

March 2025

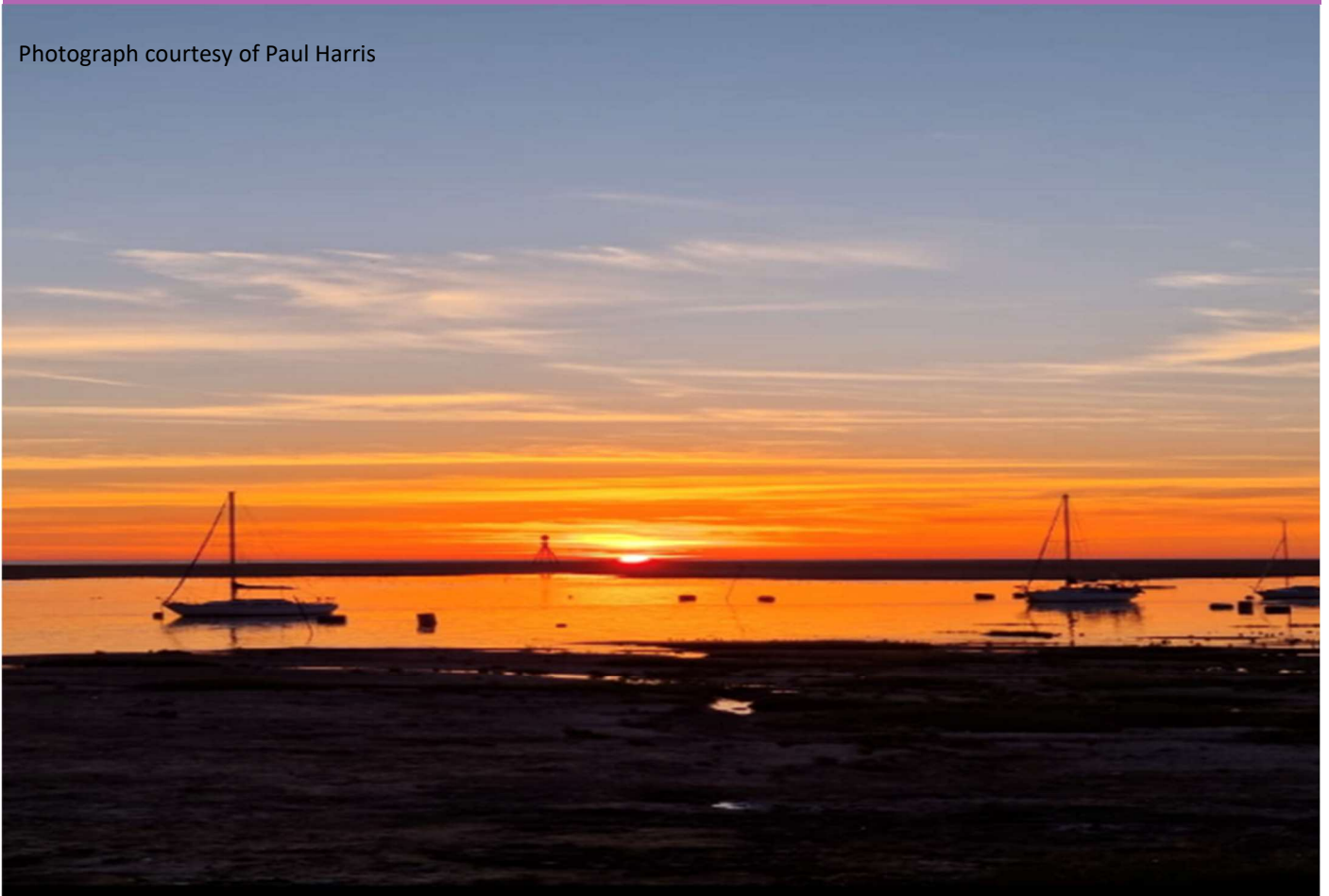
# FOCUS

Issue 292



## Parish Magazine of St Stephen's, Hightown

Photograph courtesy of Paul Harris



# The Season of Lent

*Magazine part-sponsored by John Gibson - notary services*



## Editor's Note

I attended a convent school from the age of five years old to eighteen and Lent was a major landmark in the year. During this period of time we would raise money for the Christian missionaries, of whom, I had a cloudy idea wore long woollen robes, and worked in Africa, helping children and getting very hot.

