. **St. Andrew's (Hope Centre)** Christingle 10.30am.


**Monday 25th - Christmas Day:** St. Peter's Church 9am Communion, 10.30am Worship for Everyone - Livestream: [https://youtube.com/live/m7\\_TFPk0vDI](https://youtube.com/live/m7_TFPk0vDI). **Smithills Fellowship** 10am. **Barrow Bridge and St. Andrew's joint service at St. Andrew's (Hope Centre)** 10.30am.

**Sunday 31st - New Year's Eve:** St. Peter's Church 10.30am Worship for Everyone— Livestream: <https://youtube.com/live/dpuTv0u4baE>. **\*\*\*Please note, no 6.30pm service.** **St. Andrew's (Hope Centre)** 10.30am.

**Oasis in St. Peter's Church:** The next Oasis will be on **Thursday 11th January 2024**. Refreshments from 10.30am.  **Service 11.30am - 12noon.** All welcome.

**Regular Activities at St. Peter's Parish Centre:** *Our activities have paused for the Christmas break and will re-start the week commencing 8th January.*

**Regular Activities at St. Andrew's (Hope Centre):** *Our activities have paused for the Christmas break and will re-start the week commencing 8th January.*


**Curious About Faith?:** Come on an **Alpha Course** where you can join with other people in a series of group conversations that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith. You can share your thoughts and hear what others think. You can say anything you like or nothing at all. Why not come along and encourage your friends and family to come, even if only to check it out on the first week before committing to come regularly? Our next Alpha Course starts on **Wednesday 24th January 2024** and will run each Wednesday for 12 weeks, meeting in St. Peter's Parish Centre from 8pm - 9.30 pm. Everyone is welcome and it's free. For more info or to book a place contact [amanda@stpetersparish.info](mailto:amanda@stpetersparish.info)/ 599900. 

**A Big Thank You:** We are so grateful to everyone who contributes financially to all our churches and our Big Vision, CAP, NIM and Youth and Youth Minister funds too.

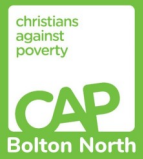
**Christmas Day Offering at St. Peter's Church:**



This year's Christmas Day offering is going to support the work of our mission partners KISC, Craig and Elaine Watson, and their initiative to provide classroom libraries for schools across Nepal. If you'd like to donate online and can add gift aid to your donation, please use this link: <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/12903#!/DonationDetails>.

**Can you be a PAIS PAL?:** Our wonderful PAIS team - Gabriel, Gleise and Michelle - have done great work connecting with children and young people across our parish during this Autumn term - hopefully most of you have had chance to see them or chat to them during one of our services. **To help support them with their work, we need your help please!** They are based at the Parish Centre but have school-based sessions in Canon Slade High School (Mondays and Tuesdays) and St. Peter's Primary School (Thursdays). To do these, a lift to and from school is required. *Do you have any day-time availability to cover one of these trips every couple of weeks? Also, if you are able to, for example, invite them over for a meal or to a social activity, the team would love to hear from you.* Thank you. Please contact [pais@stpetersparish.info](mailto:pais@stpetersparish.info)/ 07846 038543 (Gabriel) 

**Out and About Annual Treasure Hunt:** Meet at 9.30am outside St. Peter's Church on **Saturday 6th January 2024** for this family-friendly popular treasure hunt in nearby Ramsbottom. It's only 2-3 miles long and almost entirely on tarmac, with only gentle slopes so stout shoes are recommended. There will be a nice dog-friendly cafe stop en-route and you are welcome to hang around afterwards to shop and grab a meal. *Can you solve the clues?* For more info, call David Moffoot on (01204) 770994.

**CAP News:** Sam says '32 gift bags are on their way to families and individuals as part of our CAP Christmas blessings! 20 of these families will also receive a Christmas Dinner on Jesus. Please pray for good conversations as we deliver and that clients will know God's love and respond to the invitations given! Thank you.' 

**Jeff Blackburn:** Marlene would like to say a big thank you for all the kindness, love and support she and her family have received since her husband, Jeff, passed away. Huge thanks too for all who have made donations in his memory to Bolton Hospice as **over £1000** has been contributed so far!

**Parish Office:** The Parish Office is now closed for the Christmas period and will re-open on **Tuesday 2nd January 2024**. The staff and volunteer team wish you all a very happy Christmas and look forward to being of service to you in the New Year.