

St Mary's Parish Church Whitegate



NEWS FOR SEPTEMBER 2025



Our cover photo

8th September in the Church calendar marks the birthday of the Virgin Mary and on the Sunday nearest that date we remember it annually as our church's birthday too, in prayers, readings and music. At St Mary's Whitegate, we shall therefore celebrate our Patronal Festival on Sunday 7th and it seems natural to put our lovely church front and central on this month's cover. How many readers of the September NEWS can identify just where this image comes from?

It's 150 years since St Mary's was rebuilt in the form we see now. The second Lord Delamere commissioned the Cheshire architect, John Douglas and work started in 1874, being completed in 1875. Little of the former, 1728, building remains, save for the south doorway and door; and inside, the eight timber pillars are medieval and date back to the church built on the site in the 15th century.

Our Victorian building being 150 years old, it is all the more important to continue to look after it and we thank in advance all the volunteers who will turn out to help with the Big Clean of church and churchyard on Saturday 27th September.

As for the image on the front cover – do you remember where you have seen it before? It's a small vignette in the middle window on the north side of the church, the window installed to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 – when the new St Mary's was just 22 years old.

A verse for SEPTEMBER

Luke Ch 1: verse 37

"For nothing will be impossible with God."

These are the words of the angel to Mary just after she heard that she was to become pregnant from the Holy Spirit and that her relative Elizabeth, thought to be too old to conceive, was already pregnant. Both pretty incredible things to hear but Mary accepted them in faith.

The reaction from most people these days to hearing things like that would probably be to find the first available computer or phone to fact check them. And here lies the dilemma of our modern age: over generations we have gained so much knowledge and understanding of our world that our first reaction is to be sceptical and look for scientific proof of things. We think that everything can be explained and understood.

I can explain how an electron microscope works to enlarge internal components of cells one million times, but I am only fooling myself if I really think that I can understand everything. When I turn on the TV and watch events happening thousands of miles away in real time, I don't understand how that happens. I just accept it.

When I press the button on the remote I have faith that the TV will turn on, unless I haven't changed the batteries recently. So why is that any different to the faith Mary had? God gave us free will to believe or not, to have faith or not. The only thing we need to accept is in those seven words: For nothing will be impossible with God.

JTS

SEPTEMBER Diary

2nd	2.00 pm	Bible Study at Commonsideside	L.B. Methodist Chapel
3rd	10.00 am 12.00 noon	Crafty Coffee Holy Communion (BCP)	The Mews St Mary's
4th	10.30 am	First Thursday Café	The Mews
7th	9.30 am 10.30 am	St Mary's Patronal Festival Storytelling Service United Benefice Holy Communion	The Mews St Mary's
9th	2.00 pm	Bible Study at Commonsideside	L.B. Methodist Chapel
10th	9.00 am 10.00 am 12.00 noon	Men's Breakfast Crafty Coffee Holy Communion (BCP)	Tarporley G'dn Centre The Mews St Mary's
14th	9.30 am	Trinity 13 Holy Communion	St Mary's
16th	2.00 pm 7.30 pm	Bible Study at Commonsideside St Mary's Mothers' Union: film, "That Day We Sang"	L.B. Methodist Chapel The Mews
17th	10.00 am 12.00 noon	Crafty Coffee Holy Communion (BCP)	The Mews St Mary's
21st	9.30 am 9.30 am	Trinity 14 Morning Prayer Storytelling Service	St Mary's The Mews
22nd	6.30 pm	Gentlemen's Dinner – <i>to book, see page 8.</i>	The Plough, Whitegate
23rd	2.00 pm 7.30 pm	Bible Study at Commonsideside St Mary's PCC meeting (N.B. date change)	L.B. Methodist Chapel The Mews
24th	10.00 am 12.00 noon	Crafty Coffee Holy Communion (BCP)	The Mews St Mary's
25th	9.45 am meet for 10.00 am start	Whitegate Amblers walk <i>See page 8 for details of route.</i>	Marbury Country Park car park, CW9 6AT
27th	9.30-12.00 noon 12.00 noon 2.00 – 4.00 pm	Big Clean of church and churchyard Pastoral Lunch for volunteers Apple-pressing <i>See page 8 for details of these events</i>	St Mary's The Mews Church Green
28th	9.30 am	Trinity 15 Holy Communion	St Mary's
29th	2.00 pm	Mews Management Committee meeting	The Mews
30th	2.00 pm	Bible Study at Commonsideside	L.B. Methodist Chapel
OCT 1st	10.00 am 12.00 noon	Crafty Coffee Holy Communion (BCP)	The Mews St Mary's
2nd	10.30 am	First Thursday Café	The Mews
4th	From 9.30 am	Fruit & veg to Church to decorate the porch	St Mary's
5th	9.30 am 2.00 for 2.30 pm	Harvest Festival Family Service for Harvest Movies in The Mews: A Walk in the Woods	St Mary's The Mews

Please note: this year's **Harvest Supper** will be in the School Hall, 6.15 pm on Saturday 11th October. See pages 7 & 8 for more details.