At the start of Lent the teacher would put a chart of ladders on the classroom wall, one ladder per pupil, and give every pupil a paper baby, (dutifully crayoned in to the highest standard.) Every day, during Lent, we would take a penny, (1D), or two into school. In return, we could move our paper baby, one rung per penny, up the ladder labelled with our name. When the baby got to the top, you then received another paper baby and the exercise was repeated.

It was very competitive! I would beg, steal or borrow, (well maybe not steal!) to get pennies to take in. I would raid my carefully guarded money box to ensure that I had the most babies at the top of my ladder. I was certain, as were we all, that whoever won the competition would receive a real live baby, from a missionary, to take home and keep.

What a cruel disappointment lay ahead! We reached the end of term and all we got was more paper, this time in the form of a paper basket containing tissue paper and chocolate eggs. Not even a Tiny Tears baby doll!

Wishing you all a fruitful Lent,  
Colette

Entries for future issues of Focus to be sent to  
**[Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk](mailto:Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk)**  
*Please submit before last day of month*

Dear Friends,

March this year sees the start of Lent with Ash Wednesday being the 5th, and so our Lenten journey begins, a time of prayer, reflection, study and for some fasting. What does Lent mean to you?



When I was younger, a question often asked was, 'What are you giving up for Lent'? I have given up many things over the years, chocolate, biscuits, cake, crisps, supper! My late wife gave up playing 'Spider Solitaire' on the computer one year and she found that the hardest thing ever to give up! I recall she made up for it though, with several hours of playing on Easter Day evening, whilst I was left to bath and settle the children to sleep!

Lent is a period of forty days, well, forty six, including the Sundays, although traditionally Sundays don't 'count'. Forty days is a significant period of time in both the Old and New Testament. In Genesis, the flood that destroyed the earth was brought on by forty days and nights of rain. In Hebrews, the Israelites spent forty years in the wilderness before reaching the promised land. In Exodus, Moses fasted for forty days before receiving the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. The Synoptic Gospels tell us Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness fasting in preparation for his ministry. Jesus remained on earth forty days after the resurrection.

Giving something up for Lent can be a way of symbolically uniting yourself to the mystery of Jesus' own temptation in the desert. It is also a time to ponder your own priorities in your life, and to realign your will with God's, set things right.

However, taking something up for Lent can be good too! Set aside some time each day to spend in prayer, or even just in silence. The Church of England this year has produced a book of forty daily reflections, 'Living Hope: A Lent Journey'.

You could declutter your home. Donate forty things you haven't used or you don't need, to a charity shop. You could put a 'pound in a pot' each day as a thanksgiving gift and then donate it to charity. Do something nice for someone each day. There are many things you could do.

Whatever we do, let's prepare our minds and our hearts for Easter and make secure, fix firmly, the place of Jesus in our lives, and be further shaped in His image, as we walk together the Lenten journey.

God Bless, Keith

# St Stephen's Church Services for March

<b>Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> -Sunday next before Lent</b>	10:30	All-Age Eucharist
	18:00	Evensong
<b>Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> -Ash Wednesday</b>	10:30	Eucharist with imposition of ashes
	19:30	Eucharist at St Luke's, Formby
<b>Friday 7<sup>th</sup></b>	09:30	Morning Prayer
<b>Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> -1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>	10:30	Eucharist
	16:00	Toddler Church
	18:00	Evensong
<b>Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup></b>	10:30	Eucharist
	19:00	Sanctuary @ Seven
<b>Friday 14<sup>th</sup></b>	09:30	Morning Prayer
<b>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> -2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>	10:30	Eucharist
	18:00	Evensong
<b>Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup></b>	10:30	Eucharist
<b>Friday 21<sup>st</sup></b>	09:30	Morning Prayer
<b>Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>	10:30	Eucharist
	18:00	BCP Holy Communion
<b>Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup></b>	10:30	Eucharist
<b>Friday 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>09.30</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent</b>	10:30	Eucharist
<b>Mothering Sunday</b>	18:00	Evensong with Crosby Community Choir

## RENEWAL OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL OF ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH, 2025

Periodically, the Electoral Roll of members and supporters of our parish church has to be completely renewed to ensure that it contains accurate details of those on the Roll. This has to be done to be presented to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting which will be held this year on a Sunday in April or May. The exact date is yet to be announced.

