



PARISH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW WESTHOUGHTON

St Bartholomew

St Thomas

St George

Sunday 4th July 2021 St Thomas the Apostle

TODAY'S SERVICES

9:15am	Service of the Word at St. George's	Elaine Simkin
11:00am	Service of the Word at St Bartholomew's	Alan Morris
9:15am	Holy Communion Service at St. Thomas'	Revd Angela Wynne

We pray for:

Those who are ill: Cassie Buono, Brian Cato, Christopher Davies, Christine Greenhalgh, Jenny Harris, Keith Haworth, Mario Heaton, Edith Ibbotson, Joan James, Patricia James, Mike Johnson, Geoff Kyte, Eileen Marsh, Jean Partington, Norman Sidlow.

Those who have died recently:

And on their anniversaries this week we remember: Margaret Aspinall, Dorothy Chadwick, Hannah Coop, Gillian Fisher, Margaret Hodgins, Andrea Holder, Harry Hope, Roy Howarth, Edith Hulton, Keith Hulton, Leonard Martin, May Martindale, James Nightingale, Dorothy Norman, Hilda Stuart, Phyllis Walker, Arthur Westby, Minnie Wrigley.

This week:

Sunday services at St George's and St Thomas' continue this week at 9:15am and St. Bartholomew's at 11:00am as this Sunday we celebrate the feast day of St. Thomas. His "top ten best bits" were on last week's pewsheet [Saturday] if you want to swot up before the service and look very clever.

The choir will be singing at St. Bartholomew's again this week with hymns relating to St Thomas. I'm not about to practice on Saturday so Sunday's organ music will be as much of a surprise to you as me!

Note: the Ironman competition returns on Sunday so there may be a few road closures; do check your route especially if coming to one of the 9:15am services.

The daily Bible readings this week continue through the book of Genesis as we look at Jacob and his son, Joseph. He's the one of the "technicolour dreamcoat" musical fame so he's one of the few bible characters that people know about. There are a few pages of handy introduction to try and put it all into context. Next week, the church remembers St Benedict, so there are a few prayers taken from the Benedictine tradition this week.



Ordinations: St. Petertide is the traditional time for the church to ordain new deacons and priests. We remember all those preparing for ordination especially Andy Jones who will be ordained deacon by the Bishop of Manchester at Manchester cathedral on today at 10:30am and will be serving his curacy in our team. He'll have particular responsibility for St. George's during his time with us and will be living at Daisy Hill vicarage.

We pray for Andy, Katie and their son Harry as they prepare for this new ministry.

His first services with us will be at St. George's and St. Bartholomew's churches next Sunday 11th July.

Christian Aid Collection: across the parish we collected £340.65 and for the team [not including St. John's] £870.42 – with Gift Aid to claim the final total will be larger. Many thanks to all who contributed to this collection.

There are also the notices at the end.

While services and attendance at church is limited, these pewsheets and on-line services will continue. Do keep any news, views and feedback coming. Please also check our Team YouTube channel for online services:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDx266HLh9ShYeBJnON8ODg>

Online Services from July: we're now running these on the first and third Sundays only.

Ed



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The Collect:

Almighty and eternal God,
who, for the firmer foundation of our faith,
allowed your holy apostle Thomas
to doubt the resurrection of your Son
till word and sight convinced him:
grant to us, who have not seen, that we also may
believe and so confess Christ as our Lord and our
God;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Old Testament Reading Habakkuk 2. 1 - 4

The LORD's compassions are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD. It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young. Let him sit alone in silence, for the LORD has laid it on him. Let him bury his face in the dust - there may yet be hope. Let him offer his cheek to one who would strike him, and let him be filled with disgrace. For men are not cast off by the LORD for ever. Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love. For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men.

New Testament Reading: Ephesians 2. 19 - end

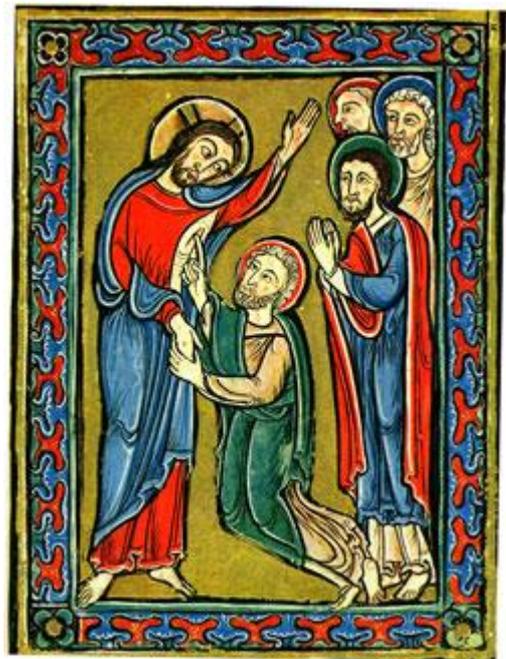
¹⁹You are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, ²⁰built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; ²²in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.

