

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2018

DIRECTORY

Team Ministers

Team Rector	Canon Dr Chris Bracegirdle	01942 859251
Team Vicar	Revd Angela Wynne	01204 468150
Curate:	Revd Kirsty Screeton	01942 575383
Reader Emeritus	Alan Morris	01942 817871
Reader	Christine Radford	01942 790091
Reader	Elaine Simkin	01942 810762

Parish Wardens

Margaret Dolphin		01942 790415
Edward McHale		01942 812193

Deputy Wardens

<i>St Bartholomew</i>	Christine Andrews	01942 817146
	Joyce Cunliffe	01204 697652
<i>St George</i>	Pat James	01204 492994
	Sarah Barry	01942 840441
<i>St Thomas</i>	Tim Browning	07827 275262
	Janet Perfect	01942 814090

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Chris writes.....

Dear friends,

It's against a backdrop of very mixed emotions that I find myself writing this letter – my final one as Team Rector. It would be less than honest of me not to say that I am looking forward to my new work in Bolton and there is much that excites me about it. None of that takes away my sense of sadness at leaving, and heartfelt thankfulness to God for such a happy and fulfilling time in Westhoughton and the wider team.



For all enquiries relating to baptism and weddings, and for other routine matters, please come to the parish office at St Bartholomew's Church on any Monday (other than Bank holidays) 6pm - 7pm

Sunday Services across the Team

St Bartholomew's:	8.00am (2nd & 4th Sundays) 11.00am each week
St Thomas'	8.00am (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays) 9.15am each Sunday
St George's	9.15am each Sunday
St John's	8.00am (1st & 3rd Sundays) 9:30am each week
St James'	8.00am (2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays) 10:45am each Sunday
St Katharine's	8.00am & 11.00am each Sunday

Items for inclusion in future newsletters should be sent to the parish office:
westhoughtonparish@outlook.com
 or given to Edward McHale, churchwarden and Director of Music
www.westhoughtonchurches.org.uk

I haven't got the space to list all the really good memories I will take away with me but not least amongst them has been welcoming new colleagues in the ministry team, seeing new ministries established and flourishing, working with excellent churchwardens, seeing some of our young people admitted to communion, continuing work with our great church schools, development of café church, establishing a newer and larger team ministry.... the list goes on. These are particular highlights for me not just because they are success stories (though they are that) but because they have involved us working together for the gospel in this place. Through these and so much else, we have prayed, laughed and laboured together in a way for which I shall always be thankful. Behind all of these wonderful memories are people – many of you reading this newsletter. Whilst it's true that some of what happens in the life of the church happens in the public arena – in other words, it's visible – so much else happens behind the scenes as the people of God get on with living, praying and seeking to grow closer to Him.

The word 'perfect' is much over used these days and in its real sense we are not a perfect church and you have not had a perfect rector. I have made mistakes along the way and hopefully been honest enough to acknowledge them, whilst being reminded that God calls all of us as we are – not perfect individuals but as works in progress. My moving on will leave some gaps but they will be filled in different ways not only by my successor but by others who will respond to new challenges. My successor will (I hope) be different from me but s/he will be called by God to serve Him and to lead His people here in a way that is right for the time – God's timing is never wrong!

In a very kind and generous way, a good number of people have told me that they'll be sorry to see me go and have asked the question 'do you have to go?' Every time I have moved to a new ministry it has been with a heavy heart for those I am leaving behind but I take great comfort from the opening verse of a hymn written in 1989:

*Go at the call of God
the call to follow on,
to leave security behind
and go where Christ has gone.
Go in the name of God,
the name of Christ you bear,
take up the cross, its victim's love
with all the world to share.*

These are words with a clear call to us all as we thank God for all we have shared together and, in faith, for all He will bless us with in the future.

With love and very best wishes

Chris

Team Farewell Service

As you've read, Chris has been appointed Vicar of Bolton Parish Church with St. Philip's Bolton and Borough Dean of Bolton. We will be holding a special team service on **Palm Sunday [25th March] at 3pm** at St. Bartholomew's church to mark his time with us. Chris will continue to lead our services through Holy Week and celebrate his final services with us on Easter Day [**1st April**].



His Collation and Induction as Vicar of Bolton will be on **Wednesday 18th April at 7:30pm** at Bolton Parish Church and everyone is welcome to attend.