



ST LUKE'S CHURCH GREAT CROSBY

APCM 2026



CARE MINISTRY TEAM

Pastoral Care comes under the umbrella of the Care Ministry, which works alongside Home Communion and Living with Loss. Over the past year, we have continued to provide support, home communion, and care for those in need within our church community. We use several methods to keep in contact, whether in person or by phone. We also have a confidential WhatsApp group that allow members to alert the team to any urgent needs and helps provide regular updates. We are currently a small team of volunteers who selflessly give their time to support others. Although small in number, we achieve a great deal. In September, we were pleased to welcome a new member, Martin to the team. Last year, Rev Jackie Parry stepped down from her role as Pastoral Care Leader, and we wish her every blessing in her new ministerial role. Having previously served as Co-Ordinator, I have now stepped into the position of Leader. I would like to sincerely thank everyone who has supported me in this transition and continues to encourage and assist me. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank every member of the team, as well as those “hidden” individuals who may not be official team members, but who faithfully and quietly provide pastoral care to others. In the coming year, we hope to develop our work further with Keystone, a support group for those living with dementia and their carer's. The care they provide to all who attend is truly humbling. We continue to hope and pray for more volunteers to become involved. If you are interested in learning more about this important ministry, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me for an informal chat. It would be lovely to hear from you. **Michelle Heaps**



HOME COMMUNION

Clergy and three designated and registered church members, take Holy Communion to the homes of members who are permanently or temporarily housebound. This is a much-valued ministry, and we give our gratitude and sincere thanks go to Linda Moore, Joyce Wade, and Joyce Fell, who have offered it over many years. Joyce Fell has now

Withdrawn, and we pray for good health and continued blessings for Linda Moore and Joyce Wade as they continue this vital Kingdom ministry. Rev Bill Pierce took Holy Communion to one housebound member who has now moved away. Rev Maragret Quayle took Holy Communion to two people following their time in hospital. Reflections of this ministry are historically interesting! There were four couples serving six permanently housebound members, and three unable to attend following recent hospital discharge, and this year we have three members caring for three regular housebound members with one recipient added in November following hospitalization after an accident. It is difficult to pinpoint a reason for this change as housebound members are all offered the opportunity to receive Holy Communion at home. Reasons maybe: The “absentees” now are younger and the custom of receiving communion weekly is not as strong as in previous years. The Covid restrictions broke the custom of visiting. “Mobility aids “now available people are more able to attend church in their later years than was previously possible, Some housebound members move to be nearer family. However, those who do receive Holy Communion at home, value it as a cherished link with their church and their friends and are grateful for the commitment of those who visit them. NOTE: It is no longer customary for a chaplain to visit every patient, so if anyone is in hospital and wishes to see the chaplain, please make this request to the person in charge of your ward, and follow it up if it does not happen.

Rev Margaret Quayle



LIVING WITH LOSS GROUP

We meet at 10:30am on the first Tuesday of each month in the Crosby Room, and everyone is warmly welcome. We continue to be a supportive and friendly group for anyone who has experienced a recent bereavement, as well as for those who were bereaved some time ago and value the opportunity to meet with others each month.

Our mornings begin with refreshments and general conversation in a relaxed setting. It is always encouraging to welcome someone new, and it never ceases to amaze us how God brings people together at just the right time for one another. Over the years, people have found us through Facebook, Crosby Bubble, and local notice boards. More recently, most new contacts have come through follow-up pastoral care calls from the Church after a funeral—though sadly this is not very frequent. As many next of kin live outside Crosby, those who usually join us are bereaved partners living locally. At present, Hazel and Jackie oversee the group. However, the group would greatly benefit from fresh input and updated ideas—either from someone joining the team or taking on a leading role. If you feel you might like to be involved, please do get in touch with us. You will be very welcome. Contact Hazel Large 07814664802

QUIET PRAYER

For four years now (since March 2022), a few folk have met to pray on Tuesday mornings for half an hour at 7.14am (based on "if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14 NIV). We pray for God's kingdom to come in our church and in our community - in and through us. All are welcome. **Jan Matthews**



SMALL GROUPS AND COURSES

Throughout 2025 we had 7 small groups that continued to run throughout the year, some in an evening mid-week and others during the day or at lunchtime. These used a variety of resources, from sermon-based notes to studying a bible book or following a course on a theme. The pastoral care inherent in belonging to these groups also helped to support a variety of church members as they shared the ups and downs of their lives, with family and health issues being some of the larger needs that were supported. For some their small

groups is also their church as they are unable to attend on Sundays, and these provide good discipleship and a prayerful grounding in Christian faith. In the Summer term, our vicar Amanda visited some of the groups by invitation to discuss and share information about the diocesan Fit for Mission Initiative that we had been invited to think about and vote on in October. The Alpha Course was also run as a course for a number of new people, as well as some current or returning members. This was highly successful and led to a new small group forming, led by a new leader. Thanks to Jan and Cath for their leadership and organisation of this course. If you want more information about small groups or courses then please contact us on office@stlukecrosby.org.uk **Rev Amanda Bruce**