Therefore, all who are registered on the existing Electoral Roll will receive a letter inviting them to renew their membership by completing the attached form and returning it to the Electoral Roll Officer. Anyone who is not already on the Roll and wishes to be included should contact me – details below. Membership shows your support for St Stephen's and its Christian mission in Hightown and confers the right to have a say in how our church is administered.

Beth Cresswell, Electoral Roll Officer

0151 929 2259- [bethcresswell@googlemail.com](mailto:bethcresswell@googlemail.com)

## Prayer prompts March (5 weeks)



**Wk 1.** 'Oh Lord, our God, you answered your people; you showed them that you are a God who forgives, even though you punished them for their sins. Praise the Lord our God, and worship at his sacred hill! The Lord our God is holy' Psalm 99: 8

**Wk 2** 'Blow the trumpet; sound the alarm on Zion, God's sacred hill. Tremble people of Judah! The day of the Lord is coming soon.' Joel 2: 1-2

**Wk 3** 'Jesus returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit, and was led by the Spirit into the desert, where he was tempted by the Devil for forty days. In all that time he ate nothing so that he was hungry when it was over.' Luke 4: 1-2

**Wk 4** 'Keep on imitating me, my brothers. Pay attention to those who follow the right example that we have set for you.' Philippians 3:17

**Wk 5** 'O God, you are my God, and I long for you. My whole being desires you; like a dry, worn out and waterless land, my soul is thirsty for you.' Psalm 63:1

**Let us pray for the people of:**

Blundell Road, Blundell Avenue, Oakfield Rd and Whitefield Close



## Toddler Church

After some simple prayers, a Bible story and some action songs, these three members of our Sunday Toddler Church had lots of fun decorating their cardboard hearts. The adults enjoyed helping them just as much!

Tea, juice and biscuits, (including yummy Twix bars), were enjoyed by all.



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## **Fun Quiz Night**

**St Stephen's Hall**

**Saturday 29th March 7.30pm**

**Tickets £10 from Di Aldis 929 3612**

**(Please bring your own food and drink)**



## **Coffee Morning**



**Saturday 1st March 10.00am–12 noon**

**St Stephen's Church Hall**

**Come and enjoy a bacon/sausage barm and a cup  
of tea or coffee**



# Eco Church



## For the love of God's good creation

A Rocha is a Christian charity working to protect and restore the natural world and committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment—for God, nature and all people.

Some while back, St Stephen's Church joined the A Rocha Eco Church Community to gain inspiration and ideas to help us, and our church, progress in our aims to care for God's world in all areas. One of our more noticeable projects was the creation of the garden at the side of the church hall, including the wildlife garden, which is open for all to use.

One of A Rocha's projects is to help a range of declining and threatened habitats. So, for example, they provide information and practical activities to help protect coastal areas, including sandhills, beaches and mudflats, such as are on our doorstep, here in Hightown.

How can we help? We can look after our marine environment in different ways. Taking part in beach or river cleans, dive cleans, being careful not to stand on animals or vegetation, not purchasing marine ornaments, only consuming sustainable seafood, reducing single-use plastics, and a richer understanding of the ocean, all help secure a better environment. Climate change is having a big impact on the coast and our seas. Therefore, climate action will also help towards a cleaner and healthier marine environment. This can be in the form of personal lifestyle changes to reduce our carbon footprint, or activism and advocacy to encourage governments and companies to make green and ethical decisions. The ocean is at the heart of the climate system; UNESCO has a core theme 'One Planet, One Ocean'. Learn more by visiting

the A Rocha website. [<https://arocha.org.uk/>]



Please remember in your prayers the family and friends of Graham Goodchild who has recently died. He wrote many excellent articles for the Focus magazine.