Gospel Reading: John 20. 24 - 29

²⁴Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the

Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' ²⁸Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' ²⁹Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'



The Post Communion Prayer:

Almighty God,
who on the day of Pentecost
sent your Holy Spirit to the apostles with the
wind from heaven and in tongues of flame,
filling them with joy and boldness to preach the
gospel: by the power of the same Spirit
strengthen us to witness to your truth
and to draw everyone to the fire of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Homily: Angela

May I speak in the name of the living God, Father Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

The 3rd July is the day dedicated to St Thomas. Did you know that the day on which we celebrate a particular saint is not their birthday but the day they died. That sounds a bit morbid but what we celebrate is their life's work for Christ and we look back with thankfulness because it's through them that we know about Jesus ourselves.

Fortunately, we can glean quite a bit about Thomas from the gospels because some of his words have been recorded. In John's gospel when Jesus decided to go back to Bethany to raise Lazarus from the dead the disciples advised him not to, because his life was in danger. But when he was determined to go, it was Thomas who said, "Let's go with him. We might as well die with him!"

When Jesus was explaining that he was going back to the Father and said "You know the way to where I am going", it was Thomas who spoke up and said "We don't know where you are going how can we know the way?" That prompted Jesus to say those faith inspiring words "I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

However perhaps the most famous words are the ones in today's gospel which earned him the title "Doubting Thomas" and although this sounds a rather dubious honour, we should be grateful to him.

Grateful because we too have doubts and we can identify with Thomas. It reassures us that we can be Christians and still have doubts. Thomas' doubt opened the door for faith to step in. It enabled Jesus to dispel his doubt by inviting him to put his finger in the wounds and see that he was real. "Do not doubt but believe." Thomas' response was, "My Lord and my God!" It went beyond believing; this wasn't just the risen Lord it was God! It was a true revelation. Reassuring to us future believers that when we look at Jesus, we really see God.

So there's a huge amount to be grateful to Thomas for.

What happened to Thomas after Pentecost is not clear but one of the most enduring stories is that he took the gospel to India where he taught and preached. There is today a Christian Community in South India called the St Thomas Christians so there maybe there is some truth in the legends. In the end he was killed by a spear and then buried in a tomb near Mylapore, near Madras around 72 AD. In Christian art you usually see Thomas depicted holding a spear because that was the weapon that killed him. Sometimes he is shown with a builder's T square because one legend claims that he built a palace for an Indian king which led him to become the patron saint of architects.

That neatly leads us into Paul's letter.

Paul says that our faith is truly based on a foundation of apostles and prophets with Jesus as the cornerstone. The cornerstone of a building is the one on which all other stones depend. The cornerstone provides a firm base to build on.

Paul says that we are built into a holy temple. A temple is a beautiful building often decorated with precious stones, the work of the finest craftsmen in the land. The image Paul might have had in his mind was the beautiful temple built by Solomon using the finest materials and craftsman's skill but remembering that the instructions for the temple were given by God.



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The dimensions and the materials all defined by God, the skills and wealth of the people were all combined to build the temple fit to house the ark of the covenant, the special chest that contained the stone tablets given to Moses and various other holy items. Solomon's Temple was God's dwelling place.

Today we are called to bring all our skills and talents to build up the Church, the holy temple of the Lord in our time. We need to be fully committed and God needs to be in charge of the building work; everything we do must have a foundation of prayer; listening to God for guidance as to what his will for us is and at the same time recognising us that together we embody God's love for the world. Through us as the holy temple he sends out new apostles for the current times. We are his messengers of salvation, and we are the bringers of his peace to our world. It's a daunting task but together and building on that firm foundation of Christ the Apostles and prophets we can do it and God will bless us with what we need. Let us thank God for making us part of his plan of salvation and for giving us the foundation of Thomas and all the saints to be our inspiration and strength.

Amen.

Intercessions

Encouraged by our fellowship with St Thomas all the saints, let us make our prayers to the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. Father, your Son called men and women to leave the past behind them and to follow him as his disciples in the way of the cross. Look with mercy upon those whom he calls today, marks with the cross and makes his disciples within the Church...

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Your Son told his disciples not to be afraid and at Easter breathed on them his gift of peace. Look with mercy upon the world into which he sent them out, and give it that peace for which it longs...

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Your Son formed around him a company who were no longer servants but friends, and he called all those who obeyed him his brother and sister and mother. Look with mercy upon our families and our friends and upon the communities in which we share...

