

# CHRIST OUR HOPE

Newsletter of Christ our Hope Liverpool



## Celebrating A Generous Harvest

BY STEVE PIERCE

Harvest is a special time for our churches; a time for joyful gratitude. With well-loved traditions of decorating the church, our harvest gifts and sharing a Harvest Supper we celebrate God's harvest abundance. In harvest worship we give thanks for the richness of God's creation and our gratitude reminds us never to take this gift for granted.

Harvest is also a time of generosity. We share the harvest gifts to support our foodbanks or in giving harvest gifts to those who are not forgotten.

This harvest-tide, just as Jewish tradition does, our bible readings and sermons will explore the OT book of Ruth. This short and beautiful story pulls no punches. All human life is here: bereavement and grief; poverty and anxiety; the struggles of two widows and male concerns of land and family name; hard words and honest faith when God seems not to care.

Ruth is also a rich tapestry of faith, hope and love and transformational generosity. We read about Naomi's generous prayer and planning for a better life for Ruth in the midst of her own deep grief. We read about Ruth's extraordinary generosity of heart, acting freely, decisively, boldly, wanting no life that excludes Naomi. We read about Boaz, whose generous integrity provides for the two widows.

Reading Ruth will encourage us to explore our own, personal journey of generosity. It will help us have better conversations around money matters and resourcing the life, ministry and mission of our churches. Above all, Ruth will invite us to think afresh of God's grace-filled generosity and how, in a small town called Bethlehem, God graciously gifts bread to a hungry people, a king to Israel and a Saviour to the world.

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# Consultation Update Holy Spirit

BY JOHN RICHARDSON

Those involved in PCCs in COHL parishes will remember November 2022. The draft proposals from the Right Buildings Team had been circulated and we were all frantically searching for the fate of our own church. At Holy Spirit our hearts sank; both our church and hall had been earmarked for closure.

We had actually been thinking for a while about our buildings and, let's not be coy, we were struggling to keep them both going. We were keeping up with our regulatory compliance, but anything else that had been identified on the Quinquennial Report as requiring attention was causing us an issue.

Holy Spirit has never been a church with investments or large legacies so any large financial outlay has always been difficult. Add to this the vast increase in utilities since Covid and also the fact that we rose to the Diocese's request to maintain Parish Share throughout Covid with no rental income from our hall, and our meagre savings had taken a battering.

In the aftermath of the report, we immediately started to think of alternatives. Both buildings were closing, so where could we meet? Also if we had no hall, we had no income so how could we rent anywhere to meet? Those who know Holy Spirit know that our worship is based around the Eucharist so a suitable meeting place had to be conducive to our style of worship.

It quickly became apparent that our only option was to accept the Right Buildings

Team's recommendations and to accept full closure.

Now, this is the Church of England, and this was never going to be a simple nor quick process and there have been times when we just wished it was all over. After much consultation and consideration the Church Commissioners Pastoral Measure was passed with no objections and so now Holy Spirit, which has served the people of Dovecot for 92 years will close in a few months.

The path has been very sad. Since Covid, the numbers returning to our church have been regularly in the low teens. Those who remain now need to find a new "home". The sadness has also been tinged with anger and frustration, not least when we found our church building advertised "for sale" on Rightmove - even before the Church Commissioner's decision was known. This was obviously accidental, but didn't help our feelings at all.

But all is not final; the PCC continues, and the church hall will remain open for the immediate future, to allow the many community groups to continue to meet. Beyond that, we'll wait and see.

And so Holy Spirit will close the church doors for the last time on **Sunday 6th October**. We will hold a **10:30am** service of Eucharist and Thanksgiving on that day. ***Please make a note of the date in your diary and EVERYONE is welcome to join us to celebrate all that Holy Spirit has stood for and to thank God for all who have worshipped and spread the gospel in Dovecot throughout the years.***

# Playscheme 2024

BY BECCA COTTRELL

As the schools break up and kids begin thinking of their summer break at Christ Church we start gearing up for our Summer

Playscheme. Partnering with our friends at Triple C, every year we host a 2 week extravaganza with crafts, football, boardgames, bouncy castle, outdoor games, colouring and glitter tattoos galore! Thanks as well to the generous support of Together Liverpool, we provide a healthy breakfast...



...and large snack for all the children, often with plenty of extra food given out too, to help through those long summer weeks.

