



# Parish News

**Including news  
from St Philip's**



**December 2020**

*Welcome to another edition of our Parish Magazine, which now also includes occasional news and contributions from St Philip's.*

Please send material for the January  
issue to  
Sigrid Pain  
sigridjcp@gmail.com  
or  
admin@boltonparishchurch.co.uk

### **Parish Church Schools**

Canon Slade School, Bradshaw Brow BL2 3BP  
Headteacher: Karen Sudworth  
Tel: 01204 333343

Bishop Bridgeman Primary School, Rupert Street BL3 6PY  
Executive Principal: Canon Jill Pilling  
Headteacher: Hafsha Hafeji

Bolton Parish Church Primary School, Chadwick Street BL2 1JN  
Headteacher: Angela Worthington  
Tel: 01204 333433

## Chris writes...

Dear friends

I'm sure you'll be pleased to read that as I write this letter, I've also just completed our service rota up to Easter 2021 and drafted our 2021 calendar. This may seem premature but in a busy parish, these things have to be done in advance.

Thinking in advance is part of everyday life, though given the year that we've had, planning has needed significant revision – even abandonment. Normally at this time of year, for example, you might have already planned your holidays for 2021 and sixth form students would be applying for university for autumn 2021. Olympic Games and the Commonwealth Games plans are in place for several years ahead and, whilst we now recognise the fragility of our planning, looking ahead is very important. That said, we must be careful that in our planning, that we do not deprive ourselves of the present moment.

Advent begins on 29 November – a season of reflection and preparation for celebration of the first coming of Christ and anticipation of His second coming. Christmas overlaps with Advent nowadays – our Christmas tree and crib will be in church early in Advent and there will be an increasing number of Christmas celebrations from then on – though again, far fewer and different in style from our normal programme. Some Christian churches will have none of this – the tree and crib appear in time for the Christmas Eve midnight service and no Christmas carols are sung before Christmas Day. I confess to not being such a purist but I can see the point as, without the preparation – marking the here and now – the celebration can be pointless.

This Advent, take time to reflect on where the season is leading (perhaps by coming to our online Advent book group or joining in morning prayer online) and so look forward to a season when we can worship our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

*With very best wishes for a happy Christmas – when it comes!*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris".

## **Some thoughts for Advent**

Here we are again at the beginning of a new Church Year. Advent has come around again. Advent, a time of preparation, of recollection, a time for thought and a time for reflection.

Advent is also a time of expectancy. The word Advent comes from two Latin words 'ad' meaning 'to' and 'venire' the Latin verb meaning 'to come'. Hence 'to come to' and we are thinking of Jesus coming to us.

We are looking forward to Christmas and remembering the time when, as our collect for Advent Sunday says, Jesus came 'to visit us in great humility'. He came as the One who had been looked forward to for many generations.

We are preparing to celebrate the coming of someone in the past. Preparing to remember one of the greatest happenings in the history of the world, 'The Incarnation', God taking human form and living amongst us.

We are also preparing ourselves and others to accept fully Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, as the old hymn says and I think that this is a lovely Advent prayer for everyone,

'O come to my heart Lord Jesus  
There is room in my heart for thee.'

We are continually asking God to come into our lives and into our hearts to rule there as King, as each week we say the collect for purity at the beginning of our Communion Service and we ask God to breathe his Holy Spirit into our hearts and our lives, that they may be cleansed and made a suitable place for Christ to dwell, now here in the present.

We are looking forward to a time in the future when God will come to judge the world. Advent is a time when we should think of the end times and of Jesus' promise to come again, to think about the second coming and if it were to come tomorrow are we prepared, are we in a state of grace.

The world, especially in the secular West has decided to forget Advent and to get on with celebrating Christmas, especially this year. It is, however a purple season, not until the Midnight celebration of

Communion on Christmas Eve do we change to white.

Advent is a season of watching and waiting, a time to think about Christ in the past, the present and the future, a challenging season, a time to think about the significance of Christ coming to judge and save.

Advent is also a season of hope. The hope of the Kingdom. Hope based on faith and trust in God. If we did not have these then we would not be preparing for Christmas in quite the same way.

So, let us approach Advent as a time of prayer and preparation, getting ready for the coming of the Lord.

There are special days in Advent which help us to prepare. The Sundays are special and many of us will have an Advent Crown or Ring to help us, by focusing on the Old Testament Prophets and Patriarchs, the New Testament Evangelists, St. John the Baptist and the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Our Lord.

There are other special days during Advent to help and remind us of the significance of the season.

### **December 6th. St. Nicholas**

St. Nicholas was a fourth century saint and bishop, famed for his kindness and generosity, for helping the poor and giving gifts to the needy.

*O Lord, come to us this Advent and give to us the kindness and generosity shown by St. Nicholas, that we may always care for others as you care for us.*

### **December 8th. The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

On this day we remember Mary's own conception by her mother, St. Ann. We remember Mary's own pregnancy, as she patiently awaits the birth of her own Son, Jesus, as she yearns to cradle him in her own arms.

*O Lord, like Mary, the Mother of our Lord, we wait for the coming of your Son. May we have patience and generosity of Spirit to care for others as Mary cared for her son Jesus.*

## **December 9th. 11th. and 12th. Ember Days.**

Ember Days are days at the beginning of each season for fasting, abstinence and prayer, especially for God's gifts in nature and the care of the environment and of all God's gifts to us.

*O Lord, we pray that your gifts may flourish within us, that we may show forth the light of your presence in our lives by in the love and care that we show for others.*

## **December 13th. St. Lucy**

St. Lucy was a fourth century Christian martyr. Her name means "light". The most common story told about her is that she secretly brought gifts of food to persecuted Christians living in hiding. She wore a crown of candles, so that her hands were free to carry her gifts.

*O Lord, may the Light of Christ shine in our hearts and minds this Advent as we welcome you again into our lives when Christmas comes. We pray that during these uncertain times, we may, like St. Lucy, strive to bring help and hope into the lives of those who troubled and in need.*

## **December 17th. O Sapientia (O Wisdom)**

O come, O come O Wisdom from on high  
To rule our hearts and minds and guide our ways,  
To lead us on by knowledge of your love,  
That we may live by love for all our days.

## **December 18th. O Adonai (O Lord God)**

O come, O come to us Lord God of Might,  
Just as you came to those in ages past.  
You came to Moses on the mount in fire.  
O may your power for ever hold us fast.