September letter from Rev Margaret

How much time do we take to notice the things immediately around us? Regulars at St Peter's, or those of you from St Mary's who attended the joint benefice service at St Peter's, may have noticed a beautiful addition to the handrail there as you go up the ramp.



The Little Budworth Mother's Union made prayer flags earlier this summer, and Jane Simpson kindly sewed them all together for us. The idea is that the prayers are lifted up as the flags blow in the breeze. They are beautiful, and they also speak to the community outside the building of our prayer and worship.



In the coming weeks, if you keep an eye on church notice boards, you'll spot some changes there too, with a range of new "SPEAK OUT STAY SAFE" posters. So what's it all about?

"SPEAK OUT STAY SAFE" is the new safeguarding campaign in the diocese of Chester. If you get chance to see the prayer flags, you will see they are praying for peace, love and joy. We only begin to feel loved and have joy and peace when we know we are in a safe community. Each one of us is loved immeasurably by God. If God is concerned for all of his creation, then we should be too.



Every church has a parish safeguarding officer (PSO). At St Mary's, this is Anne Blayney; at St Peter's, it is Jenny Marshall. Having a PSO on its own does not make us a safe place. Safeguarding only becomes effective when it is embedded in the culture of the church, it can never be a tick box exercise. The Bible gives us a clear mandate, motivation and mission to ensure that those who are or may be vulnerable (adults as well as children) are given a voice, heard, defended, and treated appropriately, effectively, fairly and compassionately. Sadly, we have all heard of abuse, neglect and harm within the wider church over the years. This is something we in our diocese are all working so hard to stamp out.



It is vital that those attending our services and other events know that we take all safeguarding concerns very seriously. As clergy, I have completed all six safeguarding courses, as well as a school safeguarding course in my role as foundation governor. Churchwardens and PCC members are also required to complete three safeguarding courses and have DBS checks. We have a parish safeguarding dashboard guiding us through the actions we need to take to be proactive, to keep our churches a safe place where all are loved and can flourish.

The biggest problem churches have is being too trusting, believing "abuse can't happen here." We want to be warm and welcoming, but we must also remain vigilant – by noticing what, or who, is around us, and knowing who to go to if we have concerns. Everything you need to know will be on the posters, so keep an eye out. Of course, we can also hold it all in prayer:

God of truth,
give us the courage to speak out so that people are protected
from the risk of being harmed in any way.
Together may we build a Church
that affirms the value of every single person
and provides a safe welcome for all.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord, **Amen**

God bless, Margaret.

NEWS FROM ST MARY'S

□ Weekly Reading Sheets now available on-line

You may like to know that our weekly readings sheets for September are now available on our website <https://www.stmaryswhitegate.org/> If they are not visible on the front page please click on the "blog" tag. If you are reading in church or are unable to come to church any Sunday we hope you will find these useful.



□ PCC in September

A reminder for members of the Parochial Church Council that the meeting date for September has changed. It will be on Tuesday 23rd at 7.30 pm in The Mews.

□ Still seeking a new NEWS editor

Readers, if you enjoy receiving the monthly NEWS bulletin from St Mary's and value the information it contains, we are still looking for someone to take on the job of putting it together once Chris Ball moves away. If you feel you could do it, or would like to find out more, please speak to her. Contact details on p. 7.

□ Hymn Books

The PCC has decided to buy new hymnbooks for St Mary's because the green hymnbooks which we have had for years are in poor condition, especially the music copies. For a number of reasons, the latest edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern seems the best choice. We have a legacy which will partially help us to buy these books, but we are also inviting members of the congregation to donate a hymnbook (or hymnbooks) in memory of a loved one. This is easy to do. Simply fill in the form at the back of church and donate £15 by bank transfer or in the envelopes provided. There will be a personalised bookplate in each book. Thank you for your support.

□ Mission & Giving update

St Mary's Mission & Giving group met on 31st July to discuss and decide how to allocate our church's donation for the second quarter of the year. As many will know, each quarter we give to other worthwhile charities 5% of income from regular donations and fund raising. The treasurers had calculated that the sum this time was £826 (income last quarter having been boosted by two Gift Aid claims paid by HMRC and the profits from the fabulous BBQ & Bands event). After discussion, it was decided to donate the sum to Cheshire Young Carers, the organisation that does sterling work supporting and counselling youngsters who carry the responsibility of looking after the needs of other family members.

□ October date for Movies in The Mews

We'll be showing the film of Bill Bryson's bestseller, A Walk in the Woods, on Sunday 5th October. 2.00 for 2.30 pm. See October NEWS for more details.