Eternal rest grant unto him ,O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen



## Brass Rota

### March

Kevin Bradshaw



## Sunday Coffee Rota March

2nd Jane Copeland

9th Shirley Burns

16th Hilary Munro

23rd Christine Grocott

30th Di Aldis

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St Stephen's Church Hall

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1:00-3:0pm

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Revd Keith Thornborough  
at

St Stephen's

on 0151 929 3097



## Who's Who at St Stephen's

<b>Vicar</b>	Revd Keith Thornborough
<b>Warden</b>	Judith Welch <a href="mailto:Judith.Churchwarden@StStephensHightown.org.uk">Judith.Churchwarden@StStephensHightown.org.uk</a>
<b>PCC Secretary</b>	Beryl Howard
<b>PCC Treasurer</b>	Keith Aldis
<b>Gift Aid Secretary</b>	Brian Taylor
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Cath Marshall <a href="mailto:cathmarshall47@yahoo.co.uk">cathmarshall47@yahoo.co.uk</a>
<b>Electoral Roll</b>	Beth Cresswell
<b>Sacristan Team</b>	Hazel Roberts
<b>Health and Safety</b>	<i>TBA</i>
<b>Flower Rota</b>	Sue Taylor
<b>CMS Secretary</b>	Berenice Gibson
<b>St Stephen's Youth Club</b>	Jane Croxton
<b>Church Hall Bookings</b>	Sally Fraser
<b>Focus Editor</b>	Colette Hudson: <a href="mailto:Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk">Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk</a>
<b>Focus Adverts</b>	Colette Hudson <a href="mailto:Adverts@StStephensHightown.org.uk">Adverts@StStephensHightown.org.uk</a>
<b>Focus Distribution</b>	Mr and Mrs K Bradshaw
<b>St Stephen's Church Website</b>	<a href="http://StStephensHightown.org.uk">StStephensHightown.org.uk</a>

# God in the Sciences

By Dr Ruth M Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

## Science and a sense of the Transcendent

***What is the difference between a cathedral and a physics lab? Are they not both saying: 'Hello'? - Annie Dillard***

Scientists often speak of a reality beyond the objects they are studying, and for some this is encountered in powerful – if rare – episodes of wonder and awe. The Christian writer J.W. Sire quotes this line from Annie Dillard in his book 'Echoes of a Voice', which explores spiritual or 'transcendent' experiences.

In his analysis of these experiences, Sire describes moments that are “emotional, intellectual, highly charged, usually sudden, unannounced, often odd, some weird, others glorious”, and places them on three different levels:

A material object that points beyond the material reality. For example, someone might develop a sense of what is good and evil, based on the actions of others.

Experience of “something personal...just behind the surface of what we are directly experiencing, often something with which one feels at peace or even at one, or, perhaps, as dangerous or threatening.”

A felt presence that has a specific character or presence, e.g., holiness, or inspiring humility, fearful awe or wonder.

According to Sire, level 1-2 experiences are fairly common but level 3 is rare. He gives a wide range of examples, including scientists. Some of these people are religious or interested in spirituality, others are atheists. Some of their moments of transcendence carried a particular meaning, others simply sparked curiosity.

The famous geneticist Francis Collins described several significant moments when he was young: “being transported by the experience of looking through a telescope”, or “a Christmas Eve where the descant on a particularly beautiful Christmas carol...left me with a sense of unexpected awe and a longing for something I could not name”.

These experiences meant that when Collins was faced with the question of belief in God, “all [his] arguments seemed very thin”. Now, as a fully-fledged scientist and a believer in God, he is able to say that “for a scientist who occasionally is given the remarkable privilege of discovering something not previously known by man, there is a special kind of joy associated with such flashes of insight.”

Most of us are not scientists, but we may well have had experiences like this in different contexts. How can we, in our engagement with scientifically minded individuals, make connections through our shared experience of the transcendent? Can we listen as well as explain, finding some common points of connection?

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**www.autumnyearslaw.co.uk Tel: 01704 870404 info@autumnyearslaw.co.uk**

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- Longer appointments
- Face-to-face consultations
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[www.formbygp.com](http://www.formbygp.com)

## Easy Fundraising

St Stephens has have been using #easyfundraising to raise FREE donations for the Church when we shop online. We have just been paid! These donations will make a BIG difference and you can help during this difficult time too - it only takes 2 minutes to sign up and 4,500+ shops ( including Amazon and Ebay) will donate for free, every time you shop online with them!

Why not visit:

[easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ststephenschhightown/  
payments/60537b0af62fd200266cbd30/](https://easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ststephenschhightown/payments/60537b0af62fd200266cbd30/)

to find out more ?

**As that famous advertising slogan tells us: 'every little helps'.**



# Time to choose *Live-in* Care

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Live-in Care is a way to remain independent at home while receiving practical care, support and companionship.