PRAYER MINISTRY

Sadly the prayer ministry team has ceased to exist due to the fact that all but one of the team have now left St Luke's. We all know how highly significant



healing is in the Bible, a core demonstration of God's love, power and kingdom. It was compassion which motivated Jesus, who taught his disciples who taught their disciples and must have been very important to him because he did a lot of it! That is why it has always been integral to St Luke's mission and ministry not only for personal healing but as an evangelistic tool and that is why I am sure there will be another team, with new people, at some time in the future. Of course in 2025 we were knocked sideways when we lost Emma, an important and much loved member of our team and a driving force for the events which we put on for the church. She will always be a part of us. It has been a joy and a privilege to pray for so many of St Luke's folk and to walk alongside many in the storms of life. So as a team, thank you so much for trusting us with your vulnerabilities and struggles which we all experience at different times in our lives.

Shirley Wallin

FIT FOR MISSION:

The Diocese of Liverpool developed the initiative of Fit for Mission as a way of making mission and ministry by local churches and in local communities more possible. This is done by relieving the individual churches of much of the governance, administration, and legal requirements they have to currently ensure are in place for the church as an institution through a centralised operational structure as they become part of a Larger Single Parish (LSP). All the churches in our deanery were asked to vote on whether they wanted to explore becoming part of a LSP in Autumn 2025. In September, the PCC of St Luke's, after many meetings and much discussion and prayer, voted to continue with this process as we started 2026. We will see how this affects us and how much it allows us to focus on being church for people, in worship, care and mission, rather than just doing church from a legal standpoint as the next 2 years unfold. We can opt out if we choose, but hold out hope that this will give us more freedom, time and energy for mission and ministry in the long-term.



Rev Amanda Bruce

WORSHIP @ ST LUKE'S CHURCH

Our worship continues to be resourced by a large team of people from trained/ordained ministers to those who lead with years of experience, to those who are new and discovering their vocational calling. We have a number of musicians who ably lead us in song and provide musical accompaniment to our activity. These leaders are all well supported by a small team of those trained and dedicated to providing us with AudioVisual capacity in the church building. Leaders, preachers, musicians, AV team, our sidespersons, churchwardens and their assistants, hospitality team and welcomers are all essential in creating a safe and good place for us to worship God with ease - Thank you to them all. The variety of liturgy (words, songs and actions) we use varied according to season and need, providing a rich diet of biblically-based traditional, contemporary, factual, visual and poetic ways in which to know and worship God,



Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Not everyone likes the changes from a steady liturgical diet of familiar and traditional, but these changes feed the wide breadth of people from a variety of traditions within our church family. In 2025 our ser-

mons focused on the book of Colossians interspersed with Lectionary readings for Epiphany and Easter. In late June and into July we spent a few weeks looking at various Apostles, John the Baptist, Peter, Thomas, the Good Samaritan, Mary Magdalene and James. In August, we preached on various Miracles from the Gospel books before delving into Creation as September and Harvest came upon us. After that we looked at Discipleship in terms of Facing Storms, Being Shaped, Venturing out, Loving, Hurting, Healing and Dreaming. Then Christ the King led us into Advent when we explored the Greening of the world, community, church and family. Christmas brought us back to the heart of our faith in the nativity stories from the Gospels of John and Luke. Our variety of congregations are all thriving: Big Breakfast Family Worship sees us gather 60+ people, with about 5-6 people leading in one way or another and an equal split between adults and children under 12. This happens once every half-term term and is based in the school hall before the school day starts. Our Wednesday congregation has grown in size and now numbers 15-20 people regularly. Pram Club, the 10am service and Big Picnic Worship have all seen new people throughout 2025, although some friends have also moved on. We also continue to have funerals, baptisms and weddings (the occasional offices, as they are called). We have 12-25 funerals a year and baptisms on most 4th Sundays in a month at 12 noon. It has been wonderful to be invited to baptise some parents alongside or prior to their child's baptism as well this year. We still get 3-5 weddings each year and are delighted to support this new step for some of our younger couples. We may not think of these Occasional Offices as worship always, but they give

the leader and supporting team a chance to share the gospel message both in preparation and in sermons during the services themselves, which we try to do whilst also recognising and responding to the pastoral needs inherent in those occasions. If you would like to be part of a supporting team as part of the mission of the church, especially for baptisms, then please let Amanda know. Worship becomes Mission becomes Discipleship becomes Pastoral Care all woven together as we bring before God all that we are and do, recognising that God is our King and Lord, friend and father, advocate and redeemer. Praise to the Lord, as we worship him week in and week out and give him ourselves and our community. **Rev Amanda Bruce**



Children's Lending Library at St Luke's Church

During 2025 an area in church was set aside for a children's play area, with a comfy chair for nursing mums. St Luke's church has signed up with the Breastfeeding Network demonstrating an interest in supporting families to have a positive experience of breastfeeding, registration is renewed annually. We re-painted the two children's chairs and restored two small tables, giving them a matching coat of child-friendly paint. The men from the Veterans shed re-purposed some unused shelving, and with a few coats of the same paint there is now a small mobile storage unit for Big Picnic Worship craft and colouring items. We also have a box of children's bags with soft toys and books which have been refreshed thanks to Carol Roocroft.