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Your Son sent out disciples to preach and heal the sick. Look with mercy on all those who yearn to hear the good news of salvation, and renew among your people the gifts of healing...

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.



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Your Son promised to those who followed him that they would sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel and would share the banquet of the kingdom. According to your promise, look with mercy on those who have walked with Christ in this life and now have passed through death...

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Almighty God,

Grant that your Church
may faithfully hold and make known
the faith that has come to us through the apostles,
that with them and all your saints
we may inherit the glories of eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

1. Who dreads, yet undismayed
Dares face his terror;
Who errs, yet having strayed
Avows his error -
Him let Saint Thomas guide,
Who stirred his fellows' pride
To move to death beside
Their Lord and Master.

2. Who longs for guidance clear
When doubts assail him,
Nor dares to move for fear
Lest faith should fail him -
For such let Christ's reply
To his disciple's cry,
'I am the Way,' supply
The light in darkness.

3. Who grieves that love lies dead
On fate's wheel broken;
And stands uncomforted
By any token -
His faith shall be restored
By Christ's compelling word
When Thomas saw the Lord,
And seeing worshipped.

Words: Archbishop J R Darbyshire [1880 – 1948] was a vicar in Liverpool, Canon of Manchester Cathedral, Archdeacon of Sheffield and Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway before moving to South Africa as Archbishop of Capetown.

Music: the tune **Elton** was written for it by John Dykes Bower, but I may be the only person who knows it. We'll sing it to **Monk's Gate** by Ralph Vaughan Williams usually used for "Who would true valour see" [To be a pilgrim].



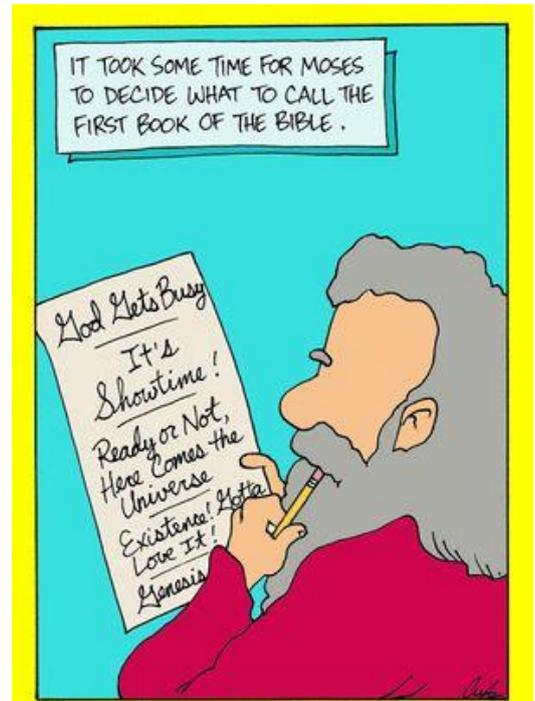
The Book of Genesis: we began looking at this at the start of February and then took a break from it, so ...

The book of Genesis is the first book of the Bible, and opens with one of the most famous first sentences ever: “*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*” It’s where we find the famous stories of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and the ark, Abraham and Isaac, and a well-dressed dreamer named Joseph.

On its own, the book of Genesis reads like a string of epic stories: a tragic saga of a world that just keeps going wrong, despite its Creator’s intentions. But Genesis isn’t a stand-alone book; it’s the history of how the nation of Israel got its population, its land, and its religion.

Important characters in Genesis

Genesis is the second-longest book of the Bible (after Jeremiah) which means there are a lot of characters in Genesis. In terms of getting an overview of the book, these four characters are the most important ones to know about:-