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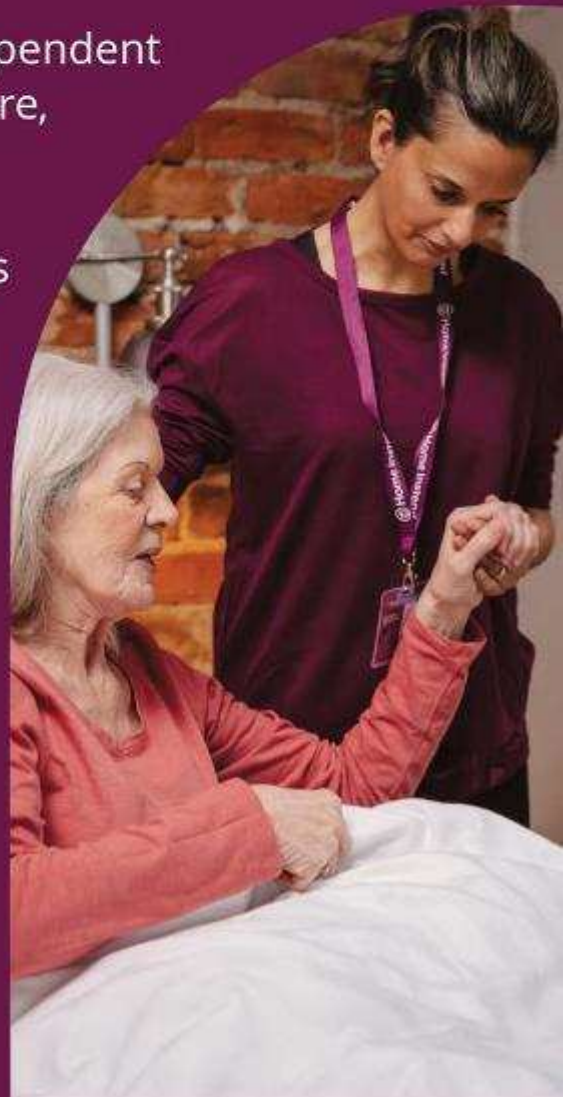
**0151 526 1225**

Or visit us at

[www.homeinstead.co.uk/  
liverpoolandsefton](http://www.homeinstead.co.uk/liverpoolandsefton)

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Liverpool, L23 5SG

Each Home Instead office is  
independently owned and operated.



## Village Organisations and Activities

Tuesday Group, St Stephen's Hall Tuesday morning 10.30am	Beryl Howard Jan Branigan
Hightown Friendship Group 1st Wednesday at 8pm St Stephen's Hall	Marjorie Walker
Gardening Club 2nd Monday 8pm St Stephen's Hall	Hilary Munro
Bowling Club, Sandy Lane	Diana Killen
Hightown Club	Chris Scrine
Blundellsands Sailing Club	Rohan Pickard— <a href="mailto:RohanPickard@gmail.com">RohanPickard@gmail.com</a> Deryk Johnson— <a href="mailto:DerykJ@gmail.com">DerykJ@gmail.com</a>
Yoga Classes, Hightown Club	Rose Billinge
Flower Show	Debbie Underhill <a href="mailto:underhillsathome@aol.com">underhillsathome@aol.com</a>
Open Mic Poetry Group 3rd Thursday 7.30pm St Stephen's Church hall	Sally Anne— <a href="mailto:tapiabowes@gmail.com">tapiabowes@gmail.com</a> Alex
Craft Group, Every Thursdays 1.30-3.30pm, St Stephen's Hall	Sue Taylor
Hightown Parish Council	Jenny Farrar <a href="mailto:clerk@hightownparishcouncil.uk">clerk@hightownparishcouncil.uk</a> <a href="http://www.hightownparishcouncil.uk">www.hightownparishcouncil.uk</a>
Community Library, Alt Centre, Lower Alt Rd. Mon 12-2, Tues 1-3, Weds 1-4, Fri 10-12	Linda Munro <a href="mailto:lindamunro@hotmail.com">lindamunro@hotmail.com</a>
Zumba Gold, Dance for all aged 55 plus, Mondays 9.45-10.30, St Stephen's Hall	Nicky Garsforth
Creo Dance Company Mon Tues Wed Thurs Sat Children 3 to 18 years	Georgia Cardwell

## From Beth's Kitchen

### PUY LENTILS WITH ROSEMARY

This is a versatile dish which when cooked can be used in an interesting number of delicious ways to stuff vegetables such as peppers, to form the base of a vegetarian shepherd's pie or as an accompaniment to baked jacket potatoes. The quantities given would serve up to six people so I pop individual portions into freezer pots and keep some frozen for later use when one has no idea what to have for supper and no time to start from scratch.



