

St Anne's,
Sale with
St Francis,
Sale Moor

e-Spire

February
2026

Candlemas

The Feast of the Presentation

Did the disciples have families? We know little about their personal lives and some are no more than names. We do know that Simon Peter's and Andrew's father was John, and James' and John's was Zebedee. We know Peter had a wife as we encounter his mother in law in three of the gospels though she remains nameless. Beyond that, nothing. And though the disciples were twelve in number, supposedly to mirror the twelve tribes, we do not know the tribe of any of them.

Prophets in the new testament? Long-dead Elijah makes an appearance at the Transfiguration but the age of prophecy was over, ending with Malachi and Jews looked to the future for the reappearance of prophets in a new messianic age. John the Baptist deflected questions about whether he was a prophet, he seemed to deny it.

So what has this to do with Candlemas. Bear with me...

Everyone loves a baby! Joseph and Mary are accosted in the temple at Jesus' presentation, perhaps by a number of people unrecorded but notably by Simeon who pronounces what we now know as the Nunc Dimitis, still said or sung daily across the Christian world. Then came an elderly lady who spoke movingly though her words were not recorded. Was she just a venerable and ancient lady gushing over a baby? Look again! We know a lot about her – her age, when she was widowed and her religious practices. And we know not just her name, Anna, but her tribe too (Asher) and she is described as a prophet. Remarkable! She whom we thought of as a minor character is singled out in ways far from common in the New Testament, what an honour. She was certainly someone!



Candlemas - “Flame of a Candle”

See the candle flame a-burning
See its flick’ring, dancing light;
See how it, the darkness spurning
Burns throughout the darkest night.

Light of faith, of God reminding
As His Spirit, long ago
Lit the first apostles, finding
Faith within the Spirit’s glow.

Light of life – God’s life eternal
Won through Christ’s atoning death
Sparing us from Hell, infernal
Granting us His living breath!

Light of hope, in God victorious
For we know that He will win
When we’ll see His flames of
glorious
Vict’ry o’er the pow’r of sin!

Light your candle, kneel and praise
Him
Kneel and praise the Lord of Hosts;
Let your prayers and praises raise
Him
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Nigel Beeton, Parish Pump



Lent at St Anne’s

We start Lent on **Ash Wednesday, 18 February** with services at
10 am Holy Communion and the Imposition of Ashes
7 pm Holy Communion and the Imposition of Ashes

On the first Sunday of Lent, **22 February**, we welcome Rev Lisa Redfern (formerly a member of this church) as our guest preacher.

Mothering Sunday is on **15 March**, with the traditional distribution of posies. Members of the MU (and everyone else would be welcome) will be assembling the posies on the Saturday (14 March) in church at 2.30.

On Passion Sunday, **22 March**, we welcome Funa Joseph as our guest preacher. Funa is our new CAP Debt Centre Manager.

We also have a guest preacher the Sunday before Lent: on 15 February Nadene Wright will be visiting us. Nadene is the Diocesan Racial Justice Officer. We look forward to welcoming her to our church.

How people fast during Lent

Many of us fast during Lent. It seems that the kind of fast you undertake may be connected to your denomination. A recent survey by the charity Green Christian found the following:

94% Black Majority Churchgoers give up all food for a set time.
85% of Orthodox churchgoers cut out specific foods and/or drinks.
83% of Pentecostal churches give up all food for a set time.
79% of Roman Catholics cut out specific foods and/or drinks.
76% of New Churches give up all food for a set time.
57% of C of E cut out specific foods and/or drinks
30% or less of Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists cut out specific foods and/or drinks.



"How did we do"

I don't know what you think of our parish website, but I feel one of its merits is that nothing pops up. You don't have to sit through an advert before you can see what you asked for. There's no intrusive pop-up to ask you to sign up for anything. Nor is there an intrusive pop-up to ask you "was this page helpful". And you're not asked to provide feedback.

Feedback is good. We can all learn from clear and honest comments on what we do or say. But feedback in the modern world is usually not like that. Why does every company, service, restaurant etc seem to want it. If any of them took any notice of the feedback given, the world would surely be a much better place. I'm left suspecting that they're fishing for short quotes they can use to promote themselves and the weaknesses the public point out are left unaddressed.

The world of feedback can

be interesting browsing. Some of those commenting are rude, unrealistic, self centred and they stand out among a lot of positive reviews for somewhere you know is OK. Some are uncritically complimentary. It's often helpful to read a few high star and a few low star reviews to get some balance, and it's reassuring if you find your own views reflected in a number of reviews from others.

