

Sunday Services across the Team

We're currently following the Covid 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 and St. George's & St. Thomas' churches at 9:15 am every Sunday.

OFFICE HOUR NOW RUNS ON A MONDAY AT St. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH 10:30 – 11:30am or Saturdays by appointment only [please e-mail westhoughtonparish@outlook.com]. For all enquiries relating to weddings, banns and for other routine matters, please contact the Rector, details below.

DIRECTORY

Team Ministers

Team Rector	Revd Carol Pharaoh carol.pharaoh@gmail.com	01942 859251
Curate in Charge	Revd Andy Jones reverendandyjones@gmail.com	01942 813 750
Team Vicar	Revd Angela Wynne	01204 468150
Associate Vicar	Revd Malcolm Wearing	07557 658452
Reader Emeritus	Alan Morris	01942 817871
Reader Emeritus	Elaine Simkin	01942 810762

Parish Wardens

Edward McHale 01942 812193

Joan O'Reilly

Deputy Wardens

St Bartholomew	Christine Andrews Vacancy	01942 817146
St George	Pat James John Moore	01204 492994
St Thomas	Graham Andrews	

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 2022

The events leading up to Easter took place over a week, traditionally called Holy Week.

It begins on **Palm Sunday**. After all His teaching and healing, Jesus had built a following. On the Sunday before He was to die, Jesus and His followers arrived at Jerusalem. The city was crowded. Jewish people were arriving from far to celebrate Passover. This commemorates how they had escaped from slavery in Egypt nearly 1,500 years earlier. Jesus rode into the city on a young donkey. He was greeted like a conquering hero. Cheering crowds waved palm branches in tribute. He was hailed as the Messiah who had come to re-establish a Jewish kingdom.

The next day they returned to Jerusalem. Jesus went to the temple, the centre of the Jewish faith, and confronted the money-changers and merchants who were ripping off the people. He overturned their tables and accused them of being thieves. The religious authorities were alarmed and feared how He was stirring up the crowds. On the Tuesday, they challenged Jesus, questioning His authority. He answered by challenging and condemning their hypocrisy. Later that day Jesus spoke to His disciples about future times. He warned them about fake religious leaders; the coming destruction of Jerusalem; wars, earthquakes and famines; and how His followers would face persecution.

By midweek the Jewish religious leaders and elders were so angry with Jesus that they began plotting to arrest and kill Him. One of Jesus' disciples, Judas, went to the chief priests and agreed to betray Him to them.

Jesus and the 12 disciples gathered on the Thursday evening to celebrate the Passover meal. This is known as the Last Supper. During the evening, Jesus initiated Holy Communion which commemorates His death. Jesus broke bread and shared it and a cup of wine with His disciples.

Judas then left to meet the other plotters. Jesus continued to teach the others and then went outside into an olive grove to pray. He even prayed for all future believers. He agonised over what was to come but chose the way of obedience. The Bible book, Luke, records Him praying, 'Father if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my

will but yours be done'. Minutes later Judas arrived with soldiers and the chief priests and Jesus was arrested.



We hope that you'll be able to come to some of our services and events as we mark Holy Week and Easter this year which should be easier than the last couple of "Covid rules" years. In whatever ways you mark this season, we wish everyone a very happy, blessed and peaceful Easter.

Hymn of the Month – April

It's a hymn for Holy Week this time.

1 It is a thing most wonderful,
almost too wonderful to be,
that God's own Son should come from heav'n,
and die to save a child like me.

2 And yet I know that it is true:
He chose a poor and humble lot,
and wept and toiled and mourned and died
for love of those who loved Him not.

3 I cannot tell how He could love
a child so weak and full of sin;
His love must be most wonderful
if He could die my love to win.

4 I sometimes think about the cross,
and shut my eyes, and try to see
the cruel nails and crown of thorns,
and Jesus crucified for me.

5 But even could I see Him die,
I could but see a little part
of that great love which, like a fire,
is always burning in His heart.

6 It is most wonderful to know
His love for me so free and sure;
but 'tis more wonderful to see
my love for Him so faint and poor.

7 And yet I want to love Thee, Lord;
O light the flame within my heart,
and I will love Thee more and more,
until I see Thee as Thou art.

