



There's a theory floating around claiming that during a time when Christians were punished for worshipping openly, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" song was used to secretly pass on the ideology of Christianity. Per this theory, each gift on the list symbolises a different aspect of the Christian faith:

- ☒ This is Jesus Christ.
- ☒ These are The Old and New Testaments.
- ☒ These are Faith, Hope and Charity, the theological virtues.
- ☒ These are the four gospels and/or the four evangelists.
- ☒ These are the first five books of the Old Testament.
- ☒ These are the six days of creation.
- ☒ These are the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments.
- ☒ These are the eight beatitudes.
- ☒ These are the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit.
- ☒☒ These are the ten commandments.
- ☒☒ These are the eleven faithful apostles.
- ☒☒ These are the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

From February 2026 the Parish News will no longer be delivered to your door. Instead, at a time convenient for you, please collect your copies from church. These will be available from the beginning of the month.  
Simon Gresty

## The Work of Christmas



When the song of the angels is stilled  
When the star in the sky is gone  
When the men from the east have gone home  
When the shepherds are back with their flocks  
Then the work of Christmas begins:

- To find the lost
- To feed the hungry
- To free the prisoner
- To redeem the nations
- To bring peace among the peoples
- To make music in the heart



### Wear Your Poppy with pride

Have you a few hours spare to help? Alsager Royal British Legion is looking for a volunteer to co-ordinate the local poppy appeal. Our current organiser Stuart is about to retire but is able to assist the new recruit in this worthwhile position.

Further details from Stuart Wareing on 01270 873444

## 2025 DRAWS TO A CLOSE

At this dark, gloomy season of the year something truly remarkable happens which lifts our spirits and brings families together as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ Saviour of the World. A time to reflect on God's love and for all of us to engage in acts of kindness, generosity and compassion towards others.

I find it a time to reflect on the passing year and to say so many thank you's. We are very fortunate to have people living amongst us who give so much time and effort; at times taken for granted but seriously you are all appreciated. The bell ringers, clock winder, Parish News editor, distributors of the newsletter, churchyard maintenance including the banks and hedges, church cleaner, readers, coffeemakers, organists, choir, servers, maintenance of the children's corner, PCC and not forgetting the Rector himself. Add to this list those who give us generous financial support; the congregation and supporters and organisers of functions  
**THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH.**

We have received a lovely letter from Helen Rutter on behalf of the Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy for the Harvest Donation of £427 which we gave as a result of your generosity at the Harvest Service. This is a very worthy charity for our rural parish to support.

The Tea Set continues to be much appreciated by all those who attend; the food is delicious and the variety of speakers interesting. We meet in the Village Hall and here is another Thank You to the Village Hall Committee who maintain the hall to a very high standard and to Carrie and Joe who keep the hall and grounds spotless.

## FROM YOUR CHURCHWARDEN CHRISTINE BAILEY



Now to say how much it means to see each and everyone of you, your families and friends come through the doors of St Bertoline's Church. December is a busy month. Do your best to join us at The Festival of Nine Lessons on Sunday 21st December at 7.00pm followed by mince pies and mulled wine. On Christmas Eve at 4.00pm bring the children to the Crib Service and Christingle. On Christmas Day there is Communion at 10.30am. Before that on Tuesday 16th December, you may receive our Carol Singers on your doorstep, but there is no way they can cover the whole parish! The church will be candlelit and beautifully decorated with a magnificent tree donated by Eileen Hawkridge and decorated by Sandra and Gary and floral decorations by Jackie and her team, well worth seeing.

As an extra bonus this year there is a Christmas Concert on Friday 19th December at 7.30pm in the church—see separate notice. Also we are delighted to be hosting the Young Farmers Carol Service on Wednesday 10th December and wish them every success in all they do.

Wishing you all a peaceful, happy Christmas and behind all the glitz and commercialisation remember the true meaning for this festive season. GOD BLESS.

### Tea Set

DECEMBER 2025 JANUARY 2026

Please note, the December Tea Set is a week earlier, on Tuesday, Dec 9th.

All welcome. £3 per person including afternoon tea.

Christmas theme

Please bring along a 'Secret Santa' gift maximum value £3.

TUESDAY 20th JANUARY 2026

2pm, Barthomley Village Hall. All welcome

£5 per person, including afternoon tea.

Fascinating talk on working in a sewing factory in Crewe.

There is also a raffle

Everyone is welcome

### Christingle and Crib Service



St. Bertoline's Church,

4.00pm Wednesday 24th December

Children are encouraged to come in  
Nativity-themed fancy dress, but this  
is not essential.