## **December 19th. O Radix Jesse (O Root of Jesse)**

O come, O come, O Root of Jesse come  
To be a sign to rulers and to kings.  
A sign to all the nations of the earth,  
That you are Sovereign Ruler of all things.

### **December 20th. O Clavis David (O Key of David)**

O come, O come, O Key of David come  
And open up the door of every heart,  
The spirit and the life of every soul  
And cause your loving rule to come and start

### **December 21st. O Oriens (O Morning Star)**

O come, O come and shine O Morning Star.  
Eternal Son of righteousness and light.  
Enlighten all who dwell in depths of dark,  
That we may live and walk within your sight.

### **December 22nd. O Rex Gentium (O King of Nations)**

O come, O come, O King of all the earth.  
O Cornerstone, O come without delay.  
O come to us and save the human race.  
Come to us soon, O Lord and with us stay.

### **December 23rd. O Emmanuel (O God with us)**

O come, O come to us Emmanuel  
Saviour and King of all the human race.  
O come and save us from our faults and sins  
And fill all souls on earth with love and grace.

Fr. Roy

#### **Support for others in need**

The Covid-19 pandemic has not removed the need for support for others – if anything, it has heightened it. Some things can be recycled to support various charities so please continue to save and bring to church the following items:

- Used postage stamps – Christmas is the best time to collect these.
- Unwanted spectacles.
- Old working mobile phones, tablets and laptops.

We continue to collect items of food for the grub tub, supporting the work of Urban Outreach.

## Christmas services

At the time of writing, we are hoping that churches will be open once again for public worship in time for Christmas. However, like everything else, there will need to be a change in what we can offer this year and the pattern of services over the Christmas period will be as outlined below. Congregational singing is still not permitted.

### Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Eve

12.15pm      Holy Communion  
11.00pm      First Communion of Christmas

### Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Day

8.00am      Holy Communion  
10.00am      Holy Communion

### Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December: St John the Evangelist

8.00am      Holy Communion  
11.00am      Holy Communion

No evening service today

*There will be no midweek services on 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January*

### Friday 1st January

12.15pm      Holy Communion

### Toy Service 13 December

This year we are, once again, intending to support Fortalice's Christmas toy appeal. At the time of writing, we are hoping that churches will open again for public worship on 2<sup>nd</sup> December so we should be able to hold our toy service on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December. On that day, we would be very grateful to receive new toys, **unwrapped** which will then be passed on to Fortalice for this year's appeal.

### Christmas Dinner on Jesus

Many readers will know that this year, in partnership with St Philip's church and our two church schools, we have pledged 500 packets of crackers (biscuits, not those with jokes and paper hats inside!) for the Urban Outreach Christmas Dinner on Jesus project. This project will provide a complete Christmas meal for families who otherwise would have very little at Christmas time. Our collection has been slowed down this year by the lockdown but we still need packets of crackers, dropped off at church **no later** than Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December.



## Sermon for Christ the King, on Matthew 25: 31-45, by Revd Ian Hepburn

Since the very first series, my wife, Ilona, has been glued to the Netflix drama *The Crown*. Me, I prefer *Top Gear*. But was interested in the argument this week over the characterisation of the Royals. Some have defended the series by saying the embellishment on screen of the personalities of the Royal Family is just the use of a bit of artistic licence, while others have said that the series at the moment bears no resemblance to the real people, saying that if it's supposed to be a historic drama, the writers should produce the evidence for their portrayal... Stalemate.

Over these last few months we've all become accustomed to the frequent calls for evidence from all kinds of places. It's fitting therefore that St Matthew goes for the evidence-based approach in his gospel. Jesus's life and death and resurrection has caused quite a stir so he focuses on setting down the evidence that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah - the long hoped-for king who would set things right. Matthew's meticulous approach draws out the evidence from prophecy and eyewitness accounts and Jesus's own words, carefully piecing together the jigsaw and *building the case* for Christ.

And this morning's reading is one of the final pieces of the jigsaw to go in place. This little story, of the separation of sheep and goats is a *metaphor for Christ as King and judge of the nations*.

### **The story**

It's a simple story about a Palestinian shepherd, gathering his flock in at the end of a day's grazing. There are sheep and there are goats, and the shepherd separates them according to their type... This is a familiar scene in Palestine, but probably leaves us with the question why the goats and sheep need to be separated at all. The answer lies in the pragmatic... The goats don't have the insulation to protect them from the cold exposure of a night on the hills where the temperatures can drop significantly – they need to huddle together for warmth – while the sheep have their abundance of Arran knitwear to keep the cold out.

***The shepherd knows his flock. He knows what's needed and he knows how to care for them.***

In the Lake District where we regularly camp on a farm, early in the evening when it's time to bring the sheep in, you can hear the whistles of the farmer with his dogs and the noise of the quad bikes as they round them up and drive the sheep back to the field nearest the farmhouse. It's a different story in the hills of Palestine, where shepherds still today go ahead of their flocks, and call them on with whistles and shouts. And the sheep and goats recognise their voice and follow on, even if the shepherd is out of sight.

## ***The Shepherd knows his flock, and the flock recognise the shepherd's voice***

### **Jesus the Messiah**

So the flock are separated out between the sheep and the goats; as a metaphor for justice and judgment. However, it loses some of its meaning when it's transferred into our very different culture with its developed and, by comparison, transparent legal system. Even a sophisticated legal system, which has at its core the aim to serve the common good, isn't able to get it right all the time.

How much more was justice a burning issue for a minority people group like the Jewish nation, under the vast authoritarianism of the Roman Empire; where rough justice was the rule rather than the exception. So the hope for Justice at the end of time, and a redressing of the balance of things was, and still is, a recurring and important theme and a source of hope for those most hard-pressed in this life. This righteous judgment is the infinitely complicated and unenviable task of the Divine, and Matthew tells us that this task is to fall Jesus. It's as unequivocal as that, Matthew says. And that is the capstone to Matthew's teaching, what he's been building up to, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the King, and the judge of all nations.

Jesus said this to the disciples on the Mount of Olives. Were they surprised at this? Did they grasp what had been said? Or was it all too much for them to take in? Matthew doesn't tell us.

### **What kind of King?**

What he does tell us relates to the kind of king and judge we might expect to see. Titles or roles that could lead to aloofness. Yet, Matthew says, that couldn't be any further from the truth.

