

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

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



**Parish of St Bartholomew
Westhoughton
St Bartholomew St Thomas St
George**

Newsletter April 2018

Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander Born April 1818

Cecil Francis Alexander was born in Dublin in April 1818 [date unknown which must make celebrating birthdays difficult]. She began writing poetry at an early age and by the 1840s was well known as a hymnwriter with hymns included in the Church of Ireland hymnal. Her book "*Hymns for Little Children*" reached its 69th edition before the close of the nineteenth century and included classics still known the world over including "Once in Royal David's City." "There is a Green Hill far away," was inspired by a little hill outside the walls of Derry. In her mind it was on a hill like that that Jesus was crucified. Her hymn was to help her godchildren to understand the statements of the creed, "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried". This hymn was composed while she sat by the bedside of a sick child. "All things bright and beautiful" is still sung at many weddings. Her version of St. Patrick's Breastplate "I bind unto myself today" is a Trinity Sunday standard in many churches with her St. Andrew's Day hymn "Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult of our life's wild restless sea" still sung often. She married an Anglican clergyman, William Alexander, later Bishop of Derry and Archbishop of Armagh and was involved heavily in charitable work in Ireland.

Although writing about 400 hymns and poems, it is those written especially for children for which she is best remembered. From "I bind unto myself today" let's celebrate her memory with the words:

*Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,*



*Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.
Ed*



Canon Chris Bracegirdle's 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. There is some parking at the church, but it is limited; do consider car sharing. There will be refreshments after the service.

Kirsty writes.....

During April, and into the beginning of May, we continue in the church calendar to celebrate the Easter season. For the past five weeks, during the season of Lent, we have been concentrating and deepening on our own relationship with God. Now, in the Easter season we are encouraged to put some of our reflecting into action and become closer to God by going out into the world and share God with all who we meet.

At the end of this month, we will also in the Team celebrate St George's Day. St George, a Roman soldier and of Greek origin, was sentenced to death for failing to recant his Christian faith. In this Easter season, as we give thanks for Jesus giving up his life on the cross, and give thanks for St George, and others, for putting their faith first, it got me wondering - How far are we, as a church and as individuals, prepared to go for our faith?

Making sacrifices in our own lives for our faith can come in many forms. It can be giving up free time to attend a service, it could be making the decision to abstain from an activity, and / or could be to put ourselves on the front line by sharing something of our faith through voice or actions making a visible sign to others. As churches, we have a place within our communities, and sometimes making sacrifices means again, putting ourselves as a congregation or as a church, out in the public eye to support let's say group of people in need, or as a church we need to make ourselves vulnerable in order for people to come to us and be part of our worshipping and living communities.

Just before Easter, in a sermon, I mentioned that we are unable to experience fully the resurrection of Jesus Christ if we do not also experience Good Friday. In order for us to offer God's hope and resurrection to others, we as individuals and as a church, need to experience our own sacrifices. Therefore, my challenge to us all, is to disturbed our comforting routine of faith and church, and instead make ourselves vulnerable by making sacrifices in order to deepen our faith with God and be disciples in God's world today.

Introducing the new Archdeacon of Bolton

A new Archdeacon has been appointed for Bolton Archdeaconry, Canon Jean Burgess, 55, who joined the Diocese on Palm Sunday. Jean began her ordained ministry in the Diocese of Derby, when she



became Assistant Curate at St George and St Mary, Gresley in 2003. In 2008 she was appointed Assistant Curate at St Alkmund and St Werburgh. She has been Priest-in-Charge there since 2013, when she also became Dean of Women's Ministry. Jean is an Honorary Canon of Derby Cathedral and was appointed Assistant Archdeacon of Derby.

Jean said, *"I am thrilled to have been appointed Archdeacon of Bolton and I look forward to working together with the people of Manchester Diocese to enable us to embody the vision of becoming a worshipping, growing and transforming Christian presence at the heart of every community."*

Jean is married to Graham and has three grown up children and a granddaughter, Alice.

We look forward to working with Archdeacon Jean as part of the process to select our new Team Rector and Team Vicar.

Organ Recital

Saturday 14th April
7:30pm St. Bartholomew's

Ed McHale

"You heard it here second"



In conjunction with Bolton & District Organists' Association, Ed is playing an organ recital at St. Bartholomew's church. It's open to everyone and admission is free, with a retiring collection. Refreshments will be served.

It's a chance to hear a selection of transcriptions of music not written for the organ played on the organ and an opportunity to hear the instrument in its Saturday role when some of the more unusual sounds, not suitable for Sundays, are allowed out to play! It's a rare opportunity to attend an organ concert where you WILL know all the music played.

The Way Ahead – Team Rector / Team Vicar

The four PCCs have met and set up a small working party to draw up the Parish profile for the new Team Rector. Following Chris's induction at Bolton this month, we can submit this to the Diocese and draw up a role description and advertise the post.

It has been agreed to pause the work on recruiting a new Team Vicar until the post of Team Rector has been advertised to allow us to update the Team Vicar profile and so that a new Team Rector, if appointed soon, can contribute to the Team Vicar selection process. Do ask any of the clergy / wardens if you have any questions or would like further information.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Monday 30th April 7:30pm

St. Bartholomew's

The APCM is open to all members of the Parish and is the meeting at which we receive our Annual Reports and Accounts for 2017 and elect our Wardens, Committee members and sidespeople for the year ahead. Nomination forms for various roles within the church are available and the electoral roll is being revised currently – do see any of the wardens / deputies for further details.

Following the meeting, there will be a time for socialising with cheese and wine.

Men's Breakfast at the Royal Oak, Fourgates on **Saturday 7th April at 9:00am**. The speaker will be from the Christian Bikers' Association.

Ladies' Dinner: Wednesday 11th April 7:00pm at Brookfield Masonic Hall. Tickets are £25 [proceeds in aid of Bolton Hospice] and are available from Dora Mills [01942 813741 / 07843 341106].