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St John's and St Luke's Together

St John's Church



St Luke's Church



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**July  
2020**  
**50 pence**

## Rector's Letter

Dear Friends

As I write we are 3 months into lockdown, and although there has been significant easing in some areas of life, the fact remains that we are still living lives that are restricted and different from what we have been accustomed to. And I don't know about you, but I am finding life increasingly tiring – for example, zoom meetings are not really life-giving, doing risk assessments for limited use of our buildings is not exactly exciting, trying to work from home while



looking after and even teaching children is draining, and thinking about whether we will still have a job at the end of all of this is deeply worrying.



So how are we to learn to live with lockdown? Well, I could point you to the example of Emma, our new young people's worker, who over the

past few weeks has really got stuck in and is working hard at building relationships with our volunteers, parents and young people – she has a 'can do' attitude. But the trouble is that as soon as we start pointing at people and say how well they are doing, that can make those of us who are struggling, to varying degrees, feel guilty, inadequate, even weak.

So perhaps a more helpful suggestion is to encourage us all to remember that God knows the very number of hairs on our heads (Matthew 10:30), that before a word is on our tongues, He knows it completely (Psalm 139:40), that we can take refuge in the shadow of His wings (Psalm 36:7), that He knows we grow weary (Isaiah 40:28-31), and that His power is most at work when we feel at our weakest ((2 Corinthians 12:9). Indeed Paul goes on to say in this passage that it was in hardships, difficulties, persecutions, insults and weaknesses that he most knew God's strength and help.



So perhaps our prayer should be as we struggle with life in lockdown that in His wisdom and grace, God would refine us, shape us and bless us and

use us. One illustration of this came for me just today – I hadn't slept well, was tired and had a headache, and had a meeting with someone that, quite frankly, I could have done without. But I felt it was important for this person, and so met in their garden and came away thinking the timing of the meeting, set months ago, really was God-ordained. In my weakness, God had used me. He can use you too, even or perhaps especially in your weakness.

Blessings

*Simon*

## Reopening the Church

And while we celebrate the many ways we are being church in the community, and worshipping online, we know that there is something special about praying, or just being, in a building in which countless people have worshipped God and prayed to Him. So we are very pleased to be able to open St John's Church for private prayer:

**Wednesdays 10am - 12 noon**

**Thursdays 6pm - 7.30 pm**

**Saturdays 10am - 12 noon**



There will be a limit of 10 people at any one time, and we do need volunteers to staff the building and ensure everyone's safety. Guidance and PPE will be available. If you could help for one hour or two, please contact the church office or Simon.

Meanwhile the prayer tree is still looking beautiful, and we can add our prayers to those that have already been offered, without going into the building. Please pray for our clergy and PCC as they work out how to progress.





## Watch Out, God Calling!



Christian looks for a way of escape outside the City of Destruction.

“Journey” can be an over-used word but is apt to describe every person’s discipleship. Jesus asked us to follow him and John Bunyan clearly described a pilgrim’s faith in terms of journey. The most recent stage in my journey has led me to test and be accepted for priesthood in the Church of England. It is significant because, once ordained, the “priest” designation will last for life alongside some other key titles, like “child of God”, “disciple / follower” and, in due time, “deacon”.

I have been “in Christian work” for thirty-one years this summer so I am used to explicitly serving God in evangelism; for charities, with young people and families, with elderly people and in encouraging fresh expressions of church. God is now calling me to take on a wider responsibility. I have found Stephen Cottrell’s book “On Priesthood” really helpful to describe the wrestling I have done to move in to this new role. He describes the church as the “royal priesthood” of God in which each Christian has a part; a shared undertaking.

This joint royal priesthood is like an orchestra of Christians which needs instrumentalists and conductors to create music of greater depth and beauty than anyone can alone. Its music exists to give glory to the inventor of music and to bless and entice others to participate in the song. I have wrestled with this move because I really love playing the evangelism and service instruments. I have noticed that evangelism can be an unpopular instrument to take up and we always have a need for more.