During the Blitz, King George 6<sup>th</sup> and his family stayed at Buckingham Palace, against the advice of the Foreign Office, who tried to get them to move to Canada. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, said at the time... "The children will not leave unless I do, I shall not leave unless their father does, and the King shall not leave the country under any circumstances whatever!" In spite of the Foreign Office advice and in spite of nine direct hits on the palace from bombs, the King and his family bound up their fate with the people of London. Their fate became his fate, their struggles became his struggles.

Jesus doesn't stand aloof. The king in the story isn't a remote onlooker, shielded from the struggle and the difficulties of the poor. No, this King stands with the most vulnerable in their time of need: the hungry, the destitute and the prisoner – He stands with them. Advent is a stone's throw away, and there we find ourselves reminded of another name of

Jesus – Immanuel, God with us. The King and Judge shows himself to be personable, ‘with us’, allowing his ear to be bent by those in need, and standing with them in solidarity... calling them members of his family.

They said, “Lord, when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you?....And the King will answer them, “truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these, who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

It’s another way of throwing the challenge back to us – to “Go and do likewise”.

As we celebrate today the Feast of Christ the King, Christ who calls us members of his own family, we are encouraged by St Teresa of Avila’s reflection on this passage, which she turned into her famous prayer:

*Christ has no body now but ours. No hands, no feet on earth but ours.*

*ours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world.*

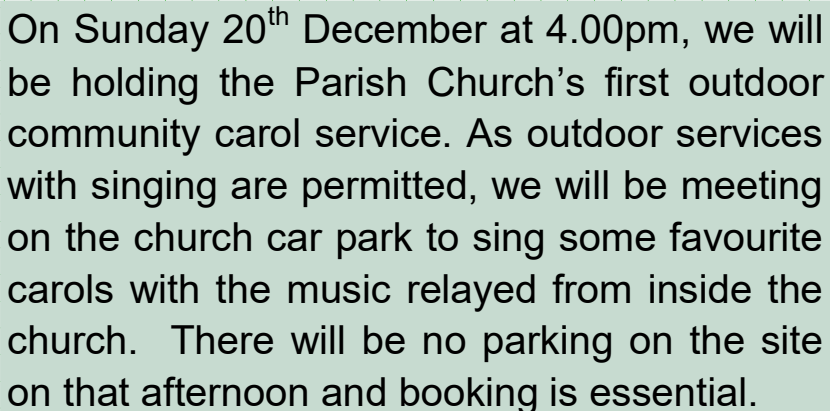
*ours are the feet with which he walks to do good.*

*ours are the hands through which he blesses all the world.*

*ours are the hands, ours are the feet, ours are the eyes, ours are the body.*

*Christ ( The King ) has no body now on earth but ours.*

Amen.



On Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 4.00pm, we will be holding the Parish Church’s first outdoor community carol service. As outdoor services with singing are permitted, we will be meeting on the church car park to sing some favourite carols with the music relayed from inside the church. There will be no parking on the site on that afternoon and booking is essential.

Please speak to one of the clergy or churchwardens if you would like to come along and sing.

## **CHURCHYARD TREES AND ASH DIEBACK**

Did you know that there are over 100 trees in the churchyard, all of which are recorded and plotted on a register kept by Bolton Council? Most were planted when the Council assumed responsibility for maintenance of the churchyard as a closed burial ground over 100 years ago.

A few weeks ago I was with the Council's Arboriculture Officers whilst they surveyed all the trees in the churchyard. In recent years, ash dieback has resulted in the loss of thousands of ash trees across the country. Sadly, as I feared, the disease has now attacked some of the ash trees in the churchyard.

Trees which have been identified as being dead or diseased have had to be felled to prevent the disease from spreading. Other trees have benefited from pruning, and self-seeded saplings, mainly sycamore, have been removed. Some of the trees were on the north side of the church overlooking Church Bank and the removal of these opens up views of that side of the church as well as increasing daylight in this area.

The work was completed during November .

We want to replace the removed trees with suitable specimens. This will be one of the projects to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2021 and we will shortly announce proposals for the purchase of the replacement trees with names of donors suitably recorded. Full details will be announced shortly.

Canon John Walsh OBE

### **The Nativity of our Lord, or the Birth-day of Christ, Commonly called Christmas-Day**

*The Collect.*

**ALMIGHTY** God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*



## **Bolton Parish Church CE Primary School**

It has been a real pleasure having all of our children back in school this term. They have all made a really good start to the new school year and have adapted well to the changes in our routines necessary to minimise the risk of COVID 19. They have really impressed us with their readiness to learn and impeccable behaviour. During the Spring lockdown we remained open for key workers and vulnerable children, whilst delivering weekly work packs to all our 240 children. For the families who had internet capabilities, and a suitable device, we supplemented this with online learning platforms. We were fortunate once schools reopened in June that our new build layout, both inside and outside, facilitated COVID practices; inside, the circular layout enabled a one-way system, nine exit doors enabled classes to enter and leave school without crossing paths, and the positioning of the school on the grounds enabled a one-way system for dropping off and picking up children. We had terrific support from the parents and were able to open for all children in all classes from June. Although not all parents were confident in sending their children back into school in June, the large number that did have ensured a smoother start in September. This also supported staff as they were confident about how systems would work, being already familiar with our new practices.

The challenges going forward include adapting our teaching practices and curriculum and increasing the number of our school devices to enable children who are needing to isolate at home to engage with their teachers, and learning online as this is now a legal requirement. Also, a second focus is the identification of gaps in learning, as a result of the spring and summer lockdown, and creation of teaching programmes to close these gaps and ensure children quickly catch up to where they had been projected to be pre-COVID as soon as possible.

### **Church and Worship**

Due to the restrictions related to COVID 19, children are not currently able to visit church or have whole school assemblies. To ensure our focus on our faith, our Christian Values and our Church link do not wane, we have adapted our practices in school. We now have a daily class worship which across the week includes: a video worship produced by a member of clergy

from Church, a headteacher PowerPoint which includes the Diocese materials and video links for that week, a class follow-up activity created by myself which is linked to our Christian Values (this may cover two sessions) and a celebration class worship. We also share the video links on our Facebook page for children who are needing to isolate at home. Although the Ethos Team are not able to meet together at the moment, we are currently looking at ways to keep them engaged and active in school safely.