The materials for this play area are all connected in some way with Bible stories, and Worship, there is a selection of Bibles, Bible story books, 'Lord's Prayer Cube', depicting the Lord's prayer in child friendly words and pictures, there are also Bible based colouring sheets suitable for younger children. Younger children, usually the under 5s, accompanied by an adult are the main users of this area. The children's lending library continues to provide us with an opportunity to share the Gospel with the Big Picnic Worship families through a wide range of fun and encouraging books. Some books were also borrowed for the story telling of our favourite Bible characters on World Book Day in March at St Luke's school Halsall. Thank you for your support. **Gillian Beardwood**



PRAM CLUB/STEPPING STONES

Our extended meeting time of 1.30 – 3pm is working well, giving time to chat – and for the children, burn off some energy – before our story time in Pram Club sessions and longer to play in the Stepping Stones sessions. We have found using 'ready-to-go'



story and craft to be very helpful – though these are going to need re-stocking and extending for more stories. We have covered our senses (I can see/hear/talk); creation; lent, Palm Sunday, advent as well as some miracles and Old Testament characters! Our WhatsApp group regularly share information and news in a secure setting, with friendships amongst our children and their carers growing outside of the group too. When we returned in September Kate stepped in to help in the absence of Nicky – who is on a 'sabbatical'. The children made a card for Nicky to show they were thinking of her. We made our usual donations to Claire House and Alder Hey Children's Hospital. Di & Pam stepped in to cover Linda's

holidays – who is a big support each week with registration, refreshments (bringing 'nice biscuits') and chatting to attendees. After our short Christmas service in church and party food, Santa made an appearance so the children could visit his grotto, where they received a bible-based storybook. Please continue to pray for our group and feel free to reach out and offer to help. **Nicky Fell & Bev Seel**

THE WAY YOUTH CLUB

Numbers have remained steady over the past year at around 18 - 24 members. Last year we had four leaders, this year we are down to three, how long the Way can continue is unknown but I feel we are running on borrowed time as all three of us are over 60. The sports tournaments we run now includes hockey as well as football and dodgeball, they all remain very popular. We recently introduced a board games night where the children play games such as Guess Who, Frustration, Chess and a few other older games. **Tim Causer.**

ST LUKE'S GIRLS UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

Here at St Luke's, we have uniform organizations as follows:

Rainbows

Brownies



If you are interested in joining or want to find out more about one of these groups please contact the office at office@stlukecrosby.org.uk and we will be able to put you in touch with one of our leaders.

Hot Chocolate Space

An 'A board' at the end of the main church path announces, "Youth drop in/Free Hot Chocolate". Thursday afternoons sees our church doors open, 3pm-4.30pm, in partnership with Liverpool Youth for Christ. We've recently had to open earlier as one of the local high schools now finishes their day at 2.45pm! Young people from various schools, grateful for a hot drink and to shelter from inclement weather regularly hang out in the welcome area, some just for a brief time

whilst awaiting their bus home. Others enjoy playing darts, Uno, chess, Jenga or are happy to sit and chat. In the summer months ice-pops are more popular, tho some enjoy hot chocolate all year round! Donations of instant hot chocolate powder, canned UHT whipped cream, small marshmallows & wrapped chocolate biscuits are always much appreciated - many thanks. **Jan Matthews, Debbie Burke & Jan Holmes.**



SOCIAL AND GROUP ACTIVITES

NIFTY KNITTERS

We are a group of ladies who meet each Friday from one till three to knit for several charities, our main one being Operation Christmas Child who send shoeboxes filled with goodies and toiletries to children in Eastern Europe and Africa living in very poor circumstances. We make hats, scarves, mitts and glove puppets and also collect items such as felt tips, colouring books, soft toys, soap, flannels and other toys which children will enjoy playing with to go to the warehouse to add to boxes which need extra items. Hats and neck warmers are very much appreciated by the seafarers coming to the Seamen's mission in Waterloo and many lovely knitted and crocheted blankets etc are sent to Sefton Baby Baskets for newborns coming home to difficult conditions. The Linus Charity ask for blankets for children in hospital to brighten up their bed and anything we are given not usable for any of the above can usually be sent to SWACA so everything finds a good home. Sadly Brenda Morris one of our founder members died recently and will be very fondly remembered, she was always smiling and had funny stories to tell to keep us amused. This year we had several

Carol Roocroft.