But overall, I get fed up with the intrusions on websites and the endless emails asking for feedback. Amazon is among those where the temptation is to say "I don't know, I haven't had time to read it/use it/eat it/give it as a present yet".

Having got that off my chest, your feedback on website and magazine is welcome: just like clergy sermons they usually pass without comment!

Howard Mason

"Looking out of the window"

Where has January gone ? The six rose buds mentioned in the last article are no longer. The freezing cold snap did away with them!

Our first snowdrop bent its head on the first day of the New Year, exactly two weeks earlier than last year, and the garden is now becoming full of these beautiful flowers.

Yellow and purple pansies are cheerful, and hidden around are some similarly coloured crocuses. Daffodils are gaining height but not yet flowering. Hyacinth bulbs are producing healthy looking flower heads an inch or so out of the ground, so everywhere is full of potential and the weeds are having a field day - quite literally, in places! The Pampas Grass is suffering damage from some very windy weather but will recover I am sure.

Looking up to higher things, there have been two "sky events" this month. The first was the "Wolf Moon" on 3 January - a huge silver ball tracking across the heavens- so called apparently, as wolves have been



known to howl at such an enormous shiny ball in the sky at the beginning of the year ! The second event was when I was making breakfast one morning and an aeroplane vapour trail could be seen with 2 or 3 undulations in it. No ! It wasn't a plane with mechanical difficulties! It was the trail coinciding with some turbulence caused by the NE wind over the Pennine hills - all very geographical knowledge. Thank you Hugh !



Back at a lower level the squirrel population is very busy at the moment picking up peanut crumbs from the untidy and noisy parakeets, ending another fascinating month of "the view from the window."

Bridget

Introducing Dame Sarah Mullally - the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE officially became Archbishop of Canterbury on 28th January 2026, when she was legally confirmed at St Paul's Cathedral. Most people know that she had been Bishop of London for several years, and that she is the first woman to ever become Archbishop of Canterbury. But what else do you know about her?

- ◆ She was born in Woking in 1962, and is one of four children, with two sisters and one brother. She attended Winston Churchill Comprehensive School and Woking Sixth Form College. She went on to South Bank Polytechnic and Heythrop College, University of London
- ◆ She worked as a nurse in the National Health Service, which she has described as "an opportunity to reflect the love of God". She specialised as a cancer nurse and became a ward sister at Westminster Hospital, before being made Director of Nursing at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital.
- ◆ In 1999, at the age of 37, she was appointed the Government's Chief Nursing Officer for England in the Department of Health. She was the youngest person ever to be appointed to the post. Bishop Sarah was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 2005 in recognition of her outstanding contribution to nursing.
- ◆ She had become a Christian at the age of 16. While working as the Chief Nursing Officer for England, she discerned a call to ordination and trained at the South East Institute for Theological Education.
- ◆ She was ordained in 2001 and served her curacy in St Saviour's Battersea Fields, initially as a self-supporting minister, before leaving her government post in 2004, which she has described at the time as "the biggest decision I have ever made".
- ◆ In 2012 she was installed as Canon Treasurer at Salisbury Cathedral and three years later took the role as Suffragan Bishop of Crediton in the Diocese of Exeter, the fourth woman to become a Bishop in the Church of England. In 2018, Bishop Sarah was installed as the 133rd Bishop of London at St Paul's Cathedral, the first woman to hold the role.
- ◆ Archbishop Sarah sits in the House of Lords as one of the Lords Spiritual, having been introduced on 24th May 2018. Her maiden speech paid tribute to the NHS on its 70th anniversary, telling the Lords: "I am the Bishop I am today because of that first vocation to nursing, and compassion and healing are constants at the heart of who I am." She was sworn in as a member of the Privy Council in March 2018 and became Dean of Her Majesty's Chapels Royal in July 2019.
- ◆ As Bishop of London, she led the Church of England's Living in Love and Faith process from 2020 to 2023. This included the formative stages of discernment and decision making which saw the introduction of the Prayers of Love and Faith for same-sex couples. She has served on the Church's National Safeguarding Steering Group and is also Lead Bishop for Health and Social Care issues.
- ◆ As a Lord Spiritual, she has drawn from both her pastoral experience and her background in nursing and healthcare and has played a key role in the ongoing debates on assisted dying.
- ◆ Archbishop Sarah is married to Eamonn, an Irish-born IT and Enterprise Architect who enjoys beekeeping and volunteering as a London tourist guide. The couple have two grown-up children, Liam and Grace.
- ◆ Archbishop Sarah has continued her interest in the health service having been a non-executive director at the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust then at Salisbury NHS Foundation Hospital.
- ◆ She is Chair of Christian Aid.
- ◆ She has spoken openly about her dyslexia, describing her difficulties with writing and reading.
- ◆ In her spare time, she loves cooking, walking and pottery.