## **Parents**

Due to the restrictions related to COVID 19, our half-termly parent workshops and update morning have had to pause. We continue to keep our parents informed by sharing a detailed class booklet at the start of term, half-termly written updates, our weekly newsletter and an increased staff and leadership presence on the playground at drop-off and collection times. We have also increased the number of text messages going home and all children isolating due to a confirmed case in their home or being clinically vulnerable receive a phone call home at least once a week. Feedback from parents has been very positive.

## **Well-being**

The emotional well-being of our children, staff and their families is very important and we have adapted school practices to enable a focus on supporting everyone's emotional well-being during the current pandemic. In addition to changes across the curriculum and awareness that children are missing out on many normal celebrations and family occasions (being unable to meet up with family or friends), we are creating opportunities for children to relax and have fun in school. An example of this was the Autumn Celebration Day we organised for Bonfire Night day. On this day, children were able to attend school in costume or their own clothes. They spent the morning learning about the origins of Bonfire Night and made fire safety posters. The afternoon was spent doing craft activities and having in-class party games. The feedback from parents and children has been very positive and despite the restrictions, children report they are very happy to be back in school. Our attendance figures back this up, being better than the current National figures at 93% (National: 90%). This is despite the need for children to isolate and having to close class bubbles several times since we started back in September.

We very much look forward to life being back to normal and being able to come into our Church again.

*Angela Worthington, Headteacher*



## Flower News

On 1st November, a pedestal arrangement was placed in the nave for All Saints. The arrangement included white carnations, chrysanthemum and roses, with molucella and garden foliage. An arrangement of white delphiniums, carnations and chrysanthemums was created in the Lady chapel. Members of the Royal Artillery attended the morning service on that day to lay a wreath at their memorial plaque. A pedestal arrangement of red carnations, roses, green chrysanthemums and hypericum berries was placed near to the memorial.

For Remembrance Sunday, the pedestal arrangement in red and green with additional poppies, was placed by the war memorial.

The WW1 lantern was framed by red, white and blue arrangements before being transferred to the Cenotaph in Victoria Square. Handmade poppies were used to create a striking effect in the windows of the south porch.

Members of Sunday school had created a fine display for Remembrance which was placed below the Chancel wall (see photo on next page).

Plans for the decoration of church for Christmas are going ahead “virtually” at the moment. As these plans have to be very flexible at this present

time, we are aiming for a simple mediaeval style, making use of candles, holly, ivy, garden foliage and crafted angels. Members of Sunday school are preparing angels at home (see article on next page).

With grateful thanks for donations received, and for support and encouragement given (distanced, and sometimes virtual) during 2020.

Flower Team







## Sunday School

This Christmas, Sunday School will be using angels to help decorate Church. As we have made each one, we have remembered someone who makes us smile and we have said thank you for them. This makes each angel a little prayer, 'Our Christmas Prayers'.

We are hoping and praying that the coming months will allow us to share more times together. Canon Chris has written a prayer on the theme of hope and I have a feeling we will be hearing more about this in the New Year.

Teach us good Lord, to pray  
in faith,  
and to live in hope,  
that we may go out into your world,  
confident in that same hope,  
and filled with the good news of  
Jesus Christ.

To him be the glory, now and for  
ever.


Amen




Have a blessed Christmas  
from everyone in Sunday  
School x


## Carol service from the archives

1991 Carol Service. From the collection of David F. Morlidge.




**BOLTON PARISH CHURCH**  
**ST. PETER WITH HOLY TRINITY**






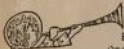
**A  
SERVICE  
OF  
NINE  
LESSONS  
AND  
CAROLS**

**CHRISTMAS EVE 1991**



**Organ Music**  
Sinfonia to Cantata No. 29  
Jesu, Joy of man's desiring  
Carol Prelude "The Coventry Carol"  
W. S. Lloyd-Messer





**PROCESSIONAL HYMN 432**  
Once in Royal David's City  
(verses 1 & 2 Choir only)

**BIDDING AND LORD'S PRAYER**

Invitatory Carol: The First Nowell  
arr. David Willcocks

**First Lesson** Genesis 3 : 8-15  
God announces in the Garden of Eden that the  
seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head  
Mr. Alex Holman  
Head Boy, Canon Slade


Carol: Adam lay ybounden  
Boris Ord

**HYMN 58**  
Of the Father's love begotten

**Second Lesson** Genesis 22 : 15-18  
God promises to faithful Abraham that in his  
seed shall all the nations of the earth be  
blessed  
Miss Sheila Crook  
Headteacher, Bolton Parish School


Carol: In the bleak midwinter  
Gustav Holst

**Third Lesson** Isaiah 9 : 2,6,7  
Christ's birth and Kingdom are foretold  
by Isaiah  
Mr. L. W. Scarff  
Secretary, Bolton, Leigh & District Deaf Society



Carol: Torches  
John Joubert

**Fourth Lesson** Micah 5 : 2-5  
The prophet Micah foretells the glory  
of Bethlehem  
Rev. Robert Lawrence  
Lecturer, Bolton Parish Church



**HYMN 65**  
O little town of Bethlehem

**Fifth Lesson** Luke 1 : 26-33,38  
The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed  
Virgin Mary  
Mrs. Pat Sneddon  
Matron, Bolton Hospice

Carol: Love came down at Christmas  
John Rutter

**Sixth Lesson** Matthew 1 : 18-25  
The birth of Jesus  
Mr. Richard Monks  
President, Bolton Chartered Accountants' Society


Carols: Sans Day Carol  
Lullay my lylking  
arr. John Rutter  
Gustav Holst

**Seventh Lesson** Luke 8 : 8-19  
The shepherds go to the manger  
Mrs. A. Miles  
Vice-President,  
Business & Professional Women's Club

**HYMN 66**  
It came upon a midnight clear

Carol: God rest ye merry Gentlemen  
arr. David Willcocks

**Eighth Lesson** Matthew 2 : 1-11  
The wise men are led by a star to Jesus  
The Mayor of Bolton  
Councillor G. Riley



Carol: We Three Kings of Orient are  
Traditional

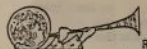
**Ninth Lesson (Stand)** John 1 : 1-14  
St. John unfolds the great mystery of the  
Incarnation  
The Vicar

Carol: Coventry Carol  
arr. Shaw

**OFFERTORY HYMN 593 (omit v.7)**  
O Come all ye faithful

**Responses:** Bernard Rose

**Collect for Christmas Eve**



**BLESSING**

**RECESSIONAL HYMN 60**  
Hark the herald angels sing

**Voluntary**  
In dulci jubilo BWV 729  
J. S. Bach

Organist and Choirmaster: Kevin Morgan

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**Christmas Services**

**CHRISTMAS EVE:** 11.30 p.m. Midnight Choral Eucharist

**CHRISTMAS DAY:** 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion  
10.30 a.m. Family Communion

**ST. STEPHEN (Boxing Day):** 12 noon Holy Communion

**CHRISTMAS SUNDAY (29th Dec.):** 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion  
10.30 a.m. Parish Eucharist



## Latest recommended posting dates

Friday 18 December: 2nd class and 2nd class signed for.