#### Ingredients

3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil	1 medium onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped	3 tbsp rosemary, finely chopped
340g puy lentils, well rinsed	850ml vegetable stock
Salt and pepper	½ tbsp red wine vinegar

#### Method

Heat 1 tbsp of olive oil in a medium-sized saucepan and add onion and garlic. Cook over a low heat until softened, translucent but not coloured.

Add the rosemary and lentils. Cook for a further minute and then add stock. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer gently for about an hour when most of the liquid should have been absorbed.

Before serving, season with salt and pepper to taste and add the remaining oil and the vinegar.

#### Serving suggestions:

*Stuff lengthwise halved and deseeded Romano peppers, top with squares of mozzarella cheese and sliced cherry tomatoes and bake in the oven until bubbling and golden.*

*Use as a base for a shepherd's pie topped with mashed, cooked sweet potato covered with grated cheese and again cooked through in the oven.*



‘Daffodils that come before the swallow dares,  
And takes the wind of March  
with beauty.’

Shakespeare

# A Good Read *by Colette Hudson*

*Continuing our exploration of Hightown, in past times,  
courtesy of Miss Chris Scott's book*

## Pony Traps

'These were the most popular forms of transport in the early days in Hightown. Mr J Savin reminded me of some of the people who were seen passing up and down to the station or going for rides in the neighbourhood. A Mr and Mrs Palmer, Blundell Road, had a yellow pony trap, with two ponies. Mr R Ratcliffe,



of 'Westwood', Mrs Rimmer of Sandy Lane and Miss McGuinness' father and mother also used this form of transport.' For a number of years, the milk was delivered by pony and trap by Mrs Jones of Rose Cottage, who delivered it fresh from Frith's Farm Dairy (later Berry's) out of the milk urns, on the back of the trap.

Miss Berry told Miss Scott that they kept a special cow for infants and invalids.

Some of you will remember Gill Rowe and Barbara Hope, who regularly drove their traps around Hightown, Barbara's pulled by Jake (pictured above) and Gill's by Prince. At Christmas, they would decorate their carriages festively and carry Father Christmas, and his fairy, (for a number of years, my younger self), around Hightown and to the children's party. In the photograph, they can be seen dressed up as Victorian ladies whilst visiting St Mary's Primary School, Little Crosby for a Victorian themed day. Their groom, holding Jake, may also look familiar! Both Barbara and Gill were highly skilled and competent carriage drivers, entering competitions with great success over a number of years.



## A Good Read (cont)

### Astronomy in Hightown

‘From the years 1930 to the time he passed away, Mr George Whittle, a well known member of the Liverpool Astronomical Society was a familiar figure in Hightown. He could often be seen on the sandhills attached to his home, gazing through his telescope at distant objects and watching the phases of the moon which he had many times photographed with his own camera.

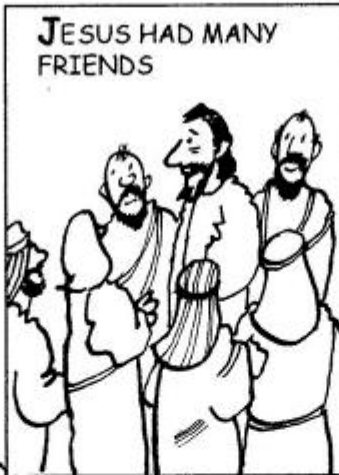
He was, in fact, a scientific instrument maker and during the years when the late Sir Oliver Lodge experimented in wireless telegraphy at the then Liverpool University College, Mr Whittle made the instruments in connection with all the experiments. He was with Oliver Lodge and the then young Marconi, when he (Sir Oliver) got sound through a stone wall for the first time in history and that was a proud, never to be forgotten, moment for Mr Whittle.’