Mothers Union

I hope that you all had a good Christmas and we wish everyone a happy and peaceful 2026. I also hope that you are all keeping warm in this cold weather, it is supposed to be getting chilly again soon so wrap up and stay warm. I don't mind the really cold weather but dislike the damp miserable days. At least in the cold you can wrap up warm and get out and about and thankfully it is now warm in church.

I had a lovely time at my son and daughter-in-law's over Christmas and had a huge surprise on the actual day. I was told to close my eyes and was led into the hallway and when I opened my eyes there was a brand new shiny bike. It was a massive surprise and I think I just stared at it to start with and kept saying 'is that really mine'. It has been well used since then, I even went out and purchased a stronger bike padlock and cable.

Carol, David and Andrew went down to stay with Louise and Stephen for a few days near

Brighton and I think its is the first in a long time that they have not been in Sale. They enjoyed themselves down there (apart from the journey home) which I believe was a bit of a nightmare. For Carol's sake I am very pleased to say that both Christingles went really well and were well attended. Plus preparing the Christingles in Church instead of the Hall worked extremely well.

In December we held our Symposium where we listened to readings and sang carols, ate mince pies and shortbread and might have indulged in some mulled wine. This is always a calming evening in the midst of the rush up to Christmas. It was also a pleasure to welcome Eileen as a member of our MU, she has been a member of the MU for a good number of years but was warmly welcomed into our group.

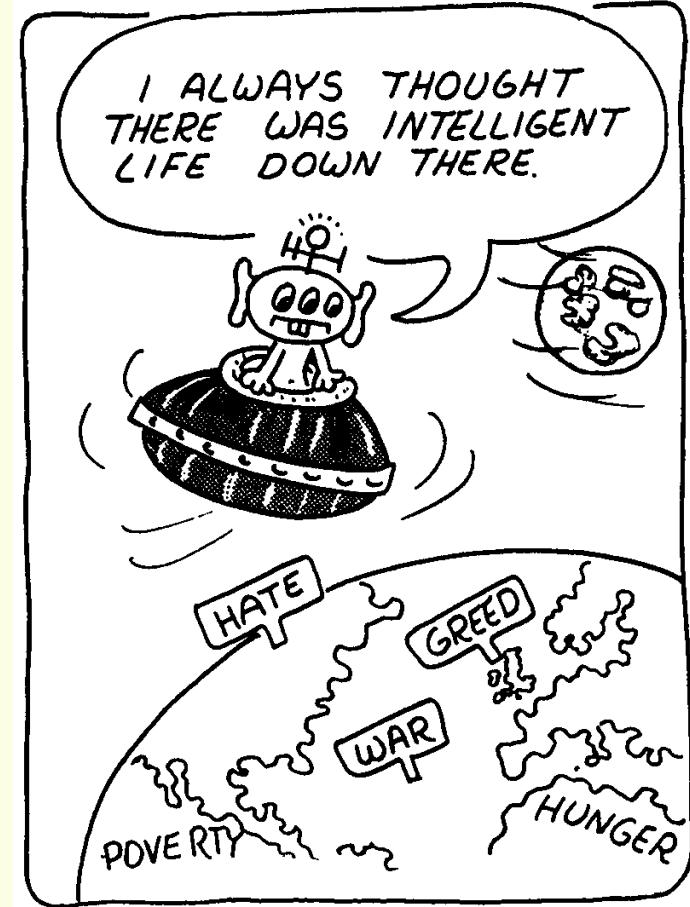
January saw us hold our annual party where we had a meal, worked out the answers

to a quiz and exchanged our Prayer Partner gifts. It is always exciting to find out who has been thinking about you during the past twelve months. The new Prayer Partners will be sorted at the February meeting.

This February meeting is our Annual Meeting where we discuss the previous year and approve the Accounts. We also confirm who will be on the Committee for the following twelve months. At the party Carol told us that she had been in touch with Sylvia Webb and was happy to say that at long last Sylvia has had her shoulder replaced. She has been waiting for this operation for a very long time and we wish her a good recovery.

