

**Diocese of Chester Cycle of Prayer**

**Sunday, 28 March to Saturday, 24 April 2021**



Sunday, 28 March 2021

### **Palm Sunday**

The disciples were weighed down. There had been dissension when the sons of Zebedee made a play for the places of authority at Christ's left and right. Soon there would be Jesus' dismaying words about the destruction of the Temple. Talk of his death would prompt them all to promises of death-defying loyalty. All too soon the promises will be found empty. Did they understand the donkey? The beast of common labour; rather than the war horse of power? Or were they weighed down with expectations of what a king's authority should look like? The palms gave Jesus and the animals the red-carpet treatment. No hoof or foot laid on bare cobbles. But didn't the disciples see that as a royal beginning, rather than the end of power plays? Jesus had sent them out (6.8) without money, nor extra shirt, nor food, or even a bag. Could there be a clearer instruction to leave the baggage behind? But it is so hard.

The road of faith overturns our self-concern, forces us to leave our burdens aside, and calls us into unlikely, but joyful, company. Ours is a God of the brief encounter on the only journey that ultimately matters – the journey to him. And, lest the coming clouds of Friday obscure the way, we know also of two sad friends journeying to Emmaus who met their Risen Lord, and although they knew him not, it was like a fire burning within them.

*In the kingdom of heaven is my end and my beginning  
And the road that I must follow night and day.  
Travel on, travel on to the kingdom that is coming,  
The kingdom will be with you all the way.*  
Sydney Carter.

*Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui*

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Monday, 29 March 2021

### **Birkenhead Deanery**

*Bari, The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

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Tuesday, 30 March 2021

### **0101 Bidston**

C: Vacant. LM: Jayne Morsley, Rob Morsley.

Dear Lord, we thank you and ask that you continue to walk with us during our current vacancy at St Oswald's. We ask that you bless our new vicar whoever he or she may be and please show yourself to our lay team working within the current Covid restrictions with our retired clergy and rural dean, giving us so much support. We pray for all our church members and the wider community during these difficult times – we thank you Lord. Amen.

Bidston Village CofE School.

*Baringo, The Anglican Church of Kenya*

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Wednesday, 31 March 2021

**0102 Birkenhead Priory**

C: Paul Bentley, Debbie Wilkinson. LM: Laura Brough, Denise Price.

Please pray for provision and discernment as our Community Project continues to adapt to the changing needs in the community we serve.

Birkenhead The Priory Parish CofE School.

*Barrackpore, The (united) Church of North India*

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Thursday, 1 April 2021

**Maundy Thursday**

**0103 Birkenhead St James with St Bede**

C: Keith Addenbrooke.

Pray for our witness to the local community through our online Holy Week Services and as we reopen for services for the first time on Easter Sunday.

*Bath & Wells, The Church of England*

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Friday, 2 April 2021

**Good Friday**

**0104 Birkenhead Christ Church**

C: Gerri Tetzlaff, Allan Goode. LM: Judith Newburn, Jackie Harness, Janice Gilbert.

We return to in-person services on Easter Day and following. Pray for strength and wisdom as we discern the way forward at Christ Church. Help us to be guided by the Holy Spirit in our future activities as we come together as a community of faith once again.

Birkenhead Christ Church CofE School.

*Bathurst, The Anglican Church of Australia*

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Saturday, 3 April 2021

**0105 Oxtan**

C: Joe Kennedy, Tina Dixon. LM: Lisa Kelly, Denis Jones, Tracey Williams.

Thanksgiving for new people we've reached via social media in the past year. We pray for wisdom in the coming months.

Oxtan St Staviour's CofE School.

*Bauchi, The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

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Sunday, 4 April 2021

### Easter Day

Mark started his gospel story like this: 'The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. ... In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee.' And the message of the young man in the empty grave is, go back to Galilee, go back to where you started. He is going on ahead of you (Mark 16.7).

Not triumphal victory for the community -- as the disciples had hoped. Not the restored Davidic kingdom -- as the rebels had hoped. Nor tragic failure and defeat -- as the reader had feared. No, go back to the beginning, go back to the place of life and work, and if we have the vision, we will see Jesus going before us.