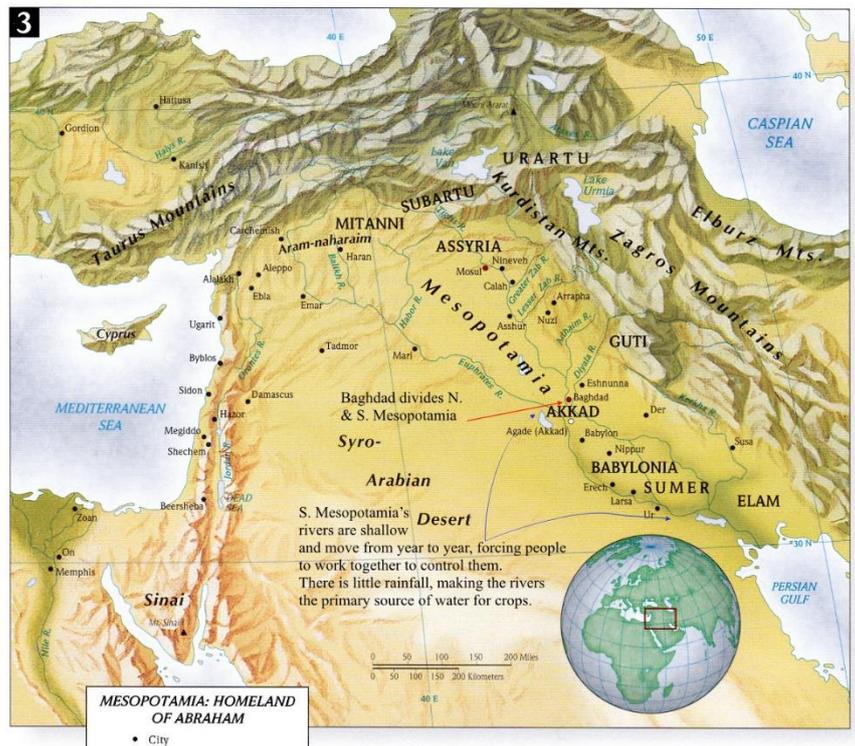


1. God [obviously] -

2. Abraham (formerly Abram) — we’ve covered him over the last couple of weeks

3. Jacob/Israel — Abraham’s grandson. Jacob tricks his father and brother, so receiving a special blessing. He has twelve sons, to whom the twelve tribes of Israel trace their lineage.

4. Joseph — Jacob’s favourite son [of *technicolour dreamcoat fame*], who has prophetic dreams of greatness. He is also able to interpret other people’s dreams. His brothers sell him into slavery, but through his God-given wisdom, he ascends to the position of second-in-command over all Egypt.



Key themes in Genesis

The book of Genesis is full of stories we know from Sunday school, like Adam and Eve, Noah’s Ark, and Jacob’s ladder. But the story of Genesis is really all about setting the stage for what is to come: it’s the long [very, very long] prologue to Israel’s beginnings as a nation. Specifically, it’s the story of the promises God made to humans—promises that God begins to carry out through the rest of the Bible. In fact, if the main thrust of Genesis were summed up in one verse, it would be these words that God said to Abraham:



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"I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you." (Gn 17:7).

So a few of the key themes are:

1. Covenant

A covenant is a solemn, binding agreement that makes two or more parties one. Genesis has a lot of these agreements, including God's covenant with Noah's post-flood ([Genesis 9:1–17](#)) and his covenants with Abraham ([Genesis 15, 17](#)).

Covenant is what moves the story forward in Genesis. God promises the childless Abraham that he will be the father of nations, that his descendants will have a land, and that the world will be blessed through them. For 38 of Genesis' 50 chapters, the story follows Abraham's family as God begins fulfilling the first part of that promise: Abraham has eight children, who have children of their own, and so on.

2. Blessing

In the 12th chapter, God promises to bless Abraham, bless his allies and eventually, bless the world through him ([12:1–3](#)). This kick starts the rest of the book, and indeed the rest of the Bible, into gear. From this point on, God has a special relationship with Abraham and his family. The rest of Genesis watches this promise unfold—and it involves a lot of people getting blessed.

The narrative of blessings is especially important when we get about halfway through the book, when Jacob "inherits" (i.e., tricks his dad into giving him) the blessing that God had given to Abraham and Isaac. This blessing was originally intended for Jacob's older brother Esau. But before another Cain and Abel situation takes place, Jacob escapes to a distant land, where he starts a new life. When Jacob returns, he wrestles with God—who blesses him.

3. Records and genealogies

A key repeated phrase in Genesis is, "this is the account of ...," or "these are the records of..." followed by either a list of names or a bunch of stories. In fact, this is pretty much all of Genesis - a long series of family trees:

- Adam's family line ([5:1](#))
- Noah's family line ([6:9](#))
- The nations that stemmed from Noah's sons ([10:1](#))
- Abraham's family ([11:27](#))
- Ishmael's family ([25:12](#))
- Isaac's family ([25:19](#))
- Esau's family ([36:1](#))
- And finally, Jacob's family ([37:2](#))

4. Promised land

One more important theme in Genesis: the land of Canaan. God promises that Abraham's descendants will possess that land [[chapter 15](#)] but this promise is not fulfilled until the book of Joshua. Abraham wanders through Canaan, Isaac settles there, and Jacob eventually settles here, too. At the end of the book, however, the budding nation of Israel is living as guests in Egypt. The next four books of the Bible tell us how they make their way back to Canaan - where things happen is just as important as what is happening.



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Overview of Genesis's story and structure

The stories in Genesis set the backdrop for vital theological principles in the rest of the Bible. In Genesis, we see that God has authority over the world. We see that humans and other creatures are in rebellion against God's order. We see the hints of God's plan to redeem his creation back to himself.