I believe strongly that the people in the orchestra are every bit as significant as the conductors so I may have been guilty of resisting the move to prove a point to myself! It has taken years but I am finally ready and willing to learn how to be one of the “conductors”. I thank God for those who have helped me through the discernment process and for the period of training necessary to equip me for this new role of serving God and His church from a new seat.

**Karin Shaw**

## A Letter From Chris and Anna Hembury in Hull

Dear friends,

Read the signs. This is not about a pause, a chance to catch our breath, or claw back a bit of time to fix our house, improve our fitness and rediscover our creative hobbies (all of which might be necessary, laudable or fulfilling). This is more rupture than hiatus, a break, a tear.



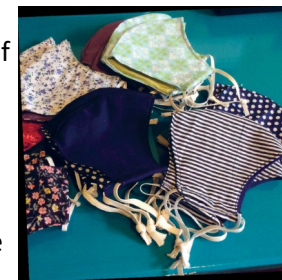
There is a right time to stitch and repair and mend and there is a right time to weave a new cloth. And perhaps there is also a right time to do neither and trust like Mary, just “let it be” and allow God to seed the next thing.

“Keep my Sabbaths holy, that they may be a sign between us. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.” Ezekiel 20:20 (20:20, perhaps it’s for just such a time as this?!)

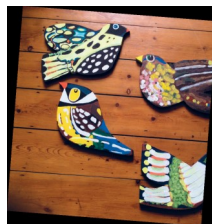
This pandemic is certainly full of heartache and loss and tragedy. But while the lockdown brings its own stresses for many of us, it also feels like a Sabbath opportunity, maybe even a gift. Christians often refer to Sunday as the Sabbath day, a day set aside for worship. But the word Sabbath means rest. The wise Walter Brueggemann says, “Sabbath, in the first instance, is not about worship. It is about work stoppage. It is about withdrawal from the anxiety system of Pharaoh, the refusal to let one’s life be defined by production and consumption and the endless pursuit of private well-being.” We are seeing how well nature responds when we just stop. New shoots push up through the concrete, insects recolonise and crosspollinate, birds and animals and sea-life arrive and thrive and there is a circular cohesion to the re-wilding. We marvel at it as if it is something separate to be gazed at objectively. But we are not created apart from this ecosystem; rather, from it and within it.

Stopping is necessary and good and life-giving for us too. We need to stop long enough to allow our own re-wilding, our own rebalancing and flourishing and living with the rest of creation.

Making face masks for our local foodbank volunteers, an Easter cross for the community garden, (*on the front cover*), painting birds for the revamped school library, the odd food parcel, phone



call or text – we’ve endeavoured to bring hope and encouragement for those who are struggling during these weeks of lockdown; but mostly we have embraced the gift and not resisted the rupture. It is humbling to recognise that Christ is a constant creative force in our neighbourhood, not reliant on our ministry. That perhaps our stopping might allow the flow. That our noblest endeavours can be as much impediment as blessing.



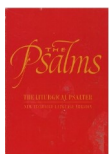
It takes a full stop to see the measure of our sentence: we are no more and no less than a line in the great story. It takes a full stop to begin to comprehend the measure of the Word. Christ’s reach is far beyond the containment of our lockdown. Give thanks with us for the stopping and pray for the hope of resurrection and new life for our community.

## Question Corner

Q) When did Christians start singing hymns and what sort were they?



A) From the very beginning, linked to the people of God in

 the Old Testament, the church’s first hymns were the psalms. In Matthew 26:30 we read that Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn at the Last Supper. Biblical scholars say that this was almost certainly the Hallelujah. “Hallel” is a Hebrew word for “praise” and it’s a selection from Psalms 113-118 sung at the Passover and other Jewish Festivals. (Hallel-uya Praise the Lord). The psalms have given us many hymns, the most obvious one being ‘The Lord’s my Shepherd’ from Psalm 23. Also, passages in the New Testament have inspired hymns, for example Luke 1:46-55 has given us the Magnificat and then the hymn “Tell out my soul the greatness of the Lord”.

