

PARISH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW WESTHOUGHTON

St Bartholomew

St Thomas

St George



SUNDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2021

CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

Welcome to Worship today

Sunday Services

St George's Church 9:15am Holy Communion Revd Carol Pharaoh / Revd Andy Jones	St Thomas' Church 9:15am Holy Communion Revd Angela Wynne	St Bartholomew's Church 11:00am Holy Communion Alan Morris / Revd Carol Pharaoh HYMNS: 690, 232, 193, 736, 227
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This week we pray for:

Those who are ill: Cassie Buono, Brian Cato, Maurice Ginniff, Christine Greenhalgh, Dawn Grundy, Jenny Harris, Keith Haworth, Mario Heaton, Edith Ibbotson, Joan James, Patricia James, Mike Johnson, Geoff Kyte, Edward Lakstigala, Eileen Marsh, Jean Partington, Norman Sidlow, John West.

Those who have died recently: Peter Finch

And on their anniversaries this week we remember: William Andrews, Frederick Baldwin, Mona Binns, Louise Chomley, Pat Dixon, James Hayes, Henry Hodson, Vera Lovett, Alice Martin, Rodney Mills, Douglas Moyse, Mary Pilkington, John Sutcliffe, Victor Wilcox, Lilian Winrow.

Today – we welcome those confirmed on 7th November to receive communion and we have bibles to present to them to mark this stage on their Christian journey.

Coming Up this week:

Sunday 21st 1:00pm 2:00pm	St Bartholomew's Church	Baptism - Layla Grace COOPER Baptism - Arthur John BOOTH
Monday 22nd 10:30am – 11:30am	St Bartholomew's Church	Office Hour
Tuesday 23rd	Online Bible Study Led by Revd Angela Wynne	Abraham – following God's call
Wednesday 24th 7:30pm	St Bartholomew's Church	Choir Practice
Friday 26th 7:00pm	St Bartholomew's Church	Town Lights Carol Service TICKET ONLY

Further details on all events at the end of this pewsheet. Do keep any news, views and feedback coming. Please also check online for this week's online service/

Next Sunday: 28th November Advent Sunday

Advent Sunday

Readings: Jeremiah 33. 14 – 16 / 1 Thessalonians 3. 9 - 13 / Luke 21. 25 - 36

9:15 am	Holy Communion at St George's Church	Revd Carol Pharaoh/Revd Andy Jones
9.15am	Service of the Word at St Thomas'	Revd Angela Wynne
11:00am	Holy Communion at St. Bartholomew's Church	Revd Carol Pharaoh/Revd Andy Jones
3:00pm	Christingle at St Bartholomew's Church	

To receive these pewsheets, newsletters or special events leaflets electronically, please e-mail
westhoughtonparish@outlook.com

Today's Readings

Collect:

God the Father, help us to hear the call of Christ the King and to follow in his service, whose kingdom has no end; for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, one glory. **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading: Daniel 7. 9 – 10 & 13 - 14

⁹As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire. ¹⁰A stream of fire issued and flowed out from his presence. A thousand thousand served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgement, and the books were opened.

¹³As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. ¹⁴To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.

New Testament Reading: Revelation 1. 4b - 8

⁴Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. **Amen.**

⁷Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. **Amen.** ⁸'I am the Alpha and the Omega', says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Gospel Reading John 18. 33 - 37

³³Pilate asked Jesus, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' ³⁴Jesus answered, 'Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?' ³⁵Pilate replied, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?' ³⁶Jesus answered, 'My

kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.' ³⁷Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.'



Post-Communion Prayer:

Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by you be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Homily: Revd Malcolm Wearing

My guess is that although you can probably name quite a few emperors, you probably don't know the names of many middle ranking Roman officials. But I am sure most churchgoers know the name of one or two them. The first is Quirinius, who if you have been listening at the carol service each year, you will know was governor of Syria when the great census was taken, which got Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem.

The second is Pontius Pilate.

But why does this Roman bureaucrat receive so much attention, when he only appears in a very small part of the Gospel accounts? Well, since the council of Nicea, back in 325 AD, Pilate's name has been recited in church services on a weekly, and in many cases daily basis, so it is no wonder we have all got familiar with it. *For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.* But why do we focus so heavily on this man, why does Pilate deserve mention in every service, when others who were equally responsible for Christ's crucifixion, only get mentioned at Passiontide?