Genesis can generally be broken into two large movements, each one the beginning of a bigger story. The first is the story of God's relationship with the world. The second is the origin story of God's relationship with Israel.

Movement 1: God and humanity (Genesis 1–11)

Genesis opens with God creating the heavens and the earth, the stars, the plants, the animals, and humans: **Adam and Eve**. God places Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, but they rebel against God, introducing a curse of sin and death to the world.

Adam and Eve have children (including Cain and Abel), and those children have children. Eventually the world becomes so violent that God sends a great flood to destroy the world, but He spares the only righteous man, **Noah**. Noah builds his famous ark to escape the floodwaters with his family (and many animals). After the waters recede, God promises to never again destroy the earth with a flood.

This movement culminates with the strange story of the Tower of Babel. The people of earth come together to make a great city and a name for themselves. At this time, God and the divine beings with him scatter the people of earth by confusing their languages and setting up different nations (Genesis 11, Deuteronomy 32:8).

Movement 2: God and Israel

Act 1: Abraham & Isaac

(Genesis 12–24)

Hundreds of years later, God calls Noah's descendant, **Abram**, to leave his family and journey to the land of Canaan. God promises to bless Abram with many descendants, and to bless all the nations of the world through him. Abram believes God's promise, even though he is old and childless. God considers him to be righteous, and changes his name from Abram to **Abraham**. Later, Abraham has a son, **Isaac**.

Act 2: Isaac

(Genesis 25–27)

Isaac dwells in the land of Canaan and has twin sons: **Jacob and Esau**.

Jacob grows up, tricks Esau into giving away his blessing, and Esau's not too happy about this. So ...

Act 3: Jacob/Israel

(Genesis 28–36)

Jacob then leaves town to live with his uncle. He marries, has 13 children, and lives with his uncle for 20 years before God calls him back to Canaan. As Jacob returns to the land of Abraham and Isaac, his name is changed to **Israel** (35:9–12).

Act 4: Joseph

(Genesis 37–50)

Of Jacob's 12 sons and one daughter, **Joseph** is his favourite. Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery, and he becomes a prisoner in Egypt. His God-given ability to interpret dreams becomes valuable to the Pharaoh, however, and so Joseph is released from prison and made second in command of all Egypt. Joseph warns Pharaoh that a terrible famine is coming, and stockpiles food for the coming years.

Joseph's predictions are correct: the famine reaches Canaan, and his brothers come to Egypt to buy food. The brothers reconcile, and Joseph provides for all the children of Israel to move to Egypt until the famine is over. The book of Genesis ends with the death of Joseph, whose last prediction is that God will bring the children of Israel back to the promised land. God begins fulfilling this in the next movement of the story: the book of Exodus.



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GENESIS

	Creation	Fall	Flood	Nations		Abraham	Isaac	Jacob	Joseph
	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 1-2	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 3-5	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 6-9	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 10-11		<i>CHAPTERS</i> 12-25	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 26-27	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 28-36	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 37-50
Beginnings	Beginning of the human race					Beginning of the chosen race			
Result	Confusion and scattering					Bondage in Egypt			
History	Primeval history					Patriarchal history			
Chronology	Over 2,000 years					Approximately 300 years			
Emphasis	Four major events					Four important people			
Key Words and Phrases	"In the beginning" (1:1) "Generations" (5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 37:2)								
Theme	God promises to redeem and bless His people.								



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Monday 5th July

Genesis 28. 10 - end

Jacob's Dream at Bethel

¹⁰ Jacob left Beersheba and went to Haran. ¹¹ The sun had already set when he came to a good place to spend the night. He took a rock there and laid his head on it to sleep. ¹² Jacob had a dream. He dreamed there was a ladder that was on the ground and reached up into heaven. He saw the angels of God going up and down the ladder. ¹³ And then Jacob saw the LORD standing by the ladder. He said, "I am the LORD, the God of your grandfather Abraham. I am the God of Isaac. I will give you the land that you are lying on now. I will give this land to you and to your children. ¹⁴ You will have as many descendants as there are particles of dust on the earth. They will spread east and west, north and south. All the families on earth will be blessed because of you and your descendants.