### Lighting 1911

‘Everyone had lamps and candles. Later, petrol gas was made on the site opposite Our Lady of Victories. It smelled and fizzed! Eventually, there was a fire there and it was destroyed. Then the site was used for making bricks for houses from sand. THEN CAME ELECTRICITY - GREAT EXCITEMENT! This power was borrowed from the power house (Railway) at Formby (now a factory.) This was WONDERFUL! As the trains pulled out from the station, the lights went dim—if two trains went out together, the lights went out altogether! I believe it was then 1/6d a unit. It was only used for lighting, of course. If the weather was stormy, (which knowing Hightown, it was frequently), the overhead wires blew down. One was never safe unless a supply of candles or old oil lamps were kept in readiness. The light failed frequently on a Sunday evening during church services. Candles kept in the vestry for the Sunday School children to light, when celebrating their birthdays, were often borrowed to light the pulpit. A nod from the preacher, and out came the matches and candles!!!’



# The Doctor and the Patient



JESUS HAD MANY FRIENDS



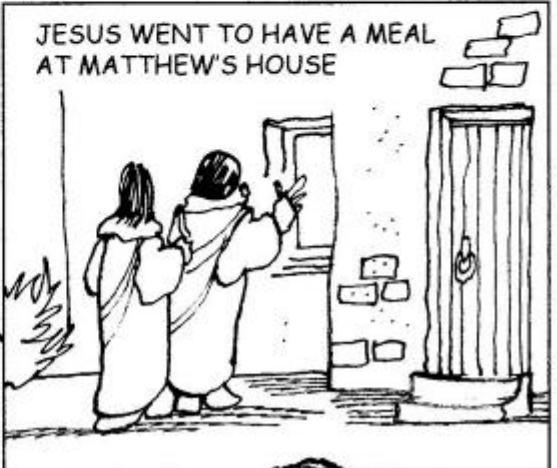
BUT SOME WERE EXTRA SPECIAL. THESE WERE HIS 'DISCIPLES'.