I think in this regard, Pilate is a victim of the church growing up and becoming a Roman institution. When Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, Constantine summoned a council at Nicea to agree what Christians believed. To get round the potential for arguments in the future about when and if all these events really happened, those at Nicea decided to nail it all to a bit of history, which in Roman eyes was definite, the name of the Governor of the province at the time, and thus Pilate was immortalised in history, probably not in the way he would have wished.

There are two people in the passion story who I think get very hard treatment. The first is Judas Iscariot, we haven't time to go into why I think that now, the second is Pilate. I think we tend demonise Pilate (and Judas for that matter) for failings we all have in ourselves. To me Pilate seems like a man trying to do his best in difficult circumstances, and in the end failing to intervene when he really should have done. How many times have we all failed to do the right thing because it was too difficult? The province he was in charge of at the time must have been a nightmare. He was trying to maintain order over a very volatile nation, a once proud nation humbled and broken under numerous occupations, but who had frequently and quite recently revolted against the occupying forces. Revolt was very much in the air; there was bitter theological disagreement amongst the religious sects (like the Sadducees and Pharisees) and to top it off the Puppet Kings supported by Rome, the Herodians, were unstable and untrustworthy. Being Governor, I think, may have been a poisoned chalice.

Pilate seems to be trying to do the right thing. He seems to truly want to understand why Jesus is being accused, but all along is faced with a man who refuses to help himself and eventually Pilate becomes resigned to doing the thing which will cause him least disruption and inconvenience.

But why was Jesus so obstinate? Why did he make Pilate's job so hard?

Well I think it goes to the heart of what we celebrate this week; Sunday is dedicated to Christ the King. Jesus was, is and always will be King, but not the kind of King that the world recognised, or Pilate recognised. In fact, none of the characters in the Gospel really recognise what Jesus' ministry is all about. They were all looking for someone who would conform to what it means to be a success in earthly terms, not seeing that

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Jesus' whole ministry was to show that earthly power, earthly prestige, and earthly riches meant nothing. The kingdom Jesus would reign over would be far greater, everlasting and perfect. In that Kingdom the prestige and comfort of some would not be bought at the expense of the degradation and poverty of others. Status in that Kingdom would be based on love, kindness, generosity and faith, not ambition, ruthlessness and violence.

In failing to interact with Pilate, Jesus makes the ultimate rejection of worldly authority. He shows that it is not important to him in any way, that he is prepared to die rather than interact with this authority, that he is not in thrall to the power the world could offer him, nor tied to earthly prestige or promise of riches. Maybe that should be a message to us too.

It is easy to be lured into thinking that prestige, authority and wealth in this life are so important, it doesn't matter what we do to get them. We can sometimes carefully avoid thinking about those we may have hurt to get our own way, to get what we want and desire.

But I think there is another strand in Jesus' obstinacy, and that goes back to those temptations in the desert at the very beginning of his ministry on Earth. The devil offers Jesus all the Kingdoms of the world and suggests to him that even if he throws himself off the pinnacle of the temple, he won't be hurt. In other words Jesus doesn't have to follow that road to the cross. Tempting him to take the easy route.

The easy route that would lead to glory, to acclamation, to earthly success, and power. The route that would have had great material benefits. More of the lame would have been cured, more of the blind would see, Israel may have been freed from oppression. Jesus would have been a benevolent and good leader. But also a failure!

Because he came to show those then, and us now, that earthly kingdoms, this earthly life, are just a pale and poor foretaste of that great Kingdom he has given us hope to see. And I wonder if he was still anxious when he stood before Pilate, that his resolve may falter. Remember only hours before he had wrestled with doubts in the Garden of Gethsemane, begging God the Father to take the cup from him. Was this unhelpful interaction with Pilate a way of making sure that Jesus' natural goodness, which I think Pilate recognised, didn't convince him to set Jesus free, and ruin the arc of his mission?

Jesus came to live as one of us, to be like us, but was crowned a king unlike anything Earth had known. He rejected all that was important on Earth to focus on what was truly important, love, kindness, generosity and faith. If we are to be his loyal subjects, we must do the same.

NOTICEBOARD:

Recording Attendance for School Admission

We have been asked to start recording physical church attendance for school admission purposes.

Parents will need to sign registers or, in the case of St Thomas, have their card stamped if they physically attend the service – nothing else will count.

The dedicated email account for parents to submit their attendance or intention to attend is no longer operating.