This coming year is the 150th anniversary of the Mothers Union and there are various celebrations occurring. We will advise you of events when we find out more details.

Love and Prayers
Jackie and Carol



"Religious faith is poetry plus, not science minus."
Mark Oakley, Dean of Southwark

Many of us who profess to be Christians are so busy with the mechanics of our religion that we have no time left for the spiritual part of it.

W B Martin

St Anne's School

We are delighted to share the wonderful news that St Anne's has received an exceptional SIAMS inspection report, which reflects the strength, faith and dedication of our whole school community.

This outcome is the result of a truly collective effort : staff, leaders, governors, parents, pupils and our church family working together to live out our shared vision, "Let Your Light Shine." The inspector was deeply impressed by the distinctive Christian character of the school and the impact it has on pupils, families and the wider community. He encouraged us to share these strengths beyond our school.

The inspection highlighted many notable strengths, including:

- A clearly expressed and embedded Christian vision that shapes every aspect of school life.
- Collective worship at the heart of the school, nurturing pupils' spirituality and moral development.
- Strong relationships grounded in Christian love, resulting in exceptional wellbeing support for adults and pupils.
- A rich, inclusive curriculum rooted in Christian values, supporting all pupils, including those with SEND and those who are vulnerable.
- High-quality Religious Education that deepens pupils' understanding of Christianity and other world views.



The report also celebrates how our vision is lived out daily through worship, curriculum and relationships, leading to exemplary behaviour, strong community links and a deep sense of belonging. The inspector praised the close partnership between the school and church, and the way pupils are encouraged to serve others, seek justice and live out their faith.

We are overwhelmed by the success of this inspection and give thanks for God's guidance throughout this journey. We remain fully committed to ensuring that every individual continues to flourish and to "let their light shine."

You can see the report [here](#) - don't worry, it's not long and technical!

Parish Life

Can you get across the pedestrian crossing in time?

Have you ever had to hurry to make it to safely across the street because the pedestrian crossing light is about to turn red again? If so, you are not alone. A recent study published in the journal Age and Ageing has found that pedestrian crossing timings are simply too brief for many elderly people and especially those with mobility problems.

The length of time given at crossing points usually assumes a walking speed of 1.2m per second. But the study found that the average speed of adults aged over 65 is only 0.77m per second. So more than half of older people need to increase their normal walking speed by about 50 per cent, just to reach the other curb safely.

One of the researchers said: "This isn't just a safety issue – it's potentially a barrier to independence, physical activity, and social connection, all of which often decline in later life."

Fairtrade Petition

Just thought you might like to know.....

During Fairtrade Fortnight last autumn many of you signed a petition to call on our MP to call on the government to protect human rights, tackle climate change and encourage business, and for policy makers to work together to improve the quality of life for the people who pick out tea. We joined over 20,000 people signing the petition! Thank you for your support.

I also wrote to our MP (Mike Kane) as part of the campaign urging him and his government to take necessary steps to promote fair trade. He replied at length. I've now heard that 98% of MPs received letters/emails etc on the issue. There is a lot of support for the principles of fair trade.

And the Fairtrade Foundation in conversation with the main supermarkets found that they are well aware of the number of customers who expect to find fair trade products on their shelves and adherence to fair trade and other ethical policies. Great news

But there is still more to do....

Janice Mason



Bishop Mark is grateful for all the work that is put into safeguarding in Chester Diocese. "Thank you for all that you do in to help us live out the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ in enabling people to be safe and welcome"

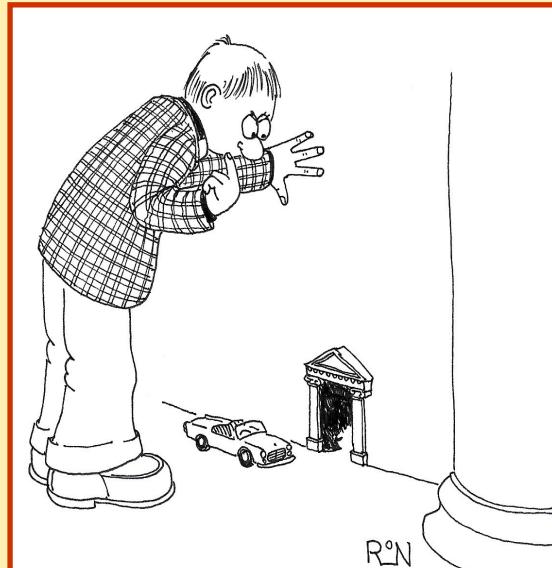
If you have any safeguarding concerns or issues of a safeguarding matter then you can contact Chester Diocese - email them at safeguarding@chester.anglican.org or ring them at 01928 718834 (option 4). Our local contact is: safeguarding.stannessale@gmail.com.

