

Sunday Services across the Team

All events in our Team are currently cancelled in line with the national guidelines for all churches across the country issued by the Church of England.

St. Bartholomew's Church will be open for a service each Sunday at 11:00am / St. George's at 9:15am
Guidelines about face coverings / distancing / signing in etc. will all still apply.

OFFICE HOUR HAS BEEN SUSPENDED IN LINE WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES. For all enquiries relating to baptism and weddings, and for other routine matters, please contact the Rector, details below.

DIRECTORY

Team Ministers

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Reader Emeritus	Alan Morris	01942 817871
Reader Emeritus	Elaine Simkin	01942 810762

Parish Wardens

Margaret Dolphin		01942 790415
Vacancy		

Deputy Wardens

St Bartholomew	Christine Andrews Edward McHale	01942 817146 01942 812193
St George	Pat James John Moore	01204 492994
St Thomas	vacancy	

www.westhoughtonchurches.org.uk

Follow us on Twitter @Wparishchurch and on Facebook

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 -
JANUARY 2021



"I never make predictions, especially not about the future,"

is a well-known quotation attributed to everyone from Mark Twain to US baseball player Yogi Berra but is probably originated in Denmark in the 1940s. Nostradamus is famous now for a book published in 1555 which contained a series of four-line poems allegedly predicting future events all of which are so vague they could apply to anything. These were all ignored during his lifetime in the same way that no-one's going to be interested in predictions I make for the year 2,400 but everyone would want to know if I could predict the football, racing and lottery results for next weekend. [Incidentally, Nostradamus was far more famous in his own lifetime for his recipe books – those who have tried it say his recipe for cherry jam is the finest they have tasted]. Remarkably, we did have the hymn "In the bleak mid-winter" on the Pewsheet Plus for 29th December when snow was falling "snow on snow" but even organists can't control the weather. Twelve months ago, we were planning the calendar of services and events for 2020 & saying goodbye to Kirsty and family as they moved to their new parish and ministry in Heywood. Well, as is obvious to us all, nothing went to plan, churches were closed for the first time in centuries, weddings and baptisms were cancelled and funeral services greatly restricted and we've all had to adapt to a new way of living which seems to change on a weekly basis. On the positive side, we've all had to look at new ways of being a church with more e-mail communication, online services and extra effort working together to re-open churches for public worship. This enforced break does give us an

opportunity to think about what we should bring back, when circumstances allow, and how we do it.

So as we start a new year of weekly pewsheets and these monthly newsletters, we're aware that everything will be going out-of-date almost as soon as we write it. We've no idea if anything we plan will take place at the moment, but we do have the hope that everything is in God's hands.

St. Paul sums it up in his Letter to the Romans chapter 15, verse 13:

I pray that the God who gives hope will fill you with much joy and peace as you trust in him. Then you will have more and more hope, and it will flow out of you by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Keep safe & well
Happy New Year
Ed

PS The National Procrastination Society have just released their predictions for 2004 and will start on 2005 at some point next month.

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Revd Dr Malcolm Jamieson Wearing as Self Supporting Minister Associate Curate in the Blackrod, Daisy Hill, Westhoughton and Wingates Team Ministry. Malcolm is currently OLM Associate Curate at Farnworth, Kearsley and Stoneclough.

Malcolm is a Chartered Civil Engineer, and in his secular work runs a small consultancy business in Farnworth. He is married to Katie and they have a son Tom, who is at University in York. They live in Over Hulton. Malcolm is looking forward to the new challenges that will come with the move from OLM ministry to a ministry with shared incumbent responsibility for a church, and believes God is calling him to work with the enthusiastic team in Daisy Hill and with colleagues in the wider team of churches.

The date of his institution will be Thursday 7th Jan 2021 at St James' Daisy Hill. Attendance at the service is by invitation only. Please pray for Malcolm as he begins his ministry with us.

We are holding a Team zoom 'Meet and greet Malcolm' session on Sunday 17th January at 4 pm at which Malcolm will be interviewed by Matt Dunne. If people would like the link for the zoom, please ask them to contact Matt on 07773 883691 or email mattdunne92@yahoo.com

Matt also asks people to forward any questions to him for Malcolm. He might not get through all the questions but he will ask a few.