BIBLE STUDY- OLD TESTAMENT CHARACTERS

Bible Study groups based on Old Testament Characters are running in autumn. Some of these sessions will be face to face and others will be online on zoom. All are invited and welcome to attend any of the sessions. The attached gives details and times of dates of these. If people would like to attend an online session, please contact the leader in charge and the zoom details will be sent accordingly. **Please note** that the afternoon session planned for 18th Nov has been cancelled and the session on 16th November will now run **one week later** on 23rd November.

SESSION	Evening ONLINE THIS WEEK	Face to Face
ABRAHAM Following God's call	Tuesday 23 rd Nov 7 pm	Thursday 9 th December 7.30 pm
	Leader: ANGELA W	Leader: ANGELA W Venue: St Katharine's

Christmas Dinner on Jesus:

In past years, we've collected mince pies, cream crackers, biscuits and one year [as I hope we've all forgotten] Christmas puddings.

This year we're aiming at collecting 700 packets of Brandy Sauce (500g tetrapak carton) OR Custard (1kg Tetrapak carton). It's liquid not the powdered sort.

Please check that the use by date is after Christmas Day and we'll be collecting in our churches between Sunday 21st November and closing date Sunday 5th December.

Many thanks, in advance, for your generosity.



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Toy Services: Sunday 12th December

We're planning our Toy Services for Sunday 12th December at St. Thomas' [9:15am] in aid of Fort Alice and St. Bartholomew's [11:00am] in aid of Bolton Lions.

Please bring unwrapped toys for these services, if you are able.

Remembrance Sunday:

Many thanks also to all those who helped to make the Remembrance Sunday commemorations such a fitting tribute. To all those who helped by cleaning and setting out the church, arranging the flowers and printing the service sheets. The Bible readings by the Westhoughton High School students were excellent as was the singing of the choir in the hymns and anthems. A highlight is always "All people that on earth do dwell" with the organ fanfares by Vaughan Williams [especially now we've got the hang of waiting for the organ to play the first line of the tune before singing]. Many thanks also to our bell ringers and those who got round the current issues with the clock by having it set to 11:00am and chiming on time.

A particular thanks goes to those who chose not to attend the Civic Service at 10:00am; we didn't have to turn people away or lock the doors for which we are very grateful.

The wreath laying at the War Memorial this year went much more smoothly and Greenfields band played the hymns and Last Post again which adds so much to the solemnity and dignity of the occasion. The fine weather is always a bonus at this event.

We were able to gather at St. Bartholomew's for our Holy Communion service at 11:30am which was also well attended and closed the Remembrance Sunday worship in a fitting way as we remember the Last Supper.

Many thanks to all who supported the "Song for Remembrance" Event which raised over £400 towards the church tower fund. Thanks especially to Ged and Sue Robinson-Todd for organising this event.

GENEROSITY WEEK BEGINS TODAY



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

CHURCH
FOR A
DIFFERENT
WORLD



Welcome to Generosity Week which runs from Thursday 18 to Wednesday 24 November 2021.

We launch Generosity Week with a message from Archdeacon Karen Lund and Bishop David Walker. Watch the video [here](#).

Generosity Week is an opportunity to celebrate the joy of God's generosity and launch our new Giving Strategy, which aims to provide a generosity and thankfulness toolkit for churches.

Generosity and thankfulness are core elements of who we are as Christians. Therefore, as our diocese is implementing ambitious plans to grow it is vital that generosity and thankfulness are at the heart of these as well.

New resources for you to share with your church will be appearing each day during Generosity Week. They include films, parish stories and prayers. Keep in touch with everything on offer by following the diocese on social media or [keep an eye on the website here](#).

There is a new, comprehensive website section on Generosity and Thankfulness with access to training, and helpful information about digital giving, fundraising and Gift Aid.



Generosity Service Sunday 21 November

On Sunday 21 November at 4pm there is a special Generosity Service with Bishop David and Cathedral Dean, Rogers Govender. You can join us for the [Premier online](#) or catch up later on Facebook or YouTube. There is a downloadable [Order of Service](#) to join in the service.