Words: These are by Bishop William Walsham How (b. Shrewsbury, Shropshire, England, 1823; d. Leenane, County Mayo, Ireland, 1897) who we've come across before when we looked at his hymn "For all the Saints" in October 2021 [for those who wish to consult their leather bound copies of previous Newsletters].



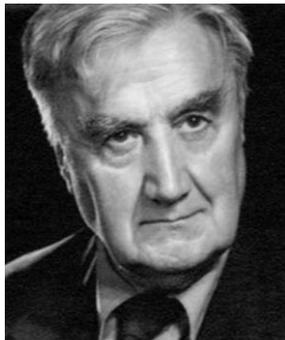
He was born and educated in Shrewsbury where his father was a solicitor. He started writing hymns as a child for services which he held with his brother and stepsister. He trained for the ministry at Oxford and served as a curate in Kidderminster and Shrewsbury before becoming rector of Whittington in Shropshire for 28 years. This gave him plenty of time for his passions of fishing, ferns and writing hymns. In 1879 he was appointed suffrage Bishop of London with special responsibility for the East End. His work in one of the poorest parts of

London earned him the respect of thousands and he was known as the "omnibus bishop" as he turned down his private carriage and travelled everywhere on public transport.

He turned down the offer of several diocese including Durham but in 1888 became the first Bishop of the new diocese of Wakefield, a very industrial area at the time, where he remained. For his work in the London slums and amongst the West Yorkshire factory workers, he also became known as the "Poor Man's Bishop" but confessed he liked best his nickname of "the Children's Bishop." He published a book of children's hymns in 1872 and it's from that collection that this month's hymn is taken.

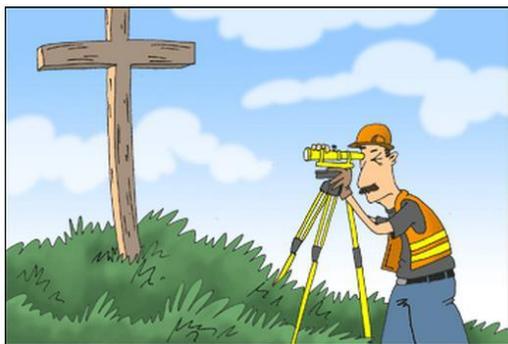
Walsham How headed it with a text from 1 John 4.10: "*This is what love is: it is not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the means by which our sins are forgiven*" in a modern translation. In the hymn he's trying to look at the cross through the eyes of a child and see in it the love of God. It's a difficult theme to cover in a children's hymn but through its imaginative treatment and avoidance of twee sentimentality, it does get its message across and works equally well as a hymn for adults.

Tune: There are several tunes set in various hymnbooks but the one that works best [accept no alternatives] is “Herongate.” This is a traditional English melody named after the village, near Ingrave, in Essex where Ralph Vaughan Williams collected the tune in 1903. There were a group of composers who went around collecting folk tunes and recording them for posterity at this time and when Vaughan Williams was appointed musical editor of the English Hymnal [first printed on Ascension Day in 1906] he used some of this collection as hymn tunes. Other famous examples in the hymn book include “To be a pilgrim” and “O Little Town of Bethlehem.”

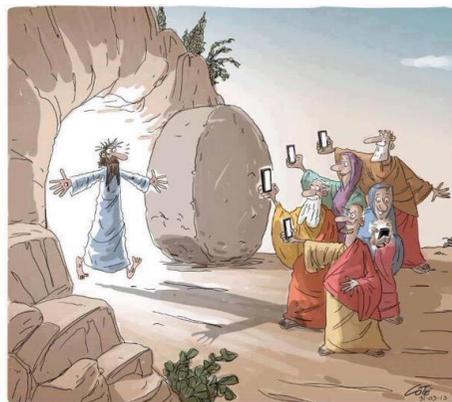


The simplicity of the tune matches the words written for children perfectly; a more complex tune just wrecks the hymn.

It's the 150th anniversary of the birth of Vaughan Williams this October, so there will be more of his music appearing later in the year.