Monday 21 December: 1st class and 1st class signed for. Royal Mail Tracked 48 hours.

Tuesday 22 December: Royal Mail Tracked 24 hours.

Wednesday 23 December: Special Delivery Guaranteed

Last month's Cryptogram of Bible verses. If you didn't see these last month, there's still time to have a go. Answers on page 27.

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

G A E A E A E E  
 Y U A V D N O A C R K O A G G T O F I R K O  
 E E ; E E E A  
 O L O K H D O N O H Q R K O C K A D F J  
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A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
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E E G G A E  
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 A E A A G  
 J V S K M P O Q E S O J F O N K M R Q S  
 A E A G 1 : 1  
 J V S K M P O Q E S O J F R Q S T V

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 S A S F F I J F F P V G F F R P Y N A P C H J N V  
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## **Planned giving**

When you come to church, please remember to bring your filled planned giving envelopes. If you would like to make your regular giving by standing order (and thank you so much to those who have recently set up standing orders and those who have been doing it that way for years) the account details you need are:

### **Parish Church**

Account Name: Bolton Parish Church PCC Stewardship.

Sort Code: 16-00-06

Account Number: 11816952

### **St Philip's**

Account Name: St. Philip's Parochial Church Council.

Sort Code: 77-02-04

Account Number: 00017505

## **The Pretoria Pit Disaster**

Mining accidents have often been in the news over the years – recent ones including the rescue of the Chilean miners, 37 fatalities caused by a coal mine gas leak in central China's Henan Province and the loss of 29 lives in the New Zealand Pike River mine. And this month we remember that our own area suffered a mining tragedy – the Pretoria Pit Disaster – exactly 110 years ago. It was the third largest mining disaster in British history, with 344 men and boys losing their lives. The official report concluded that a damaged safety lamp ignited gas pouring from an extensive roof-fall.

Hulton Colliery, known locally as Pretoria Pit, was a complex of coal seams situated on the border of Westhoughton and Atherton. The employees were mainly local men and boys, but there were also workers from nearby Bolton. On the morning of 21 December 1910, the workers clocked in for the day shift at the colliery while the rest of the community was preparing for Christmas. Over 340 men had already descended the No. 3 pit shaft when there was a massive underground explosion at 7.50 a.m.

Alfred Tonge, the General Manager of Hulton Colliery heard the explosion and quickly arrived on the scene, leading a team of rescuers into the mine. Only 4 men survived the blast. They were Fountain Byers,

William Davenport, Joseph Staveley and Simeon Gibson, a boy who was found unconscious but still breathing near No. 3 shaft. He was sent to the surface but soon died. Fountain Byers succumbed to his injuries on the following day, leaving behind a wife and child, just three days before Christmas. Joseph Staveley, a 16-year-old on his first day of work at the mine, and William Davenport were the only two survivors. A third survivor was named as John Sharples. However, he had not descended the No. 3 shaft, but had been in No. 4 Pit, and was taken to hospital suffering from gas inhalation.

A total of 342 men and boys died in No. 3 Pit. The other two victims were a worker in No. 4 Pit and a rescuer who died while attempting to put out a fire. Twenty-four unidentified bodies were buried in a vault in Westhoughton Cemetery. Eight were later identified from clothing, property and photographs, but they were not re-interred.

Within the boundaries of Bolton, there are two recorded mining accidents at which five or more people lost their lives: in 1835, at Ladyshore Colliery, Little Lever, ten men and seven boys drowned when water from the River Croal inundated the pit. In 1907, ten men were killed at Fogg's Colliery, Darcy Lever, in a cage collision.



Statue by Jane Robbins opposite Westhoughton church, unveiled 100 years after the Pretoria Pit disaster

## Quiz – Advent, Christmas and Epiphany hymns

Can you identify the hymns from the words below?

(in no particular order! – answers next month)

- |                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| 1. Shout       | 12. Dreams of darkness |
| 2. Fountain    | 13. Lowing             |
| 3. Dismay      | 14. Cure               |
| 4. Quail       | 15. Contemplations     |
| 5. Dear desire | 16. Two thousand       |
| 6. Imparts     | 17. Thither            |
| 7. Prisoners   | 18. Ever-blessèd       |
| 8. Obedient    | 19. Line               |
| 9. Veiled      | 20. Rude               |
| 10. Salute     | 21. Guest              |
| 11. Wailing    | 22. Ransom             |

## Church of England schools and academies

- Each diocese runs a Diocesan Board of Education supporting Church schools, which represents an annual investment of over £15 million.
- Approximately **1 million** children attend Church of England schools.
- About **15 million** people alive today went to a Church of England school.
- A **quarter** of primary schools and over **200** secondary schools are Church of England.
- With **250** sponsored and over **650** converter academies, the Church is the biggest sponsor of academies in England.
- Over **500** independent schools declare themselves to be Church of England in ethos.
- Across the country, Church of England clergy dedicate a million hours every year to working with children and young people in schools, often providing holiday and after-school activities.
- There are **22,500** Foundation Governors in Church schools recruited, trained and supported by dioceses.

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and princes are home,  
when the shepherds are back with the flocks,  
then the work of Christmas begins:  
to find the lost,  
to heal those broken in spirit,  
to feed the hungry,  
to release the oppressed,  
to rebuild the nations,  
to bring peace among all peoples,  
to make a little music with the heart...  
And to radiate the Light of Christ,  
every day, in every way, in all that we do and in all that we say.  
Then the work of Christmas begins.