Generosity Week: an outline



Here's an outline of what to look out for:

Friday 19 November

Parish story about generosity in action

Saturday 20 November

A Generosity Prayer read by lay people from across the diocese

Sunday 21 November

A Service of the Word led by Bishop David and Dean Rogers Govender, with contributions from some of our lay people

Monday 22 November

Archdeacon Karen Lund will be emailing clergy to highlight the launch of the Generosity Learning Hub, a new web-based resources funded by the national Church

Tuesday 23 November

How to use easyfundraising to fundraise for your church or other good causes during Black Friday and Christmas, with Roisin Lyons, Partnerships Manager at easyfundraising

Wednesday 24 November

What next at your church?, Paul Bailey, Diocesan Giving Advisor, will highlight the various generosity and thankfulness resources, web pages, and training courses provided by the Gift Aid Lite team

Town Christmas Lights Switch On & Carol Service

Friday 26th November 7:00pm

St. Bartholomew's Church

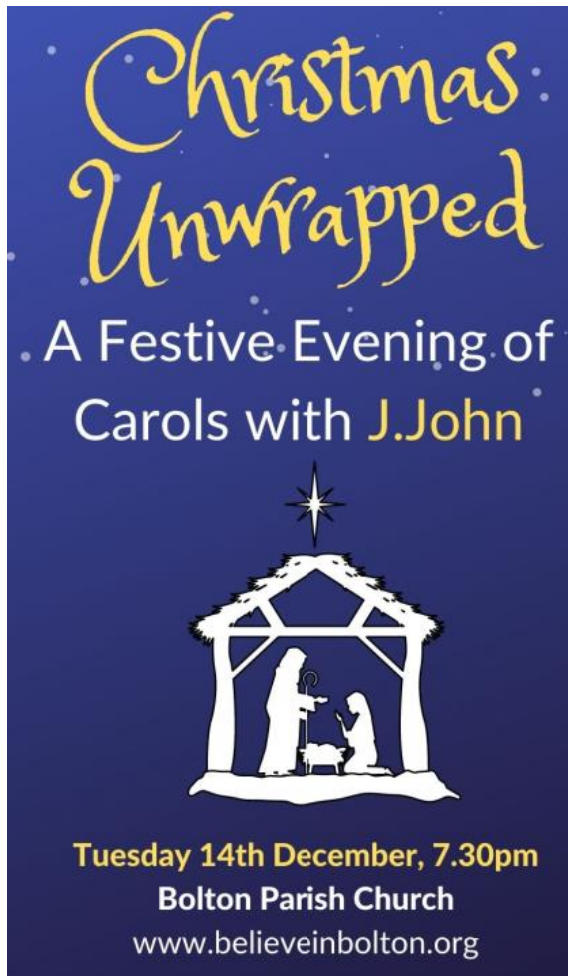
Christmas songs from local schools, and carols for all.

This year a limited number of schools will take part in person with the other schools asked to contribute a short film that we can include as part of the service.

ATTENDANCE AT THIS SERVICE IS STRICTLY LIMITED AND ADMISSION IS BY TICKET ONLY.

Tickets will be available from the Town council and a small number at our churches. Please do not attend the service if you do not have a ticket as there will be none available at the door and we cannot admit anyone without a ticket.

**Believe in Bolton 'Christmas Unwrapped' Christmas Carols Event,
Bolton Parish Church, Tuesday 14th Dec, 7-30pm**



Following the success of the Believe in Bolton event last year, we would like to invite you to this year's event: Christmas Unwrapped.

Join us as we come together as a town on Tues 14th Dec at 7-30pm in the inspirational setting of Bolton Parish Church as we sing carols, listen to readings and stories, and hear a short message about the gift of Christmas from international speaker and author, J. John.

This event is free and you can just turn up on the evening so make sure you put the date in your diaries and come along with family and friends and enjoy what will be a fantastic occasion.

So join us on Tuesday 14th December, 7.30pm at Bolton Parish Church

For more information please visit our website: www.believeinbolton.org or visit our Facebook page.



Share the light with the Christingles

Join us at our Christingle

We would love for you, your friends and your family to join us at our Christingle celebration so we can support more vulnerable children.

Sunday 28th November
Advent Sunday

St. Bartholomew's Church
3:00pm

This service will be open to all. This year [for Covid reasons] we'll be making the Christingles in advance, so there's no need to come with an orange.



christingle.org

More details and a link to a page where you can donate electronically at:

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/christingle/st-bartholomews-church-westhoughton>

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CONTACT US:

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FACEBOOK – locate us by searching Westhoughton parish

Follow us on twitter @Wparishchurch

@Westhoughtontowerbellringers

Material for the news sheet should be sent to Joan Warner by Wednesday morning

01942 818821 joan.warner35@outlook.com

Or to westhoughtonparish@outlook.com

OFFICE HOUR: Mondays 10:30am – 11:30am at St. Bartholomew's church [just drop in] or Saturday mornings by appointment e-mail westhoughtonparish@outlook.com