Crafty Ladies™

nes Law



St Lukes Sewing sisters began in 2019,we meet on the first & third Fridays of each month from 10am-12.30pm in the Webster room. We begin each session with a thought for the day ,

a prayer and our register of those attending being taken in accordance with our safeguarding policy. We begin our session with refreshments in-between. This last year we have been concentrating on charity sewing. As well as our normal syringe driver bags & drain bags given to Aintree & Liverpool Royal hospital ,we have sewn & donated mastectomy cushions to the Marina Dalglish and Linda McCartney cancer units. 50 shopping bags were made and donated

to the local foodbank. Liz Molyneux very gratefully accepted 50 girls dresses and 50 pair of boys long shorts, which are on there way to Mozambique and Malawi. Our members are a mix of St Lukes members and from the Crosby community. 2026 we will be sewing items to be sold at our forthcoming bi annual Christmas Fair in November. At the present time we have reached our maximum number of members to safely accommodate the space we use. Thank you for your support in donations towards our work for Liz Molyneux. Group leader **Sandra Dowson**

LAKESIDE

On the first Tuesday of every month, rain, hail, or shine at 8pm a few hardy souls meet outside the Royal Hotel in Waterloo and walk around the marina, stopping to enjoy the ethereal sight of swans and ducks swimming and the wind farm lit up like a small city. After an amiable chat as we walk, we adjourn to the Royal for a beverage of choice (often a cup of tea!) and then discuss something we'd like to give thanks for and something we are feeling challenged by. It's always worth making the effort to get out, the company and chat are great, and all are welcome. **Jan Matthews**

GROUNDFORCE

The Groundforce team (typically 8-10) manage the garden areas of our grounds and meet on the first Saturday of each month. Dave Law, Charles Crosland and John Turner continued to do lots of practical tasks in the week - Dave and Charles do all the mowing, strimming, cutting of hedges and edging of paths which help make the grounds so attractive. The judges from Crosby in Bloom and the Green Flag initiative gave positive reports on our work but also identified areas for improvement, including upgrading our signage and benches and the potential to involve our local community. We need to invest both time and money to keep the grounds looking attractive and welcoming. Can you help or know others who would like to? Caring for 'God's acre' is God's initiative. We start with a prayer when we meet, and our mid-morning refreshments include a time of reflection, relating an aspect of nature and

creation to our faith. Donations at our refreshments time support Water Aid. Our work in the grounds is part of our worship. The grounds continue to be a valuable resource for our community to exercise and enjoy God's creation and we pray that the teenagers who 'sit off' in the community garden and cause regular litter and low level vandalism will have an encounter with God. **Steve Matthews**

ST LUKES PLAYERS ADS

Time / Venue: Wednesdays at 19.30 in the church hall from mid-October to February; performances in March

For many years St Luke's Players have been staging an annual pantomime.

To entertain audiences of all ages, raise money for charities and provide

the opportunity for drama, dance and music within a Christian environment with God at the centre. During this time, we have donated just short of £90,000 to a huge number of charities including causes supported by the church, a variety of children's charities, cancer charities, hospices, mental health support groups and many more. Last year's Panto, 'The Little Mermaid' was a great success and, once again, God has blessed us with fantastic audiences who contributed to raising a fabulous £6440.00. Proceeds were shared between 'Queen's Court Hospice', 'An Hour for Others', 'Friends of Coronation and Victoria Parks', 'Freshfield Animal Rescue' and 'Waterloo Community Hub'. This year's production, Cinderella is in March and we hope to donate a similar amount to 'The Marina Dalglish Appeal', 'Bebe's Hive', 'Elsie's Story' and 'Alice's Wonder Dance'. This year we have some new members who have quickly become part of the Panto family. However, as part of our outreach we still love to welcome newcomers of all abilities from both the church family and the community. Why not join us and try treading the boards, or help with support roles such as painting scenery, costumes, props or coffee! Rehearsals are always great fun and we have created lasting friendships. Please have a chat with one of our members. Don't forget to look for the next show and enjoy the fun! **Ali Pierce-Murphy, Secretary**



KEYSTONE

Most new carers come through word of mouth and the Alzheimer's Society. Their needs are great, and continue to change, and attenders value the safe, confidential space for sharing. For those who bring their cared-for with them, the glass screen in the church building is invaluable, enabling them to remain visible (for assurance) but unheard by their loved-one. The majority of carers and cared-for are not churchgoers. Events this year included the Keystone Christmas lunch and the monthly meetings for carers. We have continued to give books to new carers, in particular Contented Dementia and God's Peace When You Can't Sleep which the recipients find to be very helpful. We once again remembered the week of prayer for dementia in March and celebrated our usual Christmas lunch in December. We began our 13th year (2026) with a quiet service of 'Blue Christmas' as Christmas isn't easy as a carer. Hope Calvert and Jean SpoX-orth have continued to bake treats for each month and their efforts are greatly appreciated. We have continued to pray for what we need rather than ask and our finances are healthy from donations only. We have planned a noughties party in July 2026 for those with birthdays ending in a zero and a memorial service for October. If you would like to become a prayer partner for Keystone please let Jane Stephens know and if you know of anyone who is caring for a loved one with dementia send them our way. **Jane Stephens**

Buildings on site

ST LUKE'S CHURCH HALL

Similar to previous years our hall and Webster Room continue to be used by several of our Church groups. We have weekly bookings for a community choir, Sefton Council and a new weekly booking for a children's dance class. The children's music group have increased their booking from once a week to twice



a week. There have been a number of evenings when our Church Family have come together, including two Ceilidhs, the first was to raise funds for Christian Aid and the second to raise funds for Arocha and Alejandro Mesco in Peru. We also celebrated St Luke's Day with a Hot Pot Supper which was enjoyed by all. We continue to receive enquiries for parties, some of whom make a booking. We are grateful to Gaynor who has taken over the role of overseeing the hall bookings as we have relinquished the role.