Death does not have the last word. Nor does guilt, so Peter is mentioned by name. With Jesus new beginnings are always possible. Eugene Peterson writes somewhere, 'We are after something more -- more life than we get simply by eating three meals a day and getting a little exercise. We're after God-originated and God-shaped life: a holy life.' A resurrection life.

Mark's Gospel has no definitive end because we, with all our brothers and sisters in the faith across the centuries, must make the ending. The story is ours to conclude. How will it be written in the narrative of our own lives? Mark invites each of us to journey to Galilee in the geography of our own faith. Be certain the Risen Lord is always there to meet you. A new beginning.

*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem*

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Monday, 5 April 2021

### 0106 Prenton

C: Matt Graham. Peter Earp, Carol Vague, Robert Vague, Brian McEvoy, Anne Wise, Brenda Tollady.

Sovereign Lord, as we look ahead, give us wisdom and unity as we reconnect as a church family. Help us learn valuable lessons from the pandemic about how to serve and reach our community effectively with the best hope and greatest news of all.

*Belize, The Church in the Province of the West Indies*

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Tuesday, 6 April 2021

### 0107 Rock Ferry

C: Chris Slater. LM: Dave Casson, Lucy Slavin.

*Bendigo, The Anglican Church of Australia*

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Wednesday, 7 April 2021

**0108 Tranmere St Catherine**

C: James Terry. LM: Charlotte Kirkham.

Please pray that those who attended our Easter services or listened online would rejoice in the hope that Jesus' death and resurrection offers and courageously hold out that hope to others around them. Pray for God to be at work in the lives of new people or those on the fringe or families connected through our youth and children work – may they come to see Jesus as their risen Lord.

*Benin, The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

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Thursday, 8 April 2021

**0109 Tranmere St Paul with St Luke**

C: Mike Loach, George Roach.

*Bentiu, The Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

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Friday, 9 April 2021

**0110 Woodchurch**

C: Christine Broad, Josie Tuplin. LM: Jan Lupton, Paul Jackson.

Please pray with us for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for wisdom and energy for our leadership team and parish as we respond to the lifting of lockdown restrictions and offer more services in our church building as well as continuing to offer online provision for worship; for our engagement with children and families as we seek to be faithful in proclaiming the gospel to new generations; for our relationship with our local communities as we seek new ways to serve and share the love of God with all.

Woodchurch CofE School.

*Bermuda, Extra Provincial to the Archbishop of Canterbury*

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Saturday, 10 April 2021

**Woodchurch High School**

*Bethlehem, The Episcopal Church, USA*

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Sunday, 11 April 2021

### Second Sunday of Easter

The rock over the entrance of Christ's tomb was meant to be a seal, a closing that signified his complete nothingness, his ultimate end. But it became the seal of a love poem (Song of Songs 8.6) – a seal that forever marks his love; a seal that cannot be eradicated: the fierce ardour of the lover that will know no end. The character of God's love is this – disclosed in some small part by human passion at its most profound, as Shakespeare's 116th sonnet has it:

*Love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove:  
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;*

To walk in the light of this love changes everything. It brings a new quality to being alive; it makes the lover's ardour not a momentary surge but an abiding passion. As 1 John puts it, 'We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete' (v.4). Know that abiding passion as they did in the very first days of the church: 'With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them ...' (Acts 4.33, 34).

*The Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean*

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Monday, 12 April 2021

### Bowdon Deanery

*Bhopal, The (united) Church of North India*

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Tuesday, 13 April 2021

### 1001 Altrincham St George

C: Edmund Betts, David Law.

*Bida, The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)*

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Wednesday, 14 April 2021

### 1003 Ashley

C: Karen Stanton, Giselle Rusted.

*Biharamulo, The Anglican Church of Tanzania*

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Thursday, 15 April 2021

**1004 Ashton upon Mersey St Martin**

C: Vacant.

Please pray for us during our time of vacancy.

*Birmingham, The Church of England*

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Friday, 16 April 2021

**1005 Ashton upon Mersey St Mary Magdalene**

C: Steve Rankin, Jane Beaumont. LM: Outi Rankin, Brian Macfaden, Gillian Hart, Mags Holt, Ann McBurney.

Sale St Mary's CofE School.

*Blackburn, The Church of England*

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Saturday, 17 April 2021

**1006 Bowdon**

C: Ian Rumsey. LM: John Fenton, Alan Marriott.