EVERYBODY ELSE MERELY TALKS ABOUT SURVEYING THE WONDROUS CROSS ... HE ACTUALLY DID IT



Monday 24th April 7:30pm Annual Meeting at St. Bartholomew's

We're planning to hold our Annual Meeting on the last Monday of April as usual. It's many thanks, once again, to our treasurers from all three churches for preparing the annual accounts for audit and to all who have submitted annual reports for 2021. As usual, there are one or two items we need to prepare:

Committee Nominations: Please think about standing as a churchwarden, deputy warden, PCC or committee representatives, Deanery Synod reps or a sidesperson. There are forms available for nominations.

Electoral Roll: If you're on already, you don't need to complete another form [unless your details have changed – new address etc.] We'll have forms out in March for anyone wishing to join the roll. We're revising the roll between now and Sunday 10th April. After that, we can't add any names until after the AGM although we can make any corrections required.

If you're not sure if you're on or not either email me here at westhoughtonparish@outlook.com or see me at one of the services. Ed

Annual Reports: If you have an annual report to submit, please send it in so that we can compile the Annual Reports and Accounts for approval.

Do come along to the Annual Meeting to hear what we've been doing, look at what we're planning, to accept our annual accounts and reports and elect those who will be serving us in the year ahead.

Refreshments: afterwards we will be serving cheese and wine so do stay for a chat.

Monday 11th April 7:30pm PCC Meeting at St. Bartholomew's

Primarily to accept the Annual Accounts and Report for 2021 before the Annual Meeting. This meeting will follow the Stations of the Cross service [see below].



Holy Week

MONDAY 11th April – Monday of Holy Week

Stations of the Cross 6:45pm St. Bartholomew's Church

Please note that we're running this on a different day and at a new time this year

Thursday 14th April

Maundy Thursday Communion Service

7:30pm St. Bartholomew's Church



Friday 15th April:

Good Friday

10:00am Reflective Service at St. James' Church

[this service will be more family orientated]

11:00am – 1:00pm – The Good Friday Experience at St Bartholomew's church with refreshments and hot cross buns.

[designed to be very child and family friendly]

2:00pm **"An Hour at the Cross"** Reflective service at St.

Katharine's Church, Blackrod [this service will be more suited to adults]

Saturday 16th April:

Easter Eve Vigil Service at St Katharine's

Time to be decided



Sunday 17th April

Easter Day

9:15am St. George's Church

All Age Holy Communion for Easter Day

9:15am St. Thomas' Church

Holy Communion for Easter Day

11:00am St. Bartholomew's Church Holy Communion for Easter Day



Suddenly, Father Schober was not sure whether he really should have bought the new crucifix at Ikea.



Hot Cross Buns

Last Easter, we looked at the history of Easter Gardens, the Stations of the Cross, Easter [Pascal Candles] but missed out hot cross buns. So to make up for it ...



Traditionally eaten on Good Friday to commemorate the Crucifixion, hot cross buns found an enemy in Queen Elizabeth I, who, in 1592, finding too much Popery in their popularity, banned their consumption except on specific holidays. The embargo was eventually lifted and, by the 1700s, sweet, spicy, fruity buns were sold on the streets of towns and cities with the familiar cry of ‘one a penny, two a penny’ (a penny bought you a large bun or two small ones). Each bun is decorated with a cross made from flour paste, which represents the cross on which Christ died. The spices in hot cross buns are said to represent the spices that were used to embalm Christ after his death.

They were first recorded in the 1773 *Poor Robin’s Almanack*, which seems rather late considering that, in the 14th century, a monk in St Albans is said to have distributed them among the needy.

Looking even further back, some have claimed that loaves marked with a cross found at Herculaneum in Italy are the original precursors to hot cross buns. It’s technically possible that this was a commemorative act – Christ had been nailed to the cross half a century earlier after all, and some claim that there were Christians in Pompeii by AD79 – but it’s likely they were incised in this way to make them easier to break apart.

Whatever the truth of it, we know for certain that crossed buns were eaten by the Saxons to honour *Eostre*, celebrated in April, whose name, according to the Venerable Bede, is the origin of the word Easter. For *Eostre*, goddess of the dawn and fertility, the cross symbolised the four quarters of the Moon. As was often the case, a Christian tradition was stamped on top of a pagan festival, turning *Eostre’s* feast into a celebration of Christ. And so the cross atop the bun came to stand for not only the Crucifixion, but also the intersection of the Earth (horizontal) with Heaven (vertical) — the human and the divine.