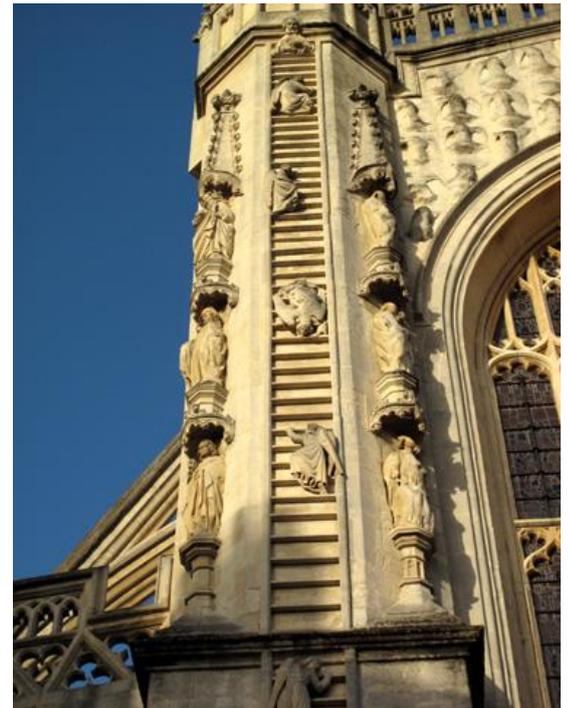
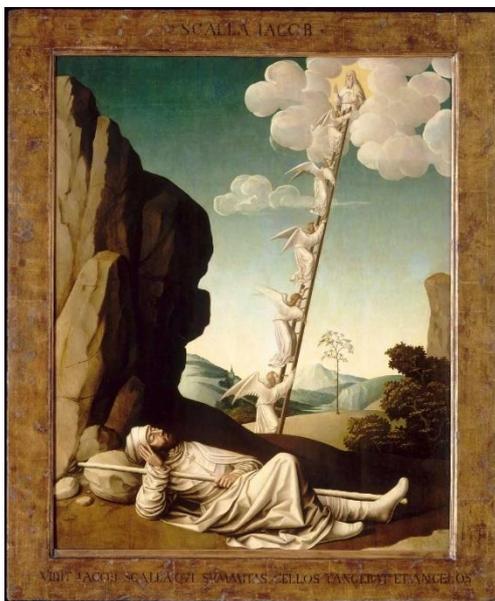
¹⁵ "I am with you, and I will protect you everywhere you go. I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised."

¹⁶ Then Jacob woke up and said, "I know that the LORD is in this place, but I did not know he was here until I slept."

¹⁷ Jacob was afraid and said, "This is a very great place. This is the house of God. This is the gate to heaven."

¹⁸ Jacob got up very early in the morning. He took the rock he had slept on and set it up on its edge. Then he poured oil on the rock. In this way he made it a memorial to God. ¹⁹ The name of that place was Luz, but Jacob named it Bethel.

²⁰ Then Jacob made a promise. He said, "If God will be with me, and if he will protect me on this trip, and if he gives me food to eat and clothes to wear, ²¹ and if I return in peace to my father's house—if he does all these things—then the LORD will be my God. ²² I am setting this stone up as a memorial stone. It will show that this is a holy place for God, and I will give God one-tenth of all he gives me."



Bath Abbey – depicting the angels climbing the ladder

This ladder was between earth and heaven. Earlier in Genesis, people had tried to build a tower [the Tower of Babel] reaching to heaven as they thought they were equal to God. But in Jacob's dream, God provided the staircase. In [John 1:51](#), Jesus said, 'Really and truly I say to you that you will see heaven open. And you will see God's angels go up and down upon the Son of Man.' Jacob needed to know that despite feeling alone, God was near him and controlling the situation.

Abraham was Jacob's grandfather. God showed to Jacob that He was blessing him. Jacob really wanted God's blessing and had even used wrong methods to try to get it. But God gives his blessing where he wants to and in [v.14](#) God made the same promises to Jacob that He had made to Abraham and Isaac.



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Later in the Bible, God did not allow the Jewish people to put up columns because the Canaanites did that to worship false gods. But Jacob put up this one here to remind himself and other people how great God was and to remember the exact place where he had this experience.

The place was probably not a city until later. It seems that Jacob was alone in the desert. 'Bethel' means 'the house of God' and Jacob gave this name to the place because he met God there.

The Prayer of St. Benedict:

*Gracious and Holy Father,
give us the wisdom to discover You,
the intelligence to understand You,
the diligence to seek after You,
the patience to wait for You,
eyes to behold You,
a heart to meditate upon You,
and a life to proclaim You,
through the power of the Spirit of Jesus, our Lord.
Amen.*

*Father, we are your chosen people.
May we live with compassion, kindness, humility and
patience,
May we forgive each other as you forgive us,
May we live with the love that brings everyone
together in perfect harmony,
May the peace of Christ reign in our hearts,
May the words we speak and the words we perform
in your Son's name
Tell you of our thanks and praise. **Amen.***

Tuesday 6th July

Genesis 32. 22 - end

²² During the night, Jacob got up and began moving his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven sons across the Jabbok River at the crossing. ²³ After he sent his family across the river, he sent across everything he had.