However, it seems that even from the beginning there was much variation; Ephesians 5:19 says ‘be filled with the Spirit, speaking with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs’. Throughout church history there have been many different styles reflecting the religious mood of the age. We have monastic style plain chant, metric hymns and poems set to music, through to gospel songs and a big input from Methodism. So now we can have a good mixture and choose the best of both traditional and modern. But, sadly, there will be no ‘Songs of Praise’ at the end of July. **David**

## God of Miracles

*(excerpts from Vikki Wright’s letter from Uganda)*

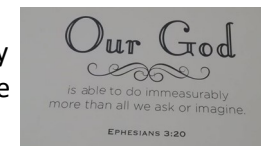
When Aidan was still a baby, I remember worrying about what we were going to do about college. I know, I know... even for the professional worrywarts that’s a bit extreme, but it’s true. We had made a commitment to full-time, faith-based missions where we would raise our own support through partnership with friends and family, and we knew our support wouldn’t be enough to put a kid through college.

I don’t remember the exact date or place, but I do remember clearly God saying, “Don’t worry about your children’s education; I’ve got it all taken care of. Just follow me and I will supply all of your needs.”



I tucked that promise into my heart, and over the next 18 years saw it come to pass time and time again. The first time was when Aidan was only three years old and was able to walk two blocks down the road to a little nursery school that had been started by a British missionary teacher here in Arua. When he was six, he moved up to the primary school started by the same lady, and Noah took his place in the nursery school.

Aidan thrived and graduated high school with honors and a 3.96 GPA. But the big question that hung over our heads was this: how are we going to afford college? Even though we’d seen God’s hand in the kids’ education all those years, keeping his promise just as he said he would, this was a BIG one, especially considering the two colleges Aidan chose were private Christian ones and not exactly cheap! Aidan and I affixed a wall sticker above my study room door that says: “Our God is able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine.” Eph 3:20. As he transferred the words to the wall, we declared their truth in faith over Aidan’s college plans.



The financial aid packages finally came in. Although both colleges had offered generous scholarships and grants, the balance remaining was still more than we could afford. We didn’t want to take out crippling student loans, and the outside scholarships Aidan had applied for didn’t seem to be coming through. We started looking at community colleges and state schools, or the option of him studying in the UK, but none of it felt right,

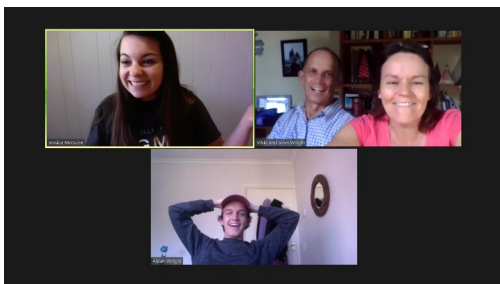
and all of those options still required more money than we had.

More sleepless nights were followed by early morning attempts to keep handing it back to God, to choose faith and not fear. Repeatedly throughout the day I would have to stop and say, "God, we trust you. You are faithful, and you are good. We release Aidan's college into your hands once again."

And then we got the news that Oral Roberts University wanted to have a phone interview with Aidan. Apparently he was in the final selection stage for a full-tuition scholarship, and the decision would be made after the phone interview. We didn't even know there was a selection process going on, or that Aidan was one of the candidates!

You can imagine the flurry of prayer requests that went out before, during and after that phone call. I struggled with fear to hope in case we were crushingly disappointed, and fear not to hope and be counted as faithless. The agony of that battle. I know many of you have been there.

Then in a Zoom call the counsellor said "We have revised Aidan's acceptance package, and are happy to inform you that Aidan has been awarded a full-tuition scholarship!"



I screamed, of course. John also whooped, and Aidan just grabbed his head and fell back in his chair. We rode the euphoria and shock for quite a while. .... All I could think was, "You were right, Father. You did it, just like you said you would."

The relief that has settled over my soul is indescribable. God has provided in so many ways over the years, but this one was unique. He answered the cries of a mama's heart (and the dad's), but also fulfilled the dreams of the child and moved that mountain right into the sea.

Wow. I'm still in awe, and hope to stay that way because our God truly is an awesome God. For those of you holding onto promises that are impossible without God, I hope this testimony encourages you to hang in there, don't give up, keep wrestling with your fears and doubts and keep your eyes on the God who is able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine. He is faithful, and so so good.