Later enthusiasts included Samuel Pepys, who enjoyed a hearty ‘Lenten supper’ of buns washed down with ale, and Dr Johnson, who, on Good Friday in 1783, sensibly breakfasted on ‘tea without milk, and... a cross bun to prevent faintness’.

There was a common practice of sharing a bun to ensure lasting friendship:

*(‘Half for you and half for me,
Between us two shall goodwill be’),*

taking a bun to sea to prevent shipwreck and, most common of all, hanging a bun in the kitchen for a year to bring luck, hence:

*Good Friday comes this month the old woman runs
With one or two a-penny hot cross buns,
Whose virtue is, if you believe what’s said,
They’ll not grow mouldy like the common bread.*

There exists, in Essex, a hot cross bun that was baked more than 200 years ago, in 1807, and another in London is dated 1821, giving credence to the belief that a bun baked on Good Friday doesn’t decay.

Other superstitions are more romantic: in 1855, *The Illustrated London News* recorded: ‘Young ladies are fond of preserving hot-cross buns. They puncture the date on its back with pins, and put it away, like a bag of lavender, in their drawers. Whoever keeps one of these mealy treasures for an entire twelvemonth is sure, it is said, to get married the next.’

So why have they been in the news this year?

Hot cross buns with novel ingredients such as chocolate, cheese and caramel may be ‘the devil at work’, a former royal chaplain has claimed.

Gavin Ashenden, who was honorary chaplain to the Queen at St James’s Palace, said the extras distract us from the seasonal treat’s religious symbolism.

The clergyman said: ‘It’s not an accident they have been warped,’ and suggested it could be taken as a sign of ‘the devil at work’.

‘[The] hot cross bun stands for the struggle between the world as it is and the world as we want it to be,’ he said.

He suggested indulgent new ingredients are ‘enlarging appetites’ rather than focusing our minds on the suffering of Christ.

Contributed by Alan Morris:

G Helm

Parents' Influence

Parents say,
"We will not influence our children in making choices and decisions in the matter of religion."

Why not?

- The television will.**
- The Advertisements will.**
- The Press will.**
- Films will.**
- The neighbours will.**
- Politicians will.**
- Teachers will.**

The greatest single influence in any child's life is from parents.
It can be for good or for bad, and will leave a lasting impression on the life of your child.



Stewardship Campaign

**Giving
in Grace**



As you will be aware, we have been running our Stewardship Campaign "Giving in Grace" over the last few weeks.

If you haven't received a pack containing a brochure, information and response

sheet do see any of the wardens, treasurers or clergy and read & pray about the information contained. If you haven't got one and would like one sending / e-mailing please get in touch

As you will know, the Covid pandemic hit church finances particularly hard with churches closed, services cancelled, no social or fund raising events and many limitations on attendances once we were able to reopen again.

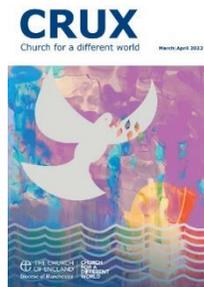
We also have our annual Parish Share to meet which this year will be £63,000 which is a lot but, thanks to the three-year plan we negotiated with the Diocese of Manchester, significantly lower than it could have been. This is the money the Diocese uses to pay for our clergy, cover housing and pension costs and support our church schools amongst other things.

CRUX Magazine

The Diocese of Manchester magazine CRUX stopped publishing during the pandemic as there were no safe ways of distributing it.

It's now back in its familiar format with news from around our diocese but it will now only be printed 5 times per year rather than monthly.

We do have free copies in all our churches if you want to take one away.



How to help by giving more effectively:

- **GIFT AID:** if you pay tax, you can Gift Aid any donations you make to the church. For every £1 you give, the Government will give us an additional 25p which soon adds up. Please note that this is the only Government funding we receive. Please collect a Gift Aid form from any of our treasurers / wardens.
- **STANDING ORDERS / DIRECT DEBIT:** if you can give this way, it does guarantee us an income each month and helps us to budget. Many thanks to those who have reviewed and increased their giving this way in the last month. Again, please collect a form from any of our treasurers / wardens.
- **JOINING THE WEEKLY ENVELOPE GIVING SCHEME:** Again, do see any of our treasurers / wardens.