This year we've had a record 160 + children registered, with anywhere between 65 – 91 attending each day. A fantastic team of volunteers, plus the hard work of Jan Quai, Triple C's Children and Families Worker means that though busy, and slightly hectic it is a joyful chaos!

But it isn't the big numbers, the meticulous planning or big games that I find most rewarding. No, for me the part of playscheme I look forward to most are the quiet, one to one moments. Those special times, whether tying a shoelace, helping with a fiddly craft or chatting with someone feeling a bit left out, where I can give them my attention, listen to them and show we care – that's what it's all about.

Being a 'Christian presence in every community' takes many forms, but for us and for these two weeks, it looks like listening to the children in our community, making them smile and sharing with them the deep peace and joy of Christ.



## Clergy News

BY HELEN EDWARDS

On Sunday 21st July, Church of the Holy Spirit marked the retirement of their Revd Peter Smyth. Father Peter presided at the special eucharist, speaking movingly about his time in Dovecot and the worship was boosted by contributions from the Liverpool Signing Choir. Afterwards, over abundant refreshments, the Church Warden John Richardson offered thanks to Peter and presented him with a gift from the Church.

On the same morning, news was shared that Revd Tom Langdon-Smith has been appointed as Rector to the Gateacre Team. Tom has served across Christ our Hope churches, leading in areas such as the Growth and Communications Teams and more recently dedicating support to the mission and ministry of All Saints Stoneycroft. Tom will move on in October and will be licensed to his new ministry on Sunday 17th November at 4pm.

We are so thankful for the faithful ministry of Tom and Peter and we ask that you continue to hold them in your prayers.



We're also delighted to be welcoming Revd Jacque Ayton to serve as Vicar at Christ Church Norris Green (Team Vicar designate in COHL). Jacque is to move from Coventry and will be licensed to this new ministry on Sunday 19th January at 4pm.



# Alpha Starting

BY BECCA COTTRELL

This Autumn Christ Church Norris Green and St Andrew's Clubmoor are partnering together to host the Alpha Course. This is open to anyone across our Churches, Christ our Hope and the whole deanery.

By hosting a day time session at Christ Church (Tuesdays 12:30 for food at CC Community Café, before moving to the centre for 1pm) and an evening session at St Andrew's, (Sundays 6 – 7:30) we hope that people will be able to get stuck in, either by helping lead a team or encouraging friends, family and neighbours to find out more about the greatest story ever told...

So do spread the word and be praying for us as we embark!



**TUESDAYS: 12:30-2:30pm**  
**CHRIST CHURCH NORRIS GREEN**  
17th September - 26th November  
Becca.Cottrell@COHL.org.uk



**SUNDAYS: 6-7:30pm**  
**ST ANDREWS CLUBMOOR**  
22nd September - 1st December  
Will.Gibbons@COHL.org.uk

Register by email or QR code

**You're  
invited  
to Alpha.**



# Supper & Speaker

**CHRIST OUR HOPE LIVERPOOL**  
**SUNDAY 15 SEP 6PM**  
Good Shepherd, Lower House Ln, L11 2SF

 **SPEAKER**  
Racial Justice Officer for Liverpool Diocese  
Jennie Taylor

**DIVERSITY IN MISSION**

Jennie will share some of her story of being part of a diverse mission focused Christian community and help us to think about welcome and participation within our shared lives of faith. Drawing on stories from her community's values fun, food, fellowship and family, Jennie will help us to consider both the opportunities and challenges of living in a diverse community of faith.



Booking helps us cater, hoping for a BBQ or a wet weather alternative. Tea and Coffee will be provided but feel free to bring your own drinks if you prefer.

**CONTACT US** [helen.edwards@COHL.org.uk](mailto:helen.edwards@COHL.org.uk)

**BOOK VIA LINK** [christourhopeliverpool.churchsuite.com/events/dccl0rse](http://christourhopeliverpool.churchsuite.com/events/dccl0rse)





# Welcoming Support Services

BY HELEN EDWARDS

We're excited to share the news that Angelika Muguluma (right) and Sue Chambers (left) have begun working together (and with us) to set up COHL Support Services. They are supported by Church St Helens Support Services team, learning from them and tailoring the systems to work well for us. They have already set up an office base, which is in St Andrew's Church, Clubmoor having begun on Tuesday 16th July. We are now advertising for a third person in the team - a Finance Officer. We look forward to how this develops and the offer of support begins to extend out across COHL churches. To contact Angelika or Sue, please email [hello@COHL.org.uk](mailto:hello@COHL.org.uk)