*Howard Thurman*

**“Christmas is a season not only of rejoicing but of reflection.”**

*– Winston Churchill*

**“I heard the bells on Christmas Day**

**Their old familiar carols play**

**And wild and sweet, the words repeat**

**Of peace on earth, good-will to men.”**

*– Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

**“Love the giver more than the gift.”**

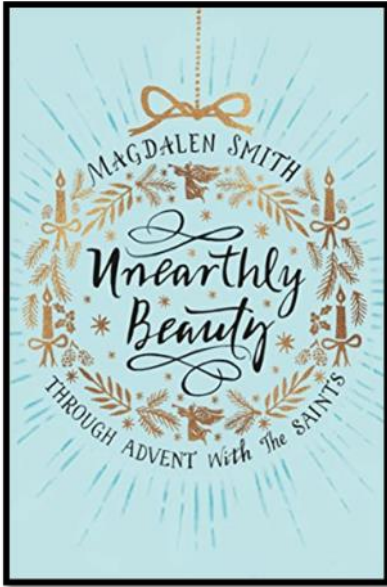
*– Brigham Young*

**“I stopped believing in Santa Claus when I was six. Mother took me to see him in a department store and he asked for my autograph.”**

*– Shirley Temple*



# Benefice Advent Book Group



We are now in the season of Advent and, like everything else this year, it will be different. Following the success of our Lent book groups, this year we are going to hold an Advent book group online.

The group will meet via Zoom on four Mondays in Advent: 30<sup>th</sup> November, 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> December, from 7.30pm to 8.30pm.

We'll spend around 45 minutes talking together about parts of the book we've read and end with the service of Night Prayer known as Compline.

The book we have chosen is 'Unearthly Beauty: Through Advent with the Saints' by Magdalen Smith (Published by SPCK in 2017. ISBN 9780281077182).

In a series of easy-to-read devotions, the author introduces us to 24 characters – some well-known, others not so well known – who help us glimpse holiness in a new way.

The book is available on line for between £5 and £7 depending on bookseller, and for Kindle at £4.79. You can also order it from Isaiah 53 (formerly CLC bookshop, and now located at the top of Crown Street) who are running a click and collect service. Ring them on 01204 532384 between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. (note: they are closed on Wednesdays and Sundays).

Please think about joining the group – even if you can't make it every week. Joining details are:

## Topic: Advent Book Group

Time: This is a recurring meeting—meet anytime

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89160135385?pwd=colaUUxDcE1tcMNGUTdsWG4vQ3lzdzo9>

Meeting ID: 891 6013 5385

Passcode: 580679



Isaiah 53 Christian Bookshop  
Unit 1  
2-5 Crown Street  
Bolton  
BL1 2RU



Tel: 01204 532 384 | [info@isaiah53christianbookshop.org](mailto:info@isaiah53christianbookshop.org) | [www.isaiah53christianbookshop.org](http://www.isaiah53christianbookshop.org)

Part of our Eco Church journey involves a commitment to shopping locally, and we are fortunate indeed to have an excellent independent shop here on our own doorstep.



The bookshop will re-open on 3 December and is worth a visit.

Isaiah 53 has been described as an oasis in the town centre. The shop offers a wide selection of books, bibles, Christmas cards, nativity scenes, Advent candles, calendars, notebooks, tea towels, mugs and an array of other gifts and worship resources.



Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/)

## Bolton's Big Carol Service



There has been an incredible response to the 'Bolton Churches' Christmas Initiative' with over 45 different churches and Christian organisations supporting the event by contributing financially to the advertisements on the billboards and buses or ordering resources to promote the carol service.

There have been orders for over 16,000 Christmas cards, 400

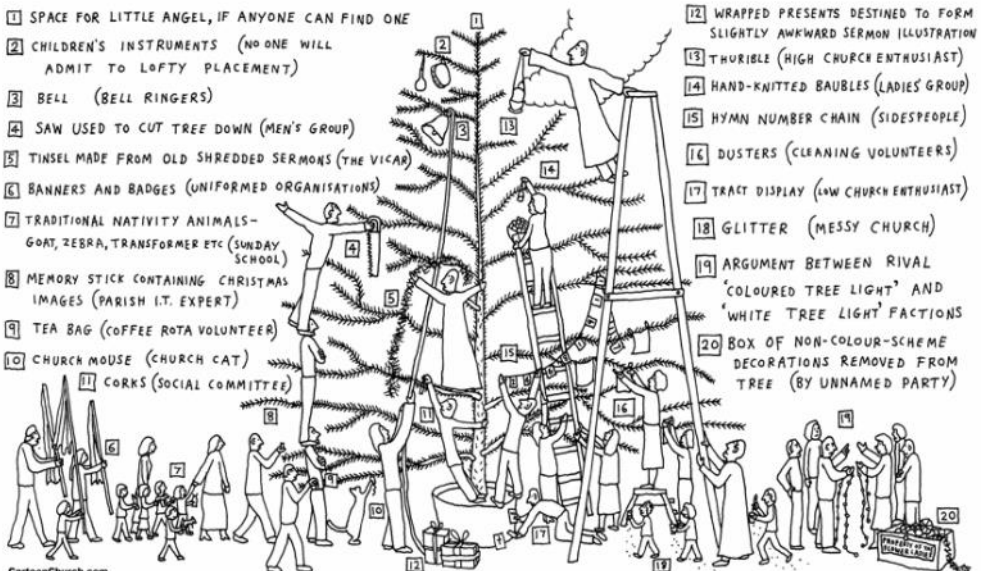
posters and 47 large banners which will be displayed outside churches across the Bolton borough.

Please look out for the advertisements throughout December and invite friends, family and neighbours to watch the carol service on Mon 21<sup>st</sup> Dec at 7pm, or any time after, on You Tube or Facebook.

### The Pre-Covid Christmas Tree

## THE PARISH CHRISTMAS TREE

THE THINGS THAT ARE HANGING ON IT (AND THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE DONE THE HANGING)



# Harvey A Crerar

*For all your plumbing and  
building work*

Telephone 01204 669170

Mobile 07759 19 44 78

1B Ansdell Road

Horwich

## Cryptogram answers

Guard me as the apple  
of the eye; hide me in  
the shadow of your  
wings

Psalm 17: 8 NRSV

In the beginning was the  
Word, and the Word  
was with God, and the  
Word was God  
John 1: 1 NRSV

I will give thanks to the  
Lord with my whole  
heart; I will tell of all  
your wonderful deeds.  
Psalm 9 : 1 NRSV

To advertise in this publication,  
contact

admin@boltonparishchurch.co.uk

## Walsh's



## De Olde Pastie Shoppe

Open: MONDAY - FRIDAY 9.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m.