We recognise that this is a difficult time financially for many people as the cost of living rises but our churches are not exempt from these rising bills.

Many thanks to all who give generously now and have continued donating throughout the pandemic which allowed us to run online services, pewsheets and newsletters.

If you want to talk about giving to the church [we're happy to do this in strict confidence], please see any of the clergy, churchwardens or the treasurers / Gift Aid officers at our churches:

Many thanks.

St George's Church: The First 26 Years

**"A church at the heart of the community
with the community at its heart"**

St George's Day – 23rd April 2022

The 25th anniversary sneaked up on us during Covid last year, but we're a bit better prepared this year.



The school was officially opened on 23rd April, St. George's Day, in 1996 by the Bishop of Bolton, Right Revd David Bonser. The church was dedicated later the same day by the Bishop of Manchester, Right Reverend Christopher Mayfield, the Methodist Chairman of the Bolton &

Rochdale District and the Moderator of the North-West province of the URC. The first service took place on Sunday 28th April with a congregation of 76.

Services

The church has one service on Sundays starting at **9:15am**. Our mix of services includes more formal Communion services, simpler all-age communion services for the whole church family and Services of the Word with involvement for all. We're focussing especially on all age worship involving the whole church in our services.



As covid guidelines ease we're

- increasing the number of people reading the Bible lessons at our services, our young people being encouraged particularly and doing it very well
- looking at baptism ministry by holding baptisms both during the service and at special baptism services after the usual 9:15am service
- restarting our Sunday School [with particular thanks to all those who have completed their DBS and child protection training to allow this to happen]
- developing links with St George's school, looking at options for Café church or other midweek activities and church participation in school assemblies
- fundraising both through weekly giving and special fund raising events such as our Lent challenge.



In all this we're thankful for the ministry of Revd Andy Jones [with Katie and Harry] for the leadership, dedication, ideas and hard work that they've brought to St George's during the first year of his curacy with us.

It's also thanks to the hard working and committed team that form the St George's church committee who have taken on so many additional tasks that the pandemic has brought.

As I wrote last year for our 25th anniversary, let's continue what we're doing as a community church in the Hoskers – bringing God to the people and bringing the people to God.

If you want the St George's experience of simple family-friendly worship, do come and see – 9:15am every Sunday morning.

Happy Birthday St. George's Church

Around the Team

At St James' church, Daisy Hill

Holy Communion from Book of Common Prayer

Every Wednesday at 10:00am

A quiet said service for those who prefer the more contemplative words of the Book of Common Prayer.

Face coverings are no longer required at this service which lasts about 40 minutes.

Refreshments are available following the service.

Tuesday Coffee & Chat

In April.

Every Fourth Tuesday at 10:00am - 11:30am

First Saturday Open Doors

Every First Saturday at 10:00am - noon



Our doors are open from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon on the first Saturday of each month to welcome people to come and enjoy a chat and a cup of tea, or a quiet time to themselves.

Messy Church Saturdays at 10:00am

Saturday 14 May 2022,

Saturday 09 July 2022

All are welcome, no booking will be required. From 10am to 12 noon.

At St John's church, Wingates

Monthly Men's Breakfast

First Saturday of every month, 9:00 – 10:30am

Toby Carvery

421 Watergate Drive

Over Hulton



[NB do check in case the date or venue is altered]

It's a chance for men to meet up for breakfast and every two / three months a guest speaker is invited.

Bric-a-brac n' Brew

First Saturday of every month, 10:30am - noon

Coffee and refreshments are served. Donations of food for Urban Outreach can be dropped off and there is a bookstall and bric-a-brac stalls in aid of church funds.

Team Youth Church

Usually third Saturday of each month 7:00 – 8:30pm

- check weekly pewsheet for details

We are looking for more volunteers to help us run this – if you could help out occasionally on a rota basis, please see Revd Andy

Coming up next month ...

Mayoral Service, Christian Aid Week, "Thy Kingdom Come" week and more ...