The Fight With God

²⁴ Jacob was left alone, and a man came and wrestled with him. The man fought with him until the sun came up. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not defeat Jacob, he touched Jacob's leg and put it out of joint.

²⁶ Then the man said to Jacob, "Let me go. The sun is coming up."

But Jacob said, "I will not let you go. You must bless me."

²⁷ And the man said to him, "What is your name?"

And Jacob said, "My name is Jacob."

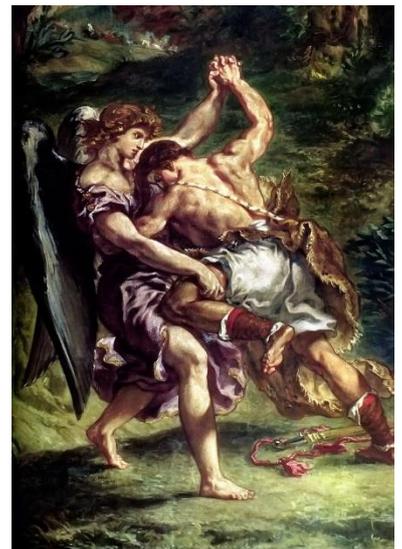
²⁸ Then the man said, "Your name will not be Jacob. Your name will now be Israel. I give you this name because you have fought with God and with men, and you have won."

²⁹ Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name."

But the man said, "Why do you ask my name?" Then the man blessed Jacob at that place.

³⁰ So Jacob named that place Peniel. He said, "At this place, I saw God face to face, but my life was spared." ³¹ Then the sun came up as Jacob left Peniel. He was limping because of his leg. ³² So even today,

the people of Israel don't eat the muscle that is on the hip joint, because this is the muscle where Jacob was hurt.



There are a lot of unknowns here. The Bible does not tell us why Jacob stayed behind alone - perhaps he needed to pray more and did not want anyone to disturb him.



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We do not know why God's man [probably an angel] fought with Jacob. But we do know why Jacob continued to struggle with the man. Jacob wanted to receive God's blessing (*verse 26*).

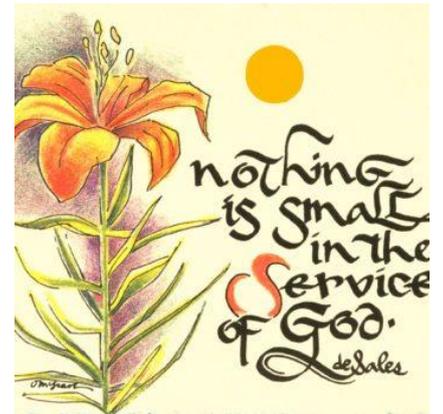
So as we saw with Abram / Abraham and Sarai / Sarah, here God gives Jacob a new name. Israel means 'God struggles' or 'he who struggles with God'. Jacob had to struggle that night as he prayed but he overcame.

Although, Jacob's name changed to Israel, although we still call him Jacob. His character changed also - he did not continue to use schemes but learned to trust God more.

Peniel [sometimes Penuel] means 'God's face'.

As with Jacob, God sometimes makes us weak in some way. In *2 Corinthians 12:9 - 10*, Paul wrote, 'The Lord said to me, "My grace is enough for you. When you are weak, then my power becomes perfect in you." So I am very happy to talk proudly about my weaknesses. Then Christ's power can live in me.'

Lord my God, my loving Father,
you have made me to know you, to love you, to serve you,
and thereby to find and fulfil myself.
I know that you are in all things and that every path can lead me to you,
but of them all there is one especially by which you want me to come to you.
Since I will do what you want of me, I pray that you send your Holy Spirit to me:
Into my mind to show me what you want of me;
into my heart to give me the determination to do it,
and to do it with all my love, with all my mind and with all my strength. **Amen**





PARISH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW WESTHOUGHTON

St Bartholomew

St Thomas

St George

INTERMISSION: Joseph's Story

A quick break now while we summarise the story of Joseph – the readings we're following only give us certain selected highlights, so this is a rough guide to the next few days of readings.

- The story of Joseph is told in **Genesis chapters 37-50**, one quarter of the book of Genesis.
- Joseph was the first son of Rachel and Jacob, and the 11th of Jacob's 12 sons (**Genesis 30:22-24**).
- Joseph was sold by his brothers into slavery in Egypt (**Genesis 37**).
- Joseph became the slave of Potiphar a very high official in Egypt. Joseph did very well with God's help. Joseph was fully trusted by his master (**Genesis 39**).
- Potiphar's wife took a fancy to Joseph, but he refused to sin with her. She became angry and told lies about him, so he was put in jail (**Genesis 39**).
- Joseph's ability to interpret dreams got him out of jail and into great favour with Pharaoh. Joseph was made a ruler over Egypt second to Pharaoh. (**Genesis 41**).
- When the famine came of which Pharaoh had dreamt and Joseph had predicted, Joseph's father, brothers, and their families, settled in Egypt where there was food. So Joseph was reunited with his family (**Genesis 42-50**).
- Joseph lived to the age of 110, having known his sons' children and even their children (**Genesis 50:22-26**).
- Stephen provided a brief summary of Joseph's Story in the New Testament (**Acts 7:9-19**).

