



NEWS AND NOTES

SUNDAY 11TH JANUARY 2026

FIRST SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY, THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

Dear friends,

This Sunday we turn our attention to the **baptism of Christ**, a moment that marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry and reveals the heart of God's delight: "You are my Son, the Beloved." As we explore this together, we'll be reflecting on what it means for us to live as people who are named, claimed, and sent—those who step into the waters of grace and rise to walk in God's calling for our own lives.

This theme also connects beautifully with our midweek teaching, where we've been thinking about what it means to "test the spirit", the discernment of what is of God and what is not. The baptism story invites us to listen again for the true voice that speaks life, identity, and purpose over us. As we gather on Sunday, we'll be holding these threads together: the God who names us, the Spirit who leads us, and the call to follow Christ with clarity, courage, and joy.

Rev'd Pam Smith



SERVING THIS WEEK

St Andrew's

Lead: Katherine Preach: Helen
Prayers: Helen
Reader 1: Ruth Reader 2: Katherine

St Paul's

Lead: Pam Preach: David
Prayers: David
Reader 1: Ikemba Reader 2: Jody

St Peter's

Lead: Pam Preach: Pam
Prayers: Karen
Reader 1: Michael Reader 2: Gillian

READINGS

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 42.1-9

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.
He will not cry or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;
a bruised reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
He will not grow faint or be crushed
until he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.
Thus says God, the Lord,
who created the heavens and stretched them
out,
who spread out the earth and what comes
from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
and spirit to those who walk in it:
I am the Lord, I have called you in
righteousness,
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
a light to the nations,
to open the eyes that are blind,

to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
 from the prison those who sit in darkness.
 I am the Lord, that is my name;
 my glory I give to no other,
 nor my praise to idols.
 See, the former things have come to pass,
 and new things I now declare;
 before they spring forth,
 I tell you of them.

New Testament Reading

Acts 10.34–43

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

Gospel Reading

Matthew 3.13–end

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by

you, and do you come to me?' But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness.' Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'



WEEKLY CHURCH PRAYERS

Collect

Heavenly Father,
 at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son:
 may we recognize him as our Lord
 and know ourselves to be your beloved
 children;
 through Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord of all time and eternity,
 you opened the heavens and revealed yourself
 as Father
 in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son:
 by the power of your Spirit
 complete the heavenly work of our rebirth
 through the waters of the new creation;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

CALENDAR

Midweek services:

Midweek services resume this week:

St Andrew's: 10.45am Wednesday 14th January
 St Paul's: 11.00am Thursday 15th January

CHURCH MEETINGS

Worship Leaders' Meeting

The Blackley worship team meet weekly on Mondays at **4pm** online

Our next in-person meeting will be on

Thursday 12th February at 7pm in the Rectory

The Mission Community leaders will also be meeting regularly. The Incumbents will gather roughly every six weeks, and the whole worship team from across the seven churches will meet in person once every two months.

Please hold your worship leaders in your prayers:

Blackley: Pam, Jane, Helen, Philip, Katherine, Steve, Sue and David

Moston & New Moston: Sophia and Gillian

Crumpsall & Moston: Hannah, Roy and Ian

Cheetham: Sarah and John

PCC Meetings

St Andrew's - 14th January 2026

St Paul's - 20th January 2026

St Peter's - 22nd January 2026

Deanery Meetings

Deanery Synod February 2026 (date TBC)

Deanery Chapter 25th February, 12.30pm

BLACKLEY CHURCH COMMUNITY EVENTS AND NEWS

Confirmation Service

Bishop Mark has agreed to visit us on Sunday **17th May** to hold a Confirmation Service. The location will be confirmed in due course, but please put it in your diary and if you or someone you know would like to be Confirmed, please let Pam know.

COMMUNITY NOTES

Blackley Church Website

Have you had a chance to look at our website recently? All three Blackley churches share a dedicated online home at <https://blackleycofe.church>, and it's packed with resources to help you stay connected and involved.

On the site you'll find our up-to-date calendar, information about upcoming services, downloadable service sheets, rotas, study materials, prayer resources, and much more. It's the easiest way to keep track of what's happening across our churches throughout the week.

If you're part of the Worship Team, you can also access all our liturgy, music, and prayer resources through the **Team Login** button at the top of the page.

Why not take a few minutes this week to explore what's there? It's a simple way to stay rooted in the life of our churches and to make the most of the resources we're offering online.

Lent Course

A reminder about our discipleship journey for Lent. During Lent we'll be offering a course called **Walking With Jesus: A Lenten Journey to Easter**. It's been created to help us deepen our faith as we make our way through these forty days and look ahead to the celebration of Easter. Each week there will be two chances to gather with others to explore the material, and the same resources will also be available on our website for anyone who prefers to engage at home.

Across the six weeks we'll reflect on these themes:

- **Beginning the Journey and Turning Towards God,**
- **In the Wilderness,**
- **Learning to Trust,**
- **Cost and Surrender,**
- **Love Poured Out,**
- **Waiting and Hope.**

Our in-person sessions will run on **Thursday evenings at 7pm** and **Sunday afternoons at 5pm** throughout Lent. Depending on numbers, we'll meet either in the Rectory or in St Andrew's Parish Room. Each gathering will last around an hour, with refreshments available beforehand.

Confirmation

If you're considering Confirmation, the Lent course offers a very helpful starting point. After Easter there will also be a four-week follow-on series focusing more closely on baptism promises, the Eucharist, and personal preparation for Confirmation. These sessions are designed with Confirmation candidates in mind, but they have also been valuable for long-standing Christians wanting to revisit and deepen their understanding of baptism and the Eucharist.

As always, everyone is warmly invited to take part in any of our discipleship gatherings.

FOR YOUR PERSONAL PRAYERS

Those getting married in 2026

- ✝ **Latisha and Declan** who will be getting married at St Peter's on 1st August
- ✝ **Ethan and Megan** who will be getting married at St Paul's on 17th October
- ✝ **Ellie** and her partner who have enquired about being married at St Peter's this year

Those grieving or remembering an anniversary at this time

- ✝ The family and friends of **Eunice Forshaw** whose funeral is on Tuesday 13th January at Blackley Crematorium
- ✝ The family and friends of **Robert Cohen** whose funeral is on Thursday 15th January at Blackley Crematorium
- ✝ The family and friends of **Stephen Williams** whose funeral is on Friday 16th January at Blackley Crematorium

Those caring

- ✝ Staff, residents and visitors at Chestnut House Care Home

Our Young People

- ✝ Staff and children at Tiddlywinks Nursery, Blackley

Those exploring Christian faith

- ✝ **Daniel, Lucy and Michael** who will be baptised during the morning service at St Paul's on 1st February 2026
- ✝ **Hudson** who will be baptised at St Peter's on 12th April 2026
- ✝ **Those who have enquired about being Confirmed next year**

Those who are ill or are in hospital

Our Community Partners

- ✝ Kathy and her service users at Morriso Health

Residents and Visitors

We pray for all those people in Aldersley Avenue, Avonmore Walk, and Ashdown Avenue

Worldwide Church

Iglesia Anglicana de la Region Central de America

CONTACT DETAILS AND USEFUL LINKS

Incumbent: Rev'd Pam Smith

Phone: 0161 264 9982 or 07834 424568

Email: clergy@blackleycofe.church

Website: <https://blackleycofe.church>

Safeguarding:

Dianne McCann (St Andrew's), Karen Moores (St Peter's) and Taron Entwistle (St Paul's)