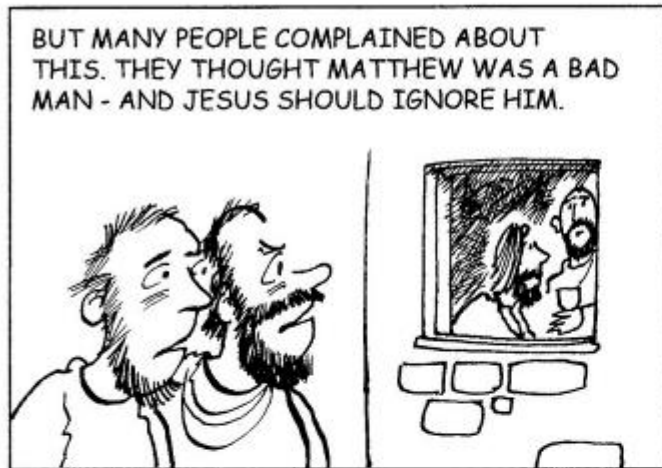
JESUS ONCE ASKED A TAX-COLLECTOR CALLED 'MATTHEW' TO BE ONE OF HIS TEAM



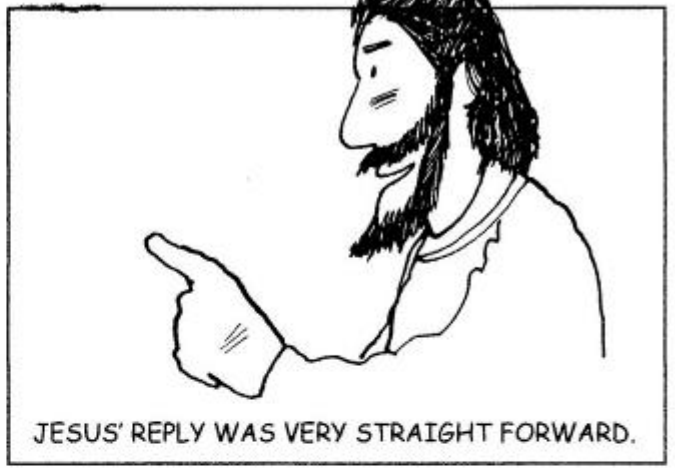
MATTHEW AGREED TO FOLLOW JESUS



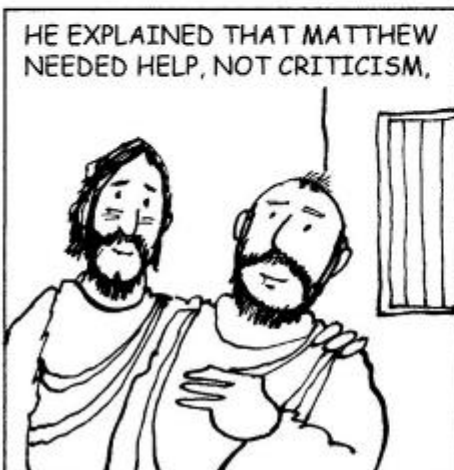
JESUS WENT TO HAVE A MEAL AT MATTHEW'S HOUSE



BUT MANY PEOPLE COMPLAINED ABOUT THIS. THEY THOUGHT MATTHEW WAS A BAD MAN - AND JESUS SHOULD IGNORE HIM.



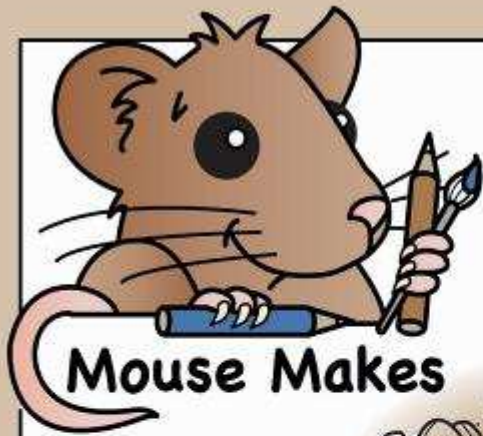
JESUS' REPLY WAS VERY STRAIGHT FORWARD.



HE EXPLAINED THAT MATTHEW NEEDED HELP, NOT CRITICISM,



"IT'S NOT THE WELL THAT NEED A DOCTOR - BUT THE SICK!"  
see Luke 5:27-32



# Mouse Makes

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS  
After Jesus was baptised who led him into the wilderness?



-----  
*Luke 4:1*

For how many days was Jesus tempted by the devil?

-----  
*Luke 4:2*

Who did Jesus say you should ONLY worship and serve?



What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into?

-----  
*Luke 4:3*

-----  
*Luke 4:8*



**READ**  
the story in  
**Luke 4:1-13**

Jesus said not to put the Lord your God to the...



-----  
*Luke 4:12*

What happened after the temptation of Jesus?  
see *Luke 4:14-15*

- JESUS • LED
- WILDERNESS
- DESERT
- TEMPTATIONS
- DAYS • DEVIL
- HUNGRY • SON
- STONE • ROCK
- KINGDOMS
- WORLD • GLORY
- WRITTEN
- SCRIPTURE
- WORSHIP • ONLY
- SERVE • LORD
- JERUSALEM
- HIGH • TEMPLE
- THROW • DOWN
- JUMP • ANGELS
- HANDS • HOLD
- LIFT • FOOT

R W O R S H I P H A N D S D  
L I F T W P A H D J U M P A  
E L O R D K I O E D O S E Y  
D D O A N G E L S E K T M S  
F E H U N G R Y E B R O C K  
O R E J E S U S R Y O N L Y  
R N S S C R I P T U R E U H  
T E M P T A T I O N S G T S  
Y S T D S J E R U S A L E M  
B S H O E H K I N G D O M S  
R F R W R I T T E N E R P O  
E O O N V G G O C E V Y L N  
A O W V E H O L D K I W E  
D T E S T V D W O R L D



Find the words from the questions too!



## **Toddler Time**

**A new fun group for Toddlers 0-4yr and their carers!**

**St. Stephen's Church Hall**

**Fridays 10am-11:30am term time**

**Play- Craft- Snack- Story- Songs- Fun!**

**ALL WELCOME!**

## **Toddler Church**

**St Stephen's Church**

**Sunday March 9th 4pm**

**A service for pre-schoolers and their families**

**Fun songs, a bible story, craft and refreshments**

**We look forward to meeting you!**

## **Youth Club**

**From age 7**

**Friday Evening Term Time**

**6pm until 7.15pm**

**£2.50 includes snacks and drinks**

**Contact: Jane Bessant 07776 305 660**

**Please note that there will be no youth club  
during school holidays**