Easy Fundraising

I'm one of 35 supporters raising free donations for Parish Church of St Anne's, Sale every time I shop online this year, and you can join in too!

Sign up [here](#) to support them on #easyfundraising and over 8,000 retailers will make a donation on your behalf when you shop with them. All the big names like Sainsbury's, Argos, Just Eat and many more are ready to donate at no extra cost to you. Every donation will help us.

Elizabeth Mills



...and yet the Church Mice still put it about that they were poor

Christingle Update

Hi everyone. Just an update to let you know how much we all raised for the Children's Society this year through our Christingle services.

I'm really proud to tell you that we raised a total of £570.00.

Thank you so much for your donations. Every penny you sent helps and will go to help a young person who needs help. The Children's Society really appreciates every penny they receive.

I was sorry not to be at the services this year but I spent Christmas with



my family down in Brighton and had a lovely time. We did watch the 5.30 service online and it looked great. I hope those of you who went to either of the services enjoyed yourselves.

I hope you all have the 2026 you want and need, that you find things to smile at each day, and that you know and feel love in your life.

Thank you!

Carol Thomas, Children's Society Rep for St Annes

Beer festival

The beer festival will be back at St Anne's again this year after last year's record attendance. Book the dates now: Friday 8 May and Saturday 9 May. More details nearer the time, and see www.salebeerpestival.com

Brick Exhibition

This will be on Saturday 11 July.

The e-Spire is our alternative to a hard-copy parish magazine. It is to supplement what appears on our website and in the weekly pastoral letter and newsheets from our clergy. If you don't receive these by email, please send your email address to Alison: alisoncox19@hotmail.com

For comments on e-Spire and to contribute to a future issue, mail the **editors**, Howard & Janice Mason at howard.mason1@btopenworld.com

Parish Directory

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	Church Road West, Sale M33 3GD	
	E-mail: alisoncox19@hotmail.com	
Hon Assistant Priest:	Rev Olwyn Marlow, 28 Arcadia Avenue	0161 962 9292
Families & Children's Workers:	Shauna Hancock & Laura Elison -	
	shauna.stannefamchild@gmail.com	
Churchwardens:	Andrew Egarr	07808 466 371
	e-mail: andrew.egarrcw@gmail.com	
PCC Secretary:	Ann Hunt: hunt289@icloud.com	
PCC Treasurer:	Chris Jones - chrisjonessat@gmail.com	07484 834 513
Hall Bookings:	Please contact the vicar at alisoncox19@hotmail.com	
Events Committee:	Please contact Ann Hunt: hunt289@icloud.com	
Sacristan/Head Server:	Sue Heath, 7 The Cloisters	0161 969 3167
Organist & Choir Leader:	Vacant	
Choir:	Tuesdays 6.45pm. Contact: matt.roughley.uk@gmail.com	
St Anne's School:	Headteacher – Polly Knight	0161 973 7181
Overseas Group:	Chair - Janice Mason	0161 969 8570
Church Fellowship:	Monthly coffee mornings, Church Hall	
Mothers' Union:	2nd Monday, 8pm, St Anne's Church Hall	0161 283 0563
Mums & Tots:	Fridays 9.15 - 11am, contact Shauna Hancock: shauna.stannefamchild@gmail.com	

Guiding

Rainbows

1st Sale Moor : Mondays 5 - 6 pm in the Church Hall
email 1stsalemoorainbows@gmail.com

2nd Sale Moor : Mondays 6.15 - 7.15 pm in the Church Hall
email 2ndsalemoorainbows@gmail.com

Brownies

1st Sale Moor: Weds 6.30 - 8 pm, Clarendon Rd Scout Hut 973 3894
2nd Sale Moor: Weds 6.30 - 8 pm in the Church Hall 0161 976 5972
3rd Sale Moor: Tues 6 pm at Moorlands School
7th Sale Moor: Tues 6 pm in the Church Hall 0161 973 2108

Guides

2nd Sale Moor: Mondays 7.30 - 9pm in the Church Hall 0161 286 1623
7th Sale Moor: Tuesdays 7 pm at Sale Moor Methodist Church

Rangers

Sale Moor Unit: Thursday evenings at Trinity Methodist Church