We want to thank all of you who have stood with us over the years in prayer, in financial support, in words of encouragement...we know that you are a huge part of the story as you have partnered with God to make it possible for us to stay on the mission field for more than twenty years. God has provided through your generosity and sacrificial offerings to us. We couldn't do this without you, and our hearts are full with the joy you bring us. We hope you are encouraged by this testimony as you share in our joy. May God shine His face upon you and give you great peace.

With much love,

**John, Vikki, Aidan, Noah and Keziah**

## A Green Quiz

1. How much of the planet's water is accessible fresh water?  
1% / 5% / 10%
2. How many trees per day are chopped down for toilet rolls?  
2 000 / 27 000 / 52 000
3. Which is the largest endangered fish?  
Whale shark / Blue fin tuna / Coelocanth
4. What is the most eaten food in the world, the main food for half the world population?
5. Which uses less water, washing a full load of dishes by hand or running a full dishwasher?
6. Approximately how much global electricity is produced from renewable resources?  
1%/5%/10%/20%
7. Is it better to turn a lamp with compact fluorescent light on and off several times a day or to leave it on?
8. Dropping the thermostat by 1°C saves about how much in heating costs?  
1%/5%/10%20%
9. Which of these is a viable alternative material for making paper?  
Sheepskin/hemp/panda excrement/all of these
10. Which is kinder to the environment – paper bags or plastic bags?



**Answers on page 16**



## Thank you and Goodbye!

It is with a great swirl of emotion that I write this final message to you all!

Yesterday really brought home to me just what a special community I have belonged within for the last 4 years. Thank you all so very much for the warmth of the send-off; so many kind messages, thoughtful cards, creative and beautiful gifts, and not forgetting that



staggering cheque. Thank you to all who contributed. I'm going to buy a proper desk chair for my new study, and I'm not sure about the rest yet (though a small greenhouse is one idea...) but I promise that I will let you know!

It was really special to be in the Vicarage garden yesterday with Simon, Andy, Fiona and Joel (and even, briefly, Emma and young Barney!). It was great to be with other people and to sing together. It reminded me

that our faith is an embodied faith - and lack of bodies has been the key challenge of the last months. At the heart of what we believe is the astonishing fact that God revealed himself most fully to the world in Jesus - he embodied God. We therefore continue to meet Jesus in one another as embodied people - the 2D image on a screen, or the voice on a phone is just not the same! So as I lament not being able to give you farewell hugs and say face-to-face goodbyes, I urge you to hold onto the gift we have in Christian community, most fully expressed when we are together.

You are all welcome to visit if you ever venture down to Birmingham; please do keep in touch. We're not actually moving until August, so we may even bump into you around Harrogate before then.

You are amazing and wonderful, a sign of God's love for the world. I thank God for the rich blessings of my time among you. May you be richly blessed as you have been blessing!

**Ruth**



## Pete Fenton shares some thoughts

**Ed** How does being a Christian affect the way you work at Harlow Carr Gardens?

**Pete** It helps keep me focussed on seeing the positive in people. I used to be very cynical and judgmental, but being a Christian forced me to rethink and try to accept people as they are. I would be very impatient with some youngsters on work placement with very bizarre ideas of what constitutes work. Now I try a lighter touch and humour.



**Ed** Does it help them?

**Pete** I think so, but don't have a great deal of contact with the students and apprentices after an initial introduction. They meet me when they arrive, and I explain about plant aims etc. They may come back later with questions about seeds etc. I try not to dominate, not to interrupt even when I can see what they want.

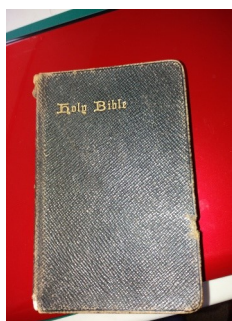
**Ed** Has it got easier?

**Pete** Not really. I still have to make a conscious decision to be patient.

**Ed** You haven't always been a Christian?

**Pete** No. I spent my first forty years believing strongly in atheism - that there is no God, that it is all hokum, that only the weak go to church. I was a scientist, a humanitarian.

My knees were the crunch point. In seven months I went from being an active cyclist and strong walker to being a cripple, living off tramadol and ibuprofen, living for work, not really living, just existing. After work I just slept.