Hymns of the Month – January

Well, it should be no surprise that we're looking at Epiphany hymns this month.

1. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!
2. Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness,
high on his heart he will bear it for thee,
and comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,
guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.
3. Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine;
for truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.
4. These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
he will accept for the Name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.
5. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!



The hymn first appeared in 1863 and was written by Revd John Samuel Bewley Monsell [1811 – 75]. He was born in Ireland and educated in Dublin before coming to England as vicar of Egham in Surrey in 1853. In 1870 he moved to St. Nicholas Church in Guildford where he oversaw a major rebuilding programme. While inspecting progress on the roof, he slipped and fell to his death.

He published more than 300 hymns of which this and “Fight the good fight” are the only two still sung today.

The opening line of the hymn comes directly from Psalm 96, verse 1 and then takes the gifts that the wise men offered to Jesus as examples of offerings that we can all bring to Christ in our daily lives and worship. Although written specifically for Epiphany, it can be sung at any time of year and especially services where we are thinking about stewardship.

“Mornings of joy” and “Evenings of tearfulness” also come directly from a psalm, this time psalm 30, verse 5:

“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”

The tune, “Was Lebet, was Schwebet” is taken from a German manuscript – the choral book of Johann Heinrich Reinhardt of 1754. He was born around 1676 and died on the feast of the Epiphany 6th January 1742. He served in Vienna as Imperial Court Organist and Choirmaster at St. Stephen’s cathedral.

1. Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.
2. Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining;
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall.
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.
3. Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion
Odours of Edom and offerings divine,
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?
4. Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
Vainly with gifts would His favour secure.
Richer by far is the heart's adoration;
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.
5. Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us Thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Reginald Heber [1783-1826] born in Malpas, Cheshire and a rector in Shropshire later serving as Bishop of Calcutta. He wrote 57 hymns covering every Sunday & major festival of the church’s year including “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty” for Trinity Sunday and this one for Epiphany. It was first published in 1811, but efforts to get his hymns published and authorised for use in the Church of England were refused by both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London and a collection first appeared a year after his death in 1827.



The first line comes from Isaiah 14.12 where the phrase “Son of the morning” is used to describe Lucifer which didn’t go down well with some publishers who changed it to “stars of the morning.” This alludes to Job 38.7 “when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” The morning stars singing also appear in verse 2 of “O Little Town of Bethlehem” but this went down even less well with some publishers who thought that it was inciting worship of the star!

In v.3, Edom is the land south of Moab stretching down to the Gulf of Aqaba on the Red Sea. The Edomites were enemies of Israel and ranted about by many of the Old Testament prophets. The “odours of Edom” refers to frankincense which was known in the Vale of Edom. I suspect Heber just chose the lyric as it fits the rhythm and metre of the hymn better than frankincense.

For a hymn we sing on one Sunday a year, there are about 20 different tunes in different hymnbooks. The one we usually have is called [surprise, surprise] “Epiphany” by Joseph Francis Thrupp [1827 – 67] a vicar in Cambridge, who first published it in 1863.

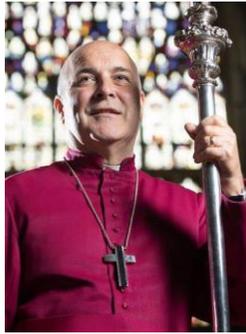
To receive these pewsheets, newsletters or special events leaflets electronically, please e-mail westhoughtonparish@outlook.com

Christmas Message by The Right Rev. Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York

"The Christmas story is the one bit of the Bible everyone knows. However, we mostly learn it from carols and nativity plays. This often makes it rather too cosy, as if a cow shed at the back of a pub was just the loveliest place to give birth.

The real story is of course a hard one. It is about a teenage mum, a poll-tax summons, what must have been a frightening labour and birth, and ends up with this little refugee family fleeing for their lives, for visiting kings and shepherds had said the child was born to be king and there is only ever room for one on a throne. However, if you read on beyond the Christmas story and find out about the man this child grows up to be, you find he is not a king in ways the world ever imagined.