Lynn and Vaughan.

CROSSROADS

Opening hours: 9.30-4.00 Monday to Saturday Purpose: a warm, welcoming café with tasty food, friendly service and the opportunity to meet new people and enjoy some company. We have experienced another successful year at Crossroads as it continues to welcome both regulars and passing trade. The social event in November was very successful, so much so that we had a waiting list for tickets and many people asking when the next event was! God continues to bless us with fabulous managers and volunteers to make Crossroads a great place to be. A huge 'thank you' must be said to the managers, volunteers and committee members who are always busy working with dedication. We said goodbye to Dee, who has been a wonderful asset, and, in her place, we welcomed Sam as a new manager to join the team. Unfortunately, our success has meant that we now pay VAT which has caused a financial strain and we would welcome any support and prayers in this area. Don't forget to pop in when you are in the village to enjoy a tasty and inexpensive experience. If you are unable to, please consider a monthly tithing contribution as every little bit helps. We are always striving to recruit volunteers, if you feel you can spare just a few hours any day of the week you are assured of a warm reception, why not give it a try? Please check out our Facebook page and give us a 'like'! **Ali Pierce-Murphy**



ST LUKES HALSALL CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

‘Inspiring lives, building futures together with Jesus.’

‘My commandment is this: love one another just as I love you’

- John 15 v 12.

Over the last year we have been delighted to continue to increase the links between St. Luke’s Church, school and our community of families through the Growing Faith Adventure. It was a real honour for school and church to receive the first Growing Faith Adventure Award in the whole of the Liverpool Diocese! The half-termly Big Breakfast Family Worship times have been wholeheartedly embraced by the school family with excellent attendance and many positive comments. Thank you to everyone who supports these special mornings. The Experience Harvest event was a wonderful success building on the previous ‘Experience’ events run. Thanks to the hard work of the church family; all of whom hopefully felt the value of bringing an important message to the children. Our school choir have loved performing at church events and services, so thank you all for making them so welcome. We look forward to continuing to grow our links, perhaps with some extra members of the congregation helping out in school, but are always grateful for your continued prayers of support.

Richard Miller, Headteacher

ST LUKE’S HALSALL SCHOOL - The Growing Faith Adventure

At St Luke’s we have always valued our links with St Luke’s Halsall, our amazing church school. In September 2024, we embarked on an exciting adventure to enrich that relationship. The Growing Faith Adventure is all about how church, home and school can work closer together, so more people know Jesus. It’s about putting children and their families at the centre of everything we do, it’s about valuing everyone as unique, gifted and loved by God. Since presenting this to PCC in September and raising the awareness of it to our church family

to share photos of their craft activities, helping to build a stronger sense of community and connection beyond Sunday gatherings. Our links with St Luke's Halsall School and parents have also continued to grow through the 'Growing Faith Adventure' programme. Throughout the year we have regularly promoted church services and events through the school, while also sharing school activities with the church community. This partnership helps strengthen the relationship between church, school and families, encouraging faith to grow. To support communication during the 'Fit for Mission' transition, a new noticeboard has been installed in the Welcome Area. This displays a map showing the nine churches within the Larger Single Parish (LSP) and helps keep you informed about developments during this two-year period of change. Over time, events and information from the other churches will also be displayed. We are grateful to Shirley, Chris, Rosemary and Richie for faithfully writing weekly newsletter reflections over many years. Thanks also to Gillian, who compiles the weekly newsletter, and Dave, who livestreams services so that those unable to attend can remain connected with the church family. Finally, a new large TV screen has been installed in church, significantly improving visibility and enhancing worship, especially when showing video clips! **Paul Beardwood**

St Luke's Bookstall 2025



299

Sales

63

Buyers

64

Bibles

St Luke's Halsall school 90
St Giles pew Bibles 65

Favourites

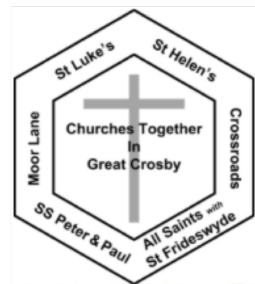
The Greatest Story Ever Told by Bear Grylls, 30
The Whole Easter Story by Jo Swinney, 14
The First Advent in Palestine by Kelley Nikondeha, 12

STORYHOUSE

Storyhouse Café went through an interesting time in 2025. At the start of the year we sought to make more definite our missional partnership with the café and Matt Thompson became our link person in the café, initially linking with Amanda, our vicar, and then with Shirley Wallin. Matt stepped down from this role in the summer and we asked for a new link person. This though coincided with the rise in National Living Wage and the resultant rise in costs that many small business faced. Sadly, after much agonising prayer and work with the accounts, it was decided in early Autumn that the Café would close after 9 years of trading on Christmas Eve 2025. We prayed for the staff as they continued to serve the community of Crosby up till that date and are glad to see some of them continue into new jobs as the café closed and re-opened as a new Christian café in the village. Others have found work in other areas of employments and we wish them all well as they continue to make Jesus known in new ways. Storyhouse Church continues to thrive under Dave Lowrie's leadership and is now based at the URC church in Crosby. This is outside of the parish on St Luke's and so they benefit from being covered by a Bishop's Mission Order within the Diocese. We retain our links with the church through Dave within the framework of the L23 Missional Partnership. **Rev Amanda Bruce**