Bowdon CofE School.

*Bo, The Church of the Province of West Africa*

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Sunday, 18 April 2021

**Third Sunday of Easter**

Being known as a Christian is not something that is accommodated socially as it once was. And I think that the response of the writer of 1 John would be, 'Well, what did you expect?' His argument is straightforward: we are God's children and our hope rests on our everyday growing up to become more and more like Christ. Christ's purity (in John's language) is a given and we are to become more like him.

You might say, as is so often said of children, that we are already a chip off the old block and our destiny is to become ever more so. This means acting in ways that are Christ's ways: 'Let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.' Not our achievement, but a consequence of what and who Christ is.

The character of our actions and thoughts must be the sinlessness of Christ – and we all know where that purity of intent led him. We cannot expect anything else. So, the world's failure to recognise us, or to give us the due regard we long for, is but a shadow of the indifference, hostility or even hatred we can expect. We can be so casual about faith; but 1 John is talking of ultimate things that shape our eternal destiny. What we do and why we do it, matters. Let the purity of life that is in Christ be our purity of life.

*The Church of Ireland*

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Monday, 19 April 2021

**1007 Broadheath**

C: Daud Gill, Lisa Redfern. LM: Peter Johnson.

Lord we pray for St Alban's church in these times of change and uncertainty. We thank you for your provision in the past and over the last year. We pray for vision and inspiration as we reach out to those in our community of Broadheath with the Gospel message. Help us to listen to their needs and fears and show care, hope and love. We pray that we will be salt and light in the community around us and have love and care for each other. May we worship you in spirit and truth and seek Your will in all things.

*Boga, Province de L'Eglise Anglicane Du Congo*

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Tuesday, 20 April 2021

**1009 Dunham Massey St Margaret**

C: Vacant.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for those at St Margaret's who have carried us through both the trials of a clergy vacancy and the Coronavirus pandemic. We pray for our new Priest-in-Charge, Revd Aled Seago as he joins us in May to lead us at the joint benefice of St Margaret and St Mark, Dunham Massey. We pray too for his wife Jo. Raise us up to be a standard in our community for our Saviour, Jesus Christ, so that hearts will be touched by His love.

*Bolivia, The Anglican Church of South America*

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Wednesday, 21 April 2021

**1010 Dunham Massey St Mark**

C: Vacant.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your continual guidance for our church of St Mark, Dunham Massey in this time of vacancy. We give thanks too, that soon we shall have a new Incumbent, Revd Aled Seago, to lead us. We ask that you are with us as we grow to know him and for our church to grow further in faith and mission.

Soon it will be Rogationtide. We give thanks for our village, with its farms and farmers, its park, and the countryside about us, enjoyed by so many people each day as they walk through Dunham Massey in their leisure time. We give thanks for the farming families of our village and around the country who produce food for us to eat. Milk and cream for ice cream, potatoes, vegetables and fruit. Cereals for bread and grass for beef and lamb. Caring and managing the countryside—your creation. We ask your blessing on all that we do in your name for our village community, church and farms.

*Bondo, The Anglican Church of Kenya*

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Thursday, 22 April 2021

**1011 Hale**

C: Karen Stanton, Giselle Rusted. LM: Julie Withers, Chris Graham, John Moss.

*Bor, The Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan*

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Friday, 23 April 2021

**George, Martyr, Patron of England**

**1012 Oughtrington**

C: Michael Burgess. LM: Roy Bond, Ray Hepworth.

We rejoice in the communion we share with George, Peter and all the saints. May they inspire us to live in these days with faith, joy and love.

*Botswana, The Church of the Province of Central Africa*

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Saturday 24 April 2021

**1013 Partington & Carrington**

C: Andrew Knight, Lucy Brewster.

St. Mary's has expressed its Church Vision as a prayer:

God of mission, Guide and bless your church in Partington and Carrington,  
as we grow in faith and number, with worship that is joyful and Spirit-filled.  
May your church be inclusive of each and everyone,  
and somewhere that all may grow as followers of Jesus.  
Give us strength to live out our faith confidently in all of life,  
sharing your love and the good news of Jesus in word and action.  
So that your power and presence are made a living reality,  
and across our community, lives are transformed and hope is realised.

*Brandon, The Anglican Church of Canada*

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