Christmas is going to be different this year. It is unlikely we will be able to do all the things we want. Perhaps the harder and darker elements of the story will come to the fore, helping us in our isolation to still go on caring for each other and finding new ways of celebrating this story. Christmas still brings great light to the darkness of our world, not least helping us to live by a different set of values. So, as one of the newest residents in York and still getting to know my new neighbours (it is much harder when we are all wearing masks!), can I wish you the comfort and joy of Christmas, a bright light in the darkness of the world."



I'VE TRIED TO EXPLAIN THAT HE'S GOING TO BE WITH ME FOREVER. BUT HE JUST DOESN'T GET IT

Jesus' Baptism [we celebrate this on 10th January this year] Mark 1:9 - 13

For me, one of the joys of a very difficult 2020 for me has been the rediscovery of my local surroundings.

With no chance of spending much time away from home, and with even relatively short travelling not advised and difficult, I have spent time exploring and becoming familiar with the footpaths and countryside near to my home; and in all seasons and all weathers I have found joy in doing so.

A regular walk has been up Pendle Hill, sometimes in good weather, but more often than not with brooding clouds and sprinklings of rain.

On one particularly cloudy and dull day, whilst looking down on the Ribble Valley, there was a sudden shaft of light that penetrated the gloom and shone brilliantly onto my hometown. The world changed; colours danced; perspectives shifted; and to some extent the familiar became unfamiliar.

In the story of Jesus' baptism we see something similar. The very moment that Jesus was getting out of the water he saw the heavens open.

This doesn't mean that there was a little door opening up somewhere in the clouds; but more that Jesus saw around him God's dimension behind an ordinary reality. The familiar became unfamiliar.

It was as if an invisible curtain had been pulled back and there, right in front of Jesus, was the presence of a different reality – a reality that looked something like the kingdom of God colliding into, overwhelming and displacing the reality of a broken world.

Much of my own Christian faith journey has been trying to understand and respond to this different reality even when it can't be seen. Occasionally, we may have witnessed that curtain being pulled back, but most of the time it really is a walk by faith and not by sight.

So as we enter the uncertainties of a new year, with the reality of a broken world all so evident around us, let us remember that the kingdom of God is close at hand; let us pray that the invisible curtain may be pulled back to reveal where and how the joy, peace, love and hope of God lives amongst us and let us give of ourselves to bring something of heaven to those we live amongst.

Sam Johnson
Deputy Director of Education
Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education

Vaccines and the Vicar's Son:

It has been said of Edward Jenner that 'his work saved more lives than any other man on earth'. It's an extraordinary claim for someone who spent his entire life as a country doctor, but it may well be true.

Edward Jenner was born in 1749 in Berkeley, Gloucestershire, England, the son of the local vicar. His family had a long tradition of sending people into the church, but the death of Jenner's father left the family impoverished and forced the young man to take up another career.



From an early age Jenner had a great interest in science and the natural world and was apprenticed to a doctor. Learning the trade, he went on to work in London where his skills both as a physician and a scientist were soon recognised. He was invited by Captain Cook to be part of the science team on his second voyage to Australasia. Jenner, however, had no love of either travel or London life and soon returned to his home village as its doctor.

Jenner's reputation as a caring and wise doctor grew among his community but he continued to pursue his longstanding fascination with nature. He was particularly interested in birds and his careful studies of cuckoo behaviour gained him such respect in the British scientific community that he was elected to the prestigious Royal Society.

The great medical curse of the age was the killer disease smallpox. In Europe, around 400,000 people a year died from the disease. Typically, when smallpox swept through a village 20 to 50 per cent of those infected died. A third of the survivors of smallpox went blind and many more were scarred for life. People were so desperate to avoid smallpox that they sought to be deliberately inoculated from sores of those who had a mild form of the disease in the hope that this would give them some immunity. It was a risky procedure with limited success.