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CROSBY

The Service for Christian Unity Week, held at All Saints with St Frideswyde in January, was well-attended, as usual. The Holy Week event at Irenaueus was appreciated by those who attended. The Good Friday Walk of Witness (lead by Moor Lane Methodist) was well-attended. As usual, St Helen's kindly provided hot-cross buns, tea and coffee, free of charge. The Ecumenical Morning Prayers are still very popular, with an average of 25 turning up each week, when we enjoy a great sense of unity. We are still short of volunteers to deliver Welcome-in



packs, but I and the recipients appreciate the kindness of our volunteers. The staff at Crossroads are still coming up with new ideas to increase their cash flow and encourage more patrons. Mrs Kathleen Zimak (All Saints with St Frideswyde) organised a World Day of Prayer Service. After many years of setting up the Christmas Crib in Crosby Village, Mr Alan Whitaker (SS Peter & Pauls) asked for someone to take over. Mrs Joyce Lightfoot (Secretary of Blundellsands & Crosby URC) kindly offered to help. The Crib figures, which were stored in Mr Whitaker's cellar, are now stored in Mrs Lightfoot's garage, and a member of her church, together with her son-in-law, installed and removed the figures. The Crib (which is getting very old and needs replacing) is still stored at St Helen's Church. The group of men who move the Crib back and forth between the village and St Helen's in their wagon are not connected to any church, but a relative of theirs once attended St Peter & Paul's. **Terri Whitaker**

DEANERY SYNOD

Sefton North Deanery's fourteen churches have been concerned with investigating the "Fit for Mission" process this year. All the PCCs voted on the issue and three PCCs decided to initiate the complex stages of joining a larger parish. They were St. Luke, Crosby; St. Michael, Blundellsands; and St. Nicholas, Blundellsands. We were fortunate that Revd. Canon Amanda Bruce was elected the Designated Lead and we pray that she will lead the negotiations to a successful conclusion. Your reps on Deanery Synod are Keith Cawdron; Rosemary Turner; Lucy Wilton; Caroline Ramsey and Zorina Jones. The Deanery welcomed Revd. Kate Greaves as the L23 curate and she has been a familiar face at our church services recently. Members of Deanery Synod have heard a variety of informative and engaging presentations this year, such as from the Southport based housing charity, "Light for Life" which supports homeless people in Sefton and works with social services, the police and NHS. The Diocesan deputy Safeguarding Officer updated members about the procedures that all churches must follow to ensure compliance with diocesan safeguarding regulations and to prepare for an audit. The Deanery has compiled a booklet of "Lent Reflections " which has been

circulated to all the Deanery churches in time for Lent 2026 and the Mission and Growth Fund has supported several missional initiatives in our parish churches. We anticipate change in the Deanery positively and look forward to increasing our outreach and mission.

Zorina Jones

World Mission Focus

While praying for the needs within our parish, it is vital to look beyond these to what is happening elsewhere in the UK and abroad. We are grateful to those leading our intercessions and to Gillian who produces our newsletters that we are encouraged to do so. Last year the return of James and Mary Bunn from Sierra Leone and the visit of Liz Molyneux highlighted the plight of many whose fragile lives are threatened by factors including disease, poverty, flooding, drought and war. We thank Lyn Newsham for having been our link partner with Liz. Since Lyn has stepped down from this role, there is a vacancy. We also thank Shirley Wallin for having been our link partner for Storyhouse Café. Our group meets three times a year, usually in January, May and September, keeping in touch with each other and sharing updates from our mission partners with all our church. Whether our focus is on Bootle (In Another Place); Arequipa, Peru (Alejandro); Guatemala (Toybox); Kenya (Arocha); New York (Hannah Spiers); Sierra Leone (Palliative Care); Malawi (Queen Elizabeth Hospital); Samaritans Purse, Christian Aid or The Children's Society, we seek to support all our partners by praying and giving our time and money. Heartfelt thanks for joining us in this. In this supposedly cashless society, it never ceases to amaze us how much money is collected in our special appeals. Donations by BACS transfers made directly to our partners are also much appreciated and of most financial benefit. Please visit our webpages on <https://stlukecrosby.org.uk/world-mission/> **Maureen Cawdron**

TOYBOX

The Toybox Charity works on the streets of Latin America with children and families who are homeless or working on the streets. Toybox works in Guatemala, Bolivia, Peru, El Salvador, Nicaragua, India and Kenya. They have many projects to help the children and their families who live on the streets. Here at St Luke's we are helping to support the Toybox campaign to get children registered with birth certificates. This costs upwards of £32 which is beyond the reach of many of these children and their families. This past Christmas, Toybox once again launched an appeal for birth registration. At the time of writing the appeal has raised £210,570. In 2025, Toybox helped 2528 children obtain their birth certificates. Toybox helped 3,002 children and young people to access formal and informal education. Toybox also helped 2,034 families with emergency food, clothing and medical care in response to natural disasters in India, Nepal and Kenya. In Guatemala and Bolivia families were given support due to economic hardships beyond the norm. Thank you for contributing to the work of The Toybox Charity over the last year. Please keep all those involved in your prayers. For further updates on their work please check out their website www.toybox.org **Janette Burridge.**