Closed: SATURDAY and SUNDAY

We are the little shop with the big reputation. We have served generations for generations, and the family has run the business since 1898. We sell fresh and frozen pasties and meat pies, along with pasties, whist pies and mini sausage rolls which are great for parties. Our uncooked frozen pasties, which can be baked at home for that 'fresh from the oven' taste, are well worth a try.

29 - 31 Churchgate, BOLTON BL1 1

Tel : 01204 - 524834

Fax: 01204 - 371682

**We support Royal School for the Blind, Church Road,  
Wavertree, LIVERPOOL L15 6TQ**

## **Bolton Parish Church Online**

**Email:** [admin@boltonparishchurch.co.uk](mailto:admin@boltonparishchurch.co.uk)

**Website:** [www.boltonparishchurch.co.uk](http://www.boltonparishchurch.co.uk)

Details of services, events, newsletters, magazines, important updates etc.

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/boltonparishchurch](http://www.facebook.com/boltonparishchurch)

Official Church Facebook page, with news, photos, and archive of online services and prayers

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/MusicAtBoltonParishChurch](http://www.facebook.com/MusicAtBoltonParishChurch)

News about music, with photos, details of musical events and videos of choir and organ

**Twitter:** @StPeterBolton

**Instagram:** [boltonparishchurchimages](https://www.instagram.com/boltonparishchurchimages)

Photos of Bolton Parish Church

## **Care packages for students at Bolton University**

Revd David Brae, young adults pioneer for Bolton town centre writes:

*I've been chatting with Revd Dr Gill Smart who is the chaplain at Bolton University about the idea of giving some care packages to the students in halls of residence.*

*I'm hoping to spend around £4 per person, with a view to keeping costs under £2,000. The care packages will consist of mini toothbrush, mini toothpaste, shower gel and deodorant, and will include a note saying something like "... on behalf of all the Church of England churches in Bolton, we'd like to let you know that we are here to support and encourage you."*

*We would also give them a contact, probably my own and Gill's for further contact if people wanted to connect. I would also be able to signpost students to the various churches across the deaneries should they make contact. If possible, could you ask your church whether they would be able to contribute financially to the packages? Thank you.*

If you would like to make a financial contribution to this project, please pass your gift to one of the clergy or wardens.

# Luke 1:26-37 *The Angel Gabriel visits Mary*



The following 25 phrases are hidden in the grid – can you find them? They are all used in Luke 1:26-37 (NIV). Each phrase is in passage order, not alphabetical

- |                      |                             |                                  |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • IN THE SIXTH MONTH | • PLEDGED TO BE MARRIED     | • GIVE HIM THE NAME JESUS        |
| • GOD SENT           | • JOSEPH                    | • HE WILL BE GREAT               |
| • THE ANGEL GABRIEL  | • DESCENDANT OF DAVID       | • THE SON OF THE MOST HIGH       |
| • TO NAZARETH        | • GREETINGS                 | • THRONE OF HIS FATHER DAVID     |
| • TO A VIRGIN        | • THE LORD IS WITH YOU      | • HE WILL REIGN                  |
|                      | • MARY WAS GREATLY TROUBLED | • OVER THE HOUSE OF JACOB        |
|                      | • DO NOT BE AFRAID          | • HIS KINGDOM                    |
|                      | • FOUND FAVOUR WITH GOD     | • WILL NEVER END                 |
|                      | • YOU WILL BE WITH CHILD    | • NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD |
|                      | • GIVE BIRTH TO A SON       |                                  |



## Winter Solstice – 21 December

A Midwinter festival has been a part of life since pre-Christian times. When the hours of daylight are fewest, the warmth of the sun weakest, and life itself seemingly at a standstill, our ancestors, the pagan peoples of Europe and Western Asia, kept festival by lighting bonfires and decorating their buildings with evergreens.

Perhaps they believed that the dying sun could be enheartened by fire, and the life of the buried seed assured by the presence of evergreen branches.

With the advent of Christianity, the Spring gods became identified with Christ, and the birthday of the sun with the birthday of the Light of the World.

The early church father Tertullian did not approve of Christmas decorations. “Let those who have no light in themselves light candles!... You are the light of the world, you are the tree ever green....” But by the time of St Gregory and St Augustine, four centuries later, this had changed. Pope Gregory instructed Augustine not to worry about harmless outward customs, as long as the right God were worshipped through them. And so many Anglo-Saxon customs were never discarded, but simply endowed with a new significance.

By 1598 a certain John Stow of London wrote how: “Against the feast of Christmas, every man’s house, as also their parish churches, were decked with holm, ivie, bayes, and whatsoever the season of the yeare afforded to be greene.”

### Where did Christmas stockings come from?



No one is really sure, but a story is told of St Nicholas, the 4th century bishop, who may have started the custom by accident. St Nicholas was from a wealthy family, and of a generous nature. As Christmas approached one year, he wanted to help a poor family whom he knew, but he wanted to do so anonymously. So he climbed up on their roof on Christmas Eve and dropped some coins down the chimney.

The next morning, to the great surprise of the family, the coins were found in the stockings of the ladies, who had hung them to dry by the fire the night before. Every year after that they put their stockings out, in the hope that some more money would fall into them. The amazing story was passed on to their friends and neighbours, and the custom caught on.



The writing of this report feels very different this academic year, under very unusual circumstances than we have been used to in school. The first few weeks have undoubtedly been challenging after the lockdown as we try to establish a new normal. Nevertheless, we have gotten off to a swift start and have been looking forward each week, trying to maintain our whole curriculum offer to be accessed by all children confidently. With risk assessments in place, leaders are keeping the school environment as safe as possible for all, and have so far been successful in maintaining many aspects of school life, some of which are detailed below.

This academic year there have been significant changes to our breakfast club offer, due to social distancing rules, as well as how lunch time is arranged and how the children enter and leave the school building. The children are taught in year group bubbles which has been very effective as children can still access a range of opportunities across two classes. Groups can be organised to be taught by year group staff and children are able to maintain social relationships. Leaders have developed the 'Recovery Curriculum' which highlights to staff the learning which children have missed through the first lockdown and how this can be recovered, whilst still maintaining current year group teaching. Staff dedication to enable all children to catch up as quickly as possible has been second to none.