□ Harvest at St Mary's

As shown in the Diary on page 3, our Harvest Festival Service will be on Sunday 5th October. Our Harvest decorating team (Pam and Jo) have been planning for a while. On the morning of Saturday 4th, we are asked to bring vegetables & fruit to decorate the porch and on Saturday or Sunday, bring a jam jar filled with flowers/fruits/leaves from the garden evoking harvest-time. These will decorate the windowsills inside.

Groceries, fruit and veg brought as offerings to the altar on Sunday morning will be donated to Mid Cheshire Foodbank or made up into harvest baskets for parishioners who can't get out to shop.

On Saturday 11th October we have our Harvest Supper at 6.15 pm in the School Hall. Everyone welcome! See the poster on page 8 for details of how to book. Please come and join in this meal when everyone locally comes together. More details in October NEWS.

□ Mid Cheshire Foodbank is asking for our help

They urgently need jars of Curry sauce and jars/packets of Carbonara or Cheese sauce, or other non-tomato based sauces to mix with pasta. (They currently have plenty of pasta in stock.)



Contacts

N. B. Our vicar, the Reverend Canon Paul Dawson, is on sabbatical leave until 30.09.25. During this time please contact our curate, the Reverend Margaret Byrne.

In this online edition of the NEWS, many contacts prefer us only to show their phone number. If you need to e-mail them, please call them first to ask for the address.

Vicar Rev Canon Paul Dawson The Vicarage, Cinder Hill, Whitegate CW8 2BH	Churchwardens Anne Blayney 07815 713012 Sandra Paskin 01606 882031 PCC Secretary Roger Wilkes 01606 75738
Curates Rev Margaret Byrne 07368 375970 <u>revmargaret1@hotmail.com</u> Rev Dr John Stopford 01606 558802 Rev Jane Millinchip 07981 981293	Church Flowers Pam Davies 01606 557833 Children's Worker Teresa Finney 01606 889311
Safeguarding Officer Anne Blayney 07815 713012 <u>safeguardingwhitegate@outlook.com</u>	Mothers' Union Eileen Lees 01606 786895
Mews Lettings Andrew Millinchip <u>amillinchip@gmail.com</u>	"News" coordinator Christine Ball 01606 593260 <u>chrisball2022@outlook.com</u>
Musical Director Andrew Millinchip 07821 810772	Pastoral & Fellowship Committee Alan Newton 01829 760239
Treasurers Gary Chadwick 07590 999169 Sarah Campbell Woodward 01829 760438 <u>treasurerwhitegatepcc@outlook.com</u>	Social & Fundraising Group John Blayney 07964 844642

❑ **October NEWS:** Comments and contributions for the next edition of the Monthly NEWS are always welcome. Please send copy to chrisball2022@outlook.com by 15th September.



THE PLOUGH WHITEGATE

**GENTLEMEN'S
DINNER**
MONDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER
6.30 PM

Enjoy a delicious meal in
convivial company

Sign up & pre-order on the notice boards in St
Mary's and St Peter's or contact Alan Newton:
acenewton513@gmail.com
01829 760239

TWO EVENTS IN ONE DAY! SATURDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER

9.30 – 12.00

Big Clean in Church & Churchyard

Join us, armed with
gloves for cleaning or
gardening and help to
make St Mary's clean
and tidy, inside and
out.
Sandwich lunch at
midday in The Mews
for the volunteer
army.



2.00 – 4.00 pm

APPLE- PRESSING On Church Green

Bring your apples,
pears & grapes in
buckets and bring
clean screw-top
bottles; go home
again with super
juice.

£3.00 per bucket.



Whitegate Amblers

September - Marbury Park

Please join us for our monthly walk discovering the
beautiful countryside around the Village of
Whitegate. If you'd like to come, please text, phone or
just turn up on the day. If you need a lift from
Whitegate please phone in advance.

Date: Thursday 25th September

Time: Meet 09:45 -Walk starts 10:00 (approx 1-2 hr)

Start: Marbury Country Park Car Park (CW9 6AT).

Description: Guided walk around the park and beside
the canal. No Stiles but possible mud.

Notes: Carpark £1.50 for 3 hrs so may like to share
transport. We welcome well behaved dogs who can
be kept under control at all times. Toilets near
carpark. For more info contact John Blayney
(07964844642)



ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH WHITEGATE

Harvest Supper



Come and join our celebrations with a locally
cooked delicious traditional 2 course meal*
followed by tea and coffee.

Also on offer are Games, Raffle, a Bar and good
company!

Saturday 11TH October in Whitegate School Hall

TICKETS £17 - 6:15pm start

(Doors open from 6.00pm)

To book, please sign up on the sheet on the
noticeboard in church or contact Elaine
Campbell (07896779962) or John Blayney
johnblayney2@gmail.com.

* Vegetarian option available