SAMARITANS PURSE

Many thanks to all our knitters and to all who filled shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. In 2025, the global Samaritan's Purse family packed over 12,205,900 shoebox gifts! This includes an incredible 232,844 shoebox gifts from the UK alone!", various fillers and many bags of knitting were taken to Emmanuel Church, Fleetwoods Lane, our nearest collection point. All these items will bring much joy to their recipients, so thanks again. The mission of Operation Christmas Child is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world. Through this project, Samaritan's Purse partners with the local church worldwide to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and make disciples of the nations. As well as distributing shoeboxes to children across the world, Samaritan's Purse is also

involved in international disaster response - since 2009, they have responded to over 112 disasters around the world. Their mission is to bring hope and light in the darkest situations as fast as they can when disaster strikes. They work through the local church and ministry partners on the ground, utilising all their experience in food distribution, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, and medical services in Jesus Name. Thank you for all your help. **Vera de Villiers & Jan Matthews.**

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Throughout 2025, St. Luke's congregation continued to support the work of The Children's Society through the home box scheme, raising £470—almost double the amount collected in 2024. Home boxes are available at the back of church



if you would like to support this charity, and they can be returned at any time of year, not just at Christmas. Once again, the Christingle service was planned and delivered by the Big Picnic Worship team, with dedicated support from the whole World Mission team. The service was based on the Bible Society story “The New Noisy Neighbour” and was very well received, with positive feedback from many of the 200+ people who attended. We also introduced a new Christingle song, which we sang as a round. As always, it was a joy to hear the buzz in church and to see so many families and friends gathered together. Our Christingle factory efficiently transformed 200 oranges into Christingles, ensuring that almost everyone—not just the children—could receive one. Many thanks to everyone who helped in the factory, and to Barrington's for once again supplying the oranges. The money raised from the home boxes, along with the £340 collected at the Christingle service, will go directly to The Children's Society to support their vital work tackling child poverty and neglect, and helping all children have a better chance in life.

Hilary and I would like to thank you all for your continued support. More information can be found at: www.childrenssociety.org.uk

Jo Marshall & Hilary Roberts

ALEJANDRO MESCO

In the latest Newsletter from Alejandro, he reports that in recent weeks there has been torrential rains, causing flooding in Arequipa, filling homes with water and sand, 600 homes have been affected and Arequipa is in a state of emergency. Alejandro is well but he is Doris's carer and there are times when she becomes very ill. Alejandros sons, Carlos and Rolando are both teachers and his daughter Helen will begin her final year of studies and hopefully will finish in December this year. The Medical Ministry Institute. held a Medical campaign in the Colca Canyon this March. Please pray for Doris Mesco's health and for continuing good health for Alejandro as he cares for her.

Joyce Fell Link Mission partner.

MALAWI

The Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital is the main government teaching hospital and centre for some specialised care, such as for children with cancer. The whole children's department seems to get busier every year and though A&E was recently expanded the resuscitation room is almost always overcrowded. Today 3 from a family of 7 were admitted, having eaten some sort of toxin (?herbicide, ?? paraquat) from which the others 4 had died at home; another died on arrival here. These toxic herbicides are banned in the UK. But there is always a brighter side – a second newly trained children's oncologist has joined the team, and a medical officer started today. Chemotherapy is still a problem but with charitable funds we more or less keep up with the need. Families are finding life expensive; fuel prices rose by 42% and as a land locked country that affects the cost of everything. The diocese has opened a secondary school for girls in the last year and is a great opportunity for girls to get a good education grounded in Christian principles. The ladies of the church continue to support rural priests who are struggling, with food parcels and gifts especially at Christmas. St. Luke's sewing ladies have made beautiful children's dresses and shorts. Most are now in Malawi and I plan to give them out tomorrow to children in the ward. Photos will follow! Thank you St Luke's for prayers and generous giving. Many families are grateful to you all. **Liz Molyneux**



AROCHA

Is a Christian conservation organization that is part of a larger International Network of A Rocha organizations in 20 countries around the world. Our mission is to make God's love for His world known by demonstrating how to practically care for it through scientific research, advocacy, environmental education, and sustainable community-based conservation programmes. By working with local communities, we aim to achieve the long-term conservation of threatened habitats and species. We are restoring habitats, and educating the community. Practical examples of the work in Kenya include: Eco-scholarships for secondary school students helping to protect one of Africa's prime forests. Coral reef research at Watamu Marine National Park. Conservation agriculture, environmental education and bird ringing. Community conservation tree planting. Purchasing land to create a Nature Reserve and safeguard indigenous forest and its threatened wildlife. Donations from homemade preserves & honey available in church & in the church office enables us to contribute financially to A Rocha Kenya - please keep buying! Many thanks. **Jan Matthews.**

SIERRA LEONE

Connaught Palliative Care Unit,
Freetown, Sierra Leone.

'Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer' Romans 12 v 12



After 8 years working in Sierra Leone to set up and develop the palliative care service, we returned at the end of May 2025. The unit has cared for over 1,300 patients, and their families, and trained teams for 8 of the 16 districts across Sierra Leone as well as training palliative care champions in Connaught and 3 other Freetown Hospitals. We have made affordable oral morphine solution available to treat pain in our patients; contributed to Ministry of Health strategy and policy documents on cancer; adapted a palliative care training manual for Sierra Leone; and developed a palliative care curriculum for students. I am hopeful that the wonderful team we've left behind – now a Sierra Leonean Consultant

doctor lead, 4 nurses and a pharmacist – will continue to flourish and to train others to provide holistic, compassionate palliative care in their country. The training and modelling they received from visiting Hospice Africa in Uganda was empowering and inspiring, and has given them an ethos and vision of access to palliative care for all in Africa. So as we are joyful and grateful to God for this progress, please continue to be faithful in prayer for the team, particularly as they have had several colleagues and family members as patients and bereavements over the past few months. Pray for their comfort, resilience, patience and vision, to continue the work. **Mary Bunn**

Christian Aid Report

St. Luke's Church has been a mission partner for Christian Aid. We started with the house collection format and then replaced that with an open collection event in Crosby village. We also have discussion evenings, soup suppers and a quiz. Last year the event was widened into the village by inviting musicians to play in the pedestrian



area and it became a little “Christian Aid Music Festival”. We had a lot of helpers from other churches in Crosby who acted as collectors in the village. We also celebrated Christian Aid week with a Ceilidh in the church hall which helped to raise further funds. Giving in church brought in a considerable amount but congregational giving was largely done through the CA website. All in all we raised well over £1300. I hope that the collection makes people think about those in need far away to whom even small amounts can make a big difference. Christian Aid is an organization which is very aware of the reasons for deprivation and poverty in so many countries world-wide and they try to be more than just a source of finance: They campaign against corruption, invest in education and skills and support people affected by war and the often-devastating effects of the climate crisis. They are always there when disaster strikes in whatever way. I feel that the gift of music is something I can share with people and so I try to use my

musical skills and contacts to make the event in the village more of a festival of music, of hope and joy than just a fundraiser. The village collection with live music will take place on 1. and 2. May. For this to happen I rely on the support from the wider church. So please think about what you would like to help with.

Kirsten Sothmann

In Another Place

2025 was a very busy year for In Another Place. We finished moving into The Castle, a series of disused shopping units in Bootle Strand Shopping Centre, transforming it into a unified space perfect for our regular workshops and activities. We brought Wonderland to life in our free family shows on Saturdays throughout the year, receiving a huge amount of positive feedback. Our yearly production of The Easter Experience was well-received, as was the Bootle International Festival which is now proudly an annual event for Bootle. We helped fulfil a long-held dream of one of our volunteers who, with a small team, completed a sponsored climb of Mount Snowdon. We celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Iron Men on Crosby beach, and our own 20th anniversary with one of our most ambitious productions to date; The Qwerkies. This involved a Qwerky (scarecrow) trail spanning 4.5 miles, three 30-minute performances across two locations, and the support of over 40 community groups, schools and individuals, without whom it could not have been such a success. We have continued to increase our social outreach, running activities such as The Qwerkie Workshops with several schools and community groups, art facilitations for Bedford Road Primary and PSS, and assisting Mencap Crosby's Thursday Club. We finished the year with the return of The Secret at Christmas and The Bootle Grotto, which brought the seasonal spirit to The Strand and joy to many families. As we move into 2026, we aim to continue our momentum, bringing accessible entertainment into Bootle, connecting communities together, and helping our volunteers develop their creative and social skills. **Sam Mason**

Community at the Crossing

Hannah Spiers is part of the Chemin Neuf Community in Manhattan. Here is an extract from their website: <https://www.stjohndivine.org/spiritual-life/community-at-the-crossing/about> The Community at the Crossing is an ecumenical program for spiritual formation in the heart of New York City. Our vision is to equip each member to serve Christ in their chosen path by providing the space and formation necessary to establish rhythms of life and to discern God's call. Members spend a year in prayer and discernment, service and mission, biblical and theological formation, and intentional community, choosing as their sisters and brothers people who are radically different from themselves. We believe that being 'interrupted by God' is the best thing that can happen to anyone. We believe as Christians that there is far more that unites us than divides us and that our world is in desperate need of people who can model authentic unity, which is born from reconciliation, truth, and the humility of shared life. This program will inspire peace and justice in the larger society, facilitate a space where Christians from different denominations can reignite the ecumenical dialogues that many believe have grown cold, and be an example of Christ-centered faith rooted in local community. Through this program, the lives of participants will be transformed, thereby transforming the lives of everyone they touch. The Community is based at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in Morningside Heights, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, New York City. **Maureen Cawdron**