There has been added pressure undoubtedly from continued absence from children if they or family members develop symptoms of Covid 19. We have had some year group closures, which have included our Nursery, Year 6 and this week our Year 2 cohorts. When this happens, contingency plans are in place for remote teaching, and teachers are again working hard to ensure as many children as possible are able to access school on line, and provide paper packs for those children who have no access.

Worship sessions continue to be an important part of the school day. With collective worship in the hall not in line with the current risk assessments, worship takes place in individual classrooms. We have been extremely fortunate in being able to access weekly recorded clergy assemblies from Canon Chris and Rev Ian, as well as 'Worship to Go' sessions from Manchester Diocese. These have been supplemented with a mixture of live and recorded worship sessions delivered by staff at the school.

Having positive mental health has never been as important as in these current times. At Bishop Bridgeman this is always a high priority, so staff have continued to support children's mental health through discreet sessions teaching about a healthy mind, as well as through sessions such as 'Commando Joes' which is delivered by an instructor who has been in the armed forces, where children undertake a range of activities to develop their resilience, positivity and team work as well as a range of other skills to foster their character.



Commando Joe session developing team-building and resilience

Our school calendar is usually filled with a range of wider opportunities which are on offer for pupils and their families. However, these have been significantly reduced so far this year. Wherever possible, leaders will balance the risks before undertaking curriculum enrichment activities.

So far this term, we have been able to fundraise for Macmillan Cancer Support and we will be doing the same for Children in Need. We have started our collection of crackers for the Urban Outreach initiative 'Christmas Dinner on Jesus'.

Our Year 2 cohort have enjoyed a day in Rivington, visiting the terraced gardens whilst researching Lord Leverhulme as part of their local history topic. Equally, the Year 1 cohort enjoyed taking part in a Tudor themed day which involved baking some traditional foods from the times.

One event which the whole school are looking forward to in a few weeks is a live theatre performance of 'Wizard of Oz' which will be held in school for year group bubbles throughout the day. Plans are also being developed for how best to celebrate Christmas later this term, with recorded nativity performances and carol singing. I look forward to sharing these moments over the next few weeks with you all.

Mrs H Hafeji  
Principal





Year 2 trip to Rivington as part of their local study of William Hesketh Lever



Left:  
Tudor baking  
by Year 1

## Who said it? From magazine contributions during the year

Chris (11), Ian (4), Kenneth (4) or Barrie (3) *Answers at foot of next page*

1. However we address the decisions of the future, we do so as people united in the faith and hope that the risen Jesus brings.
2. We can no longer rely on certain “givens” in society.
3. I can only say, thank God for our primary and secondary school teachers!
4. We have a great privilege in being members of this mixed and varied church family in which everyone, regardless of age or background has a full and equal part.
5. Whether one is an astronomer looking up at the stars or a worshipper in Bolton Parish Church looking upwards at the stained-glass windows, we are confronted by mystery.
6. We have lost ‘an age of innocence’.
7. I wonder what stories of bold trust and confidence in the power of God to ‘change the dynamic’ will transpire over the coming weeks?
8. However else you use the time in Holy Week, I encourage you to join with me as I try not to “hit the ground running” but to “hit the ground kneeling”.
9. It was St Augustine who is said to have observed that to sing is to pray twice, and there is great wisdom in that.
10. ...we can with confidence trust our Creator, for it is the bedrock of our faith.
11. In only a few weeks, we have adapted to a new way of living and learned a new vocabulary.
12. And we know that the Universe is getting bigger – we can measure the speed of its expansion. But what is it expanding into?
13. Faith experience is often likened to a journey and many of our hymns – from as far back as “*He who would valiant be*” to the more recent as “*One more step along the world I go*” echo this theme.
14. But even just scratching the surface of 2000 years of Christian prayer, and beyond, I find myself feeling like I am ‘standing on the shoulders of giants’.
15. We have an enormous deposit of faith within our Christian community here and I thank God that it overflows into every walk of life well beyond the church building.

16. Many people have found themselves courageously undertaking roles they weren't expecting.
17. The German philosopher Hegel famously wrote that *'the only thing that we learn from history is that we learn nothing from history'* – how true.
18. Soon I was stumbling on exactly the same sense of ignorance, mystery and, yes, awe.
19. I am deeply committed to everyone at Bolton Parish Church being able to use their gifts and talents in the most effective way possible.
20. Perhaps we can all identify with the “knocks, bruises, difficulties and adversities” which maybe experienced in the journey of life here on earth.
21. It's often the case that we take everyday things for granted and only realise their significance when they're not there.
22. In vain thou strugglest to get free  
I never will unloose my hold  
Art thou the man who died for me?  
The mystery of thy love unfold  
Wrestling, I will not let thee go  
Till I thy name, thy nature know.



Charles Wesley).

1. Chris, 2.. Chris, 3. Ian, 4. Chris, 5. Kenneth, 6.Barrie, 7. Ian, 8. Chris, 9. Chris, 10. Barrie, 11. Chris, 12. Kenneth, 13. Chris, 14. Ian, 15. Chris, 16. Ian, 17. Chris, 18. Kenneth, 19. Chris, 20. Barrie, 21 Chris, 22. Kenneth (quoting

## BOLTON PARISH CHURCH CONTACTS

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Associate Priest:	Revd Barrie Gaskell	07512782297
Lecturer:	Revd Ian Hepburn lecturer@boltonparishchurch.co.uk	01942 814045
Authorised Lay Minister:	Evelyn F Weston	01204 594123
Church Wardens:	Canon John Walsh OBE	01204 840188
	Evelyn F Weston	01204 594123
Deputy Wardens:	Mr Graham C Burrows      Mr David Eckersley Mr Alan Forrester          Mr Andrew J Mitchell Mr David F Morlidge        Mr Trevor J Whillas Miss Esther Gelling	
PCC Secretary:	Mr Ian Darbyshire	
Treasurer:	Mr Andrew J Mitchell	01204 840633
Director of Music:	Mr Michael Pain michaelpain18@gmail.com	01204 491827
Administration	admin@boltonparishchurch.co.uk	01204 522226

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	Canon Jill Pilling	07977 933010