At some point I felt the urge to read the Bible, and found the pain eased. And my Christian friends noticed the difference. They invited me to their church, and things went on from there.

Three significant things helped to convince me:

One night I couldn't sleep for the pain. Then a warm, happy, contented feeling began and grew and sent me to sleep. I was convinced that God had hugged me.

Walking from Woodfield Road to the bus station I reached Franklin Road and could go no further. But I felt a warmth start in my chest and spread through my body; was afraid at first, but it withdrew the pain so that I was skipping by the time I reached the bus station! The glow lasted for a few days.

I had asked God for a sign.

After my mother died I was struggling to live on just my income, and owed quite a lot on my credit card. I received a rebate from Northern Electric of £384.27; when I looked at the latest credit card bill it was for £384.27! I was convinced and started attending church regularly, and have had no doubts since.

**Ed** Even though you still have pain in your knees?

**Pete** Yes, I began to feel that God wasn't answering my prayers for healing, but then I realised that the message was 'Not yet', and I can cope with that.

**Ed** Tell us how you met your wife Pat.

**Pete** My life had become nothing but work; I was saying at work that I thought I should find a hobby or interest, and Coral suggested that I might volunteer at the Millennium Green. She introduced me to Pat and Angela, and my Saturdays were committed! I was delighted to discover that what I was helping to plant had come from Harlow Carr! But there was no water on site for these tender plants. Pat and I volunteered to look after the plants, and got on very well together - and the rest is history!



**Ed** What made you become warden?

**Pete** I felt God was urging me to offer to be warden at St Luke's, but I couldn't do it on my own, so asked Pat to join me. I think now that it was God nudging me to get Pat to be warden! I can't do much to help.

**Ed** Any thoughts you would like to share?

**Pete** As a fairly new Christian, I ask you long-standing Christians not to forget what it was like when you first became a Christian, and to be patient. We must all be welcoming and accepting, not frightening or overwhelming.

### More Reminiscence

Like John Fletcher, I remember Nora playing in the Sunday School for Miss King, who was another lovely lady. Miss King used to invite us to her house (6 Bilton Lane) for sewing lessons, and to make items for sale on the CMS stall at the Sale of Work.



Outside St John's. Notice the railings!

Another recollection is of Nora playing for the Sunday School anniversary, which was for girls only! We processed into church wearing white dresses and mob caps and sat in front of the choir.

*(And I remember Betty George organising a revival of this event for the 125th anniversary. My daughter was one of the little girls pressed to*

*wear the obligatory white dresses and mob caps! Ed)*

Sonia mentioned Nora playing for Katrina Hughes dancing school. I was privileged to help dress the dancers; some of the dresses were beautiful, especially the ones for 'My Fair Lady'.

Nora and Donald will now be reunited. God bless them both, and may they rest in peace!

*Christine Raper*

### Bilton and Woodfield Library Reopening

The library Trustees, working with NYCC, are hoping that the library will reopen soon; in the first instance for 'click and collect' or 'call and collect' and for returning books. Details will be on the library facebook and twitter, in the local paper and in church notices.

### No Summer Fair, but the 'jam stall' is still very well stocked!



Ring 569907 or email [SJSLFocus@gmail.com](mailto:SJSLFocus@gmail.com) for details or to place your order for home-made jam, marmalade, chutney. We will deliver.





# St. Margaret's Homecare

*Caring for you!*

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## OUR AIM IS SIMPLE

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*Tailored to your needs from 15 mins to as long as you wish*

## WHY?

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Contact Karen or Wendy  
on: **01423 876397**  
or email: [karen@stmargarets.biz](mailto:karen@stmargarets.biz)

## Hear to Help

**Anxiety around Coronavirus?  
Do you need a moment to talk?**

**Our specialist support workers  
are ready to listen.**

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8am-8pm. Seven days a week.