Other Facts About Joseph

- Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath, daughter of Potiphara, priest of On, to be his wife (**Genesis 41:45**).
- Jacob, before he died, gave his blessing to Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. However Jacob gave the greater blessing to the younger Ephraim (**Genesis 48**).
- Moses, before he died, gave a similar blessing to the house of Joseph, which he called "**the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh**" (**Deuteronomy 33:13-17**).
- Joseph had great faith in God. For example, just before his death he predicted that God would visit the children of Israel and lead them out of Egypt and into the promised land (**Genesis 50:22-26**).
- "**By faith Joseph, when he was dying, said confidently that the children of Israel would leave Egypt. He even instructed them to take his bones with them.**" (**Hebrews 11:22**).
- "**The bones of Joseph which the children of Israel had brought up from the land of Egypt, they buried at Shechem in the plot of ground that Jacob had purchased from the sons of Hamor...**" (**Joshua 24:32**).

Jacob's Sons

The twelve sons of Jacob (Israel) from oldest to youngest were as follows.

- Leah was the mother of **1. Reuben**, **2. Simeon**, **3. Levi** and **4. Judah** (**Genesis 29:31-35**).
- Bilhah (Rachel's maid) was the mother of **5. Dan** and **6. Naphtali** (**Genesis 30:1-8**).
- Zilpa (Leah's maid) was the mother of **7. Gad** and **8. Asher** (**Genesis 30:9-13**).
- Leah was the mother of **9. Issachar** and **10. Zebulun** (**Genesis 30:17-21 & Genesis 30:22**).
- Rachel was the mother of **11. Joseph** and **12. Benjamin** (**Genesis 30:22-24, Genesis 35:16-18**).



Wednesday 7th July

Genesis 41. 55 – end & 42 . 5 – 7 & 17 - end

⁵⁵ The famine began, and the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Pharaoh said to the Egyptian people, “Go ask Joseph what to do.”

⁵⁶ There was famine everywhere, so Joseph gave the people grain from the warehouses. He sold the stored grain to the people of Egypt. The famine was bad in Egypt, ⁵⁷ but the famine was bad everywhere. So people from the countries around Egypt had to come to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain.

⁵ The famine was very bad in Canaan, so there were many people from Canaan who went to Egypt to buy grain. Among them were the sons of Israel.

⁶ Joseph was the governor of Egypt at the time. He was the one who checked the sale of grain to people who came to Egypt to buy it. Joseph’s brothers came to him and bowed before him. ⁷ Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted like he didn’t know them. He was rude when he spoke to them. He said, “Where do you come from?”

The brothers answered, “We have come from the land of Canaan to buy food.”

¹⁷ Then Joseph put them all in prison for three days.

The Troubles Begin

¹⁸ After three days Joseph said to them, “I am a God-fearing man. Do this, and I will let you live. ¹⁹ If you are honest men, one of your brothers can stay here in prison, and the others can go and carry grain back to your people. ²⁰ But then you must bring your youngest brother back here to me. Then I will know that you are telling the truth, and you will not have to die.”

The brothers agreed to this. ²¹ They said to each other, “We are being punished for the bad thing we did to our younger brother Joseph. We saw the trouble he was in. He begged us to save him, but we refused to listen. So now we are in trouble.”

²² Then Reuben said to them, “I told you not to do anything bad to that boy, but you refused to listen to me. Now we are being punished for his death.”

²³⁻²⁴ Joseph was using an interpreter to talk to his brothers, so the brothers did not know that he understood their language. He heard and understood everything they said, and that made him want to cry. So he turned away and left the room. When he came back, he took one of the brothers, Simeon, and tied him up while the others watched. ²⁵ Joseph told the servants to fill the bags with grain. The brothers had given Joseph the money for the grain, but he didn’t keep the money. He put the money in their bags of grain. Then he gave them what they would need for their trip back home.

²⁶ So the brothers put the grain on their donkeys and left. ²⁷ That night the brothers stopped at a place to spend the night. One of the brothers opened his sack to get some grain for his donkey. And there in the sack, he saw his money! ²⁸ He said to the other brothers, “Look! Here is the money I paid for the grain. Someone put the money back in my sack.” The brothers were very afraid. They said to one another, “What is God doing to us?”

The Brothers Report to Jacob