In thinking about smallpox, Jenner pondered a dairymaid's intriguing comment: 'I shall never have smallpox for I have had cowpox.' Cowpox was a

mild infection of animals which could be caught by humans with little harmful effect. Jenner concluded that there must be a possibility that smallpox could be prevented by inoculating people with cowpox. Yet as a scientist he knew that to be of any worth, any experiments had to be conducted carefully. When an outbreak of cowpox occurred locally, Jenner deliberately inoculated a young stable hand with it. The boy suffered only mild effects and when, a few months later, he was inoculated with smallpox, he failed to catch the far more serious disease. Encouraged, Jenner persisted with more inoculations and in 1797 sent a short communication to the Royal Society describing his results. His paper was rejected on the grounds that it had only 13 samples. Disappointed but not deterred, Jenner went away and carried out more work, eventually publishing his results at his own expense. Jenner called his new procedure vaccination after the Latin word for cow, vacca. Despite controversy, his method spread rapidly throughout Britain and was soon taken up across the world. Jenner refused to make money out of his discovery – he inoculated the poor for free – and in encouraging the careful use of the new technique he bankrupted himself. He died in 1823. His old adversary, smallpox, outlasted him for a while. Increasingly confined to remote parts of the world, it was finally eradicated in 1980.

Despite the turbulence of the times in which Jenner lived – the Napoleonic wars were raging – his fame became enormous.

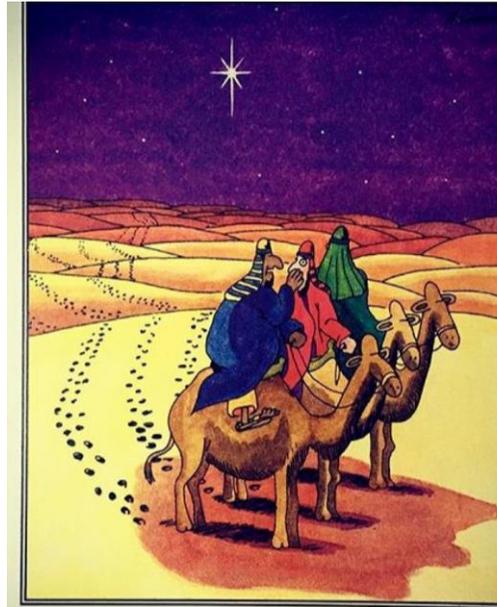
Edward Jenner was a committed Christian. He was typical of many believers in every age who demonstrate their faith through the way they live their lives. An amiable, quiet, warm-hearted Christian, ever ready with the appropriate Bible verse, Jenner was anxious that his discovery would be used as widely as possible. He was particularly concerned that praise should be directed not to him, but to the God who had made and used him.

Here is a man who became a household name across the world, yet his celebrity status left him unchanged. Jenner remained to the end of his life a man who was gentle, humble and gracious. So, at a time when the word vaccination is widely heard, spare a thought for Edward Jenner, the man who started it all.

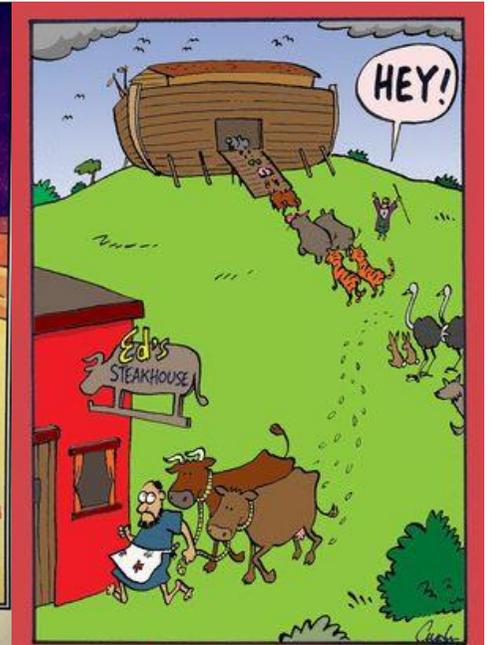




Then the 3 WISEMEN from the East visit the Newborn King. **Mt 2**



"Hold still, Omar. ... Now look up. Yep. You've got something in your eye, all right. Could be sand."



(See Genesis 3) 12-30-2013

REMEMBER THAT NEW YEAR RESOLUTION YOU MADE TO TRY NEW THINGS?