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A service provided by Just 'B', part of Saint Michael's Hospice and Herriot Hospice Homecare. Calls are charged at local rates and may vary dependent on time of day and or even be included within your call package. Please visit Ofcom for further details <https://bit.ly/localcallcharges>

## Answers to Green Quiz

1. 1% (3% is fresh, but below ground or locked away in ice and glaciers)
2. 27 000
3. Whale shark
4. Rice
5. Dishwasher. Handwashing can use up to 50% more water than a modern dishwasher.
6. 10%
7. It is always better to turn it off when not needed. No extra energy is needed to start a CFL bulb.
8. 5%
9. All of them
10. Not as straightforward as it seems. Paper manufacture is more resource-intensive, and disposal is more expensive. Paper tends to tear, so bags are not as easily reusable as plastic ones. We know that plastic is dangerous for animals and fish.



# PEOPLE



## FUNERALS/ MEMORIALS

We extend our sympathy to the families of those who have recently died:

Margaret Manning

Anne Shepherd

## Congratulations

to Les Anderson on reaching the ripe old age of 90!

## Welcome

to Laura Martin as she is licensed to our parish and joins our leadership team



While the churches are closed, maintenance has been continuing. Thanks to our wardens Pat and Nigel for organising fire safety checks, work on the floor, painting, electricity upgrading, and of course to Rob, Nigel, Sam, Katy, Jake and Terry and others for extensive work on the churchyard, which is looking beautiful.



## SUNDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JULY

is Copy Date for the August 2020 edition of Focus.

Items for inclusion to: [SJSLfocus@gmail.com](mailto:SJSLfocus@gmail.com) or leave them in the drawer at the back of St John's Church

## St John's & St Luke's CHURCH OFFICE OPENING HOURS

There are no set hours at the moment.

Emails will be read regularly: [church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk](mailto:church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk)

Messages to 565129 will be checked.

Urgent calls should be made to one of the clergy - see details on page 19.

The office will be closed from 17<sup>th</sup> July to reopen on 27<sup>th</sup> July. Messages will be picked up, but not always immediately. See details above for urgent calls.

# JULY'S CALENDAR

Sunday Services are on Facebook -

<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsandstlukes>

and then will be available on Youtube

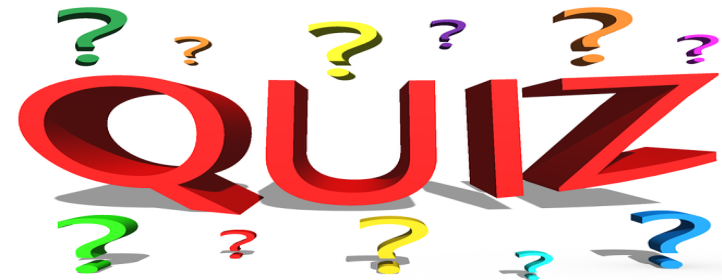
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8L4u20U49m-1zutZMRJdIQ/>

Join us for a chat after the services on Sundays at 11.15am

Morning Prayer is on Zoom - email Simon for an invitation

The quiz is also on Zoom. Simon will send out a link nearer the time

Every week		
Monday to Thursday,	9.00am	Morning Prayer
Wednesdays and Saturdays	10am-12noon	St John's Church Open
Thursdays	6pm-7.30pm	St John's Church Open
Sundays	9.30am 10.30am	Children's Service Morning Worship
Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	TBA 7.30pm	Laura's Licensing Pub Quiz without the pub



## Pub Quiz Without the Pub

Saturday 4th July 7.30 pm

Pit yourself against other church families or individuals to answer the challenging questions.

£5 per family to church's hardship fund, helping local families.

Probably the last in the present series

Invitation to Zoom will be sent out

# ST JOHN'S AND ST LUKE'S TOGETHER WHO'S WHO

**Parish Office Phone No: 01423 565129**

**Parish Office email: [church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk](mailto:church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk)**

**For parish information including services and events**

**visit Parish Website: [www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk](http://www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk)**

**Twitter: [//twitter.com/stjohnsstlukes](https://twitter.com/stjohnsstlukes)**

**[www.facebook.com/groups/stjohnsandstlukes.harrogate/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/stjohnsandstlukes.harrogate/)**

**[www.facebook.com/stjohnsandstlukes](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsandstlukes) - for livestreaming**

## The Ministry Team

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**Mrs Emma James - Young People's Worker**

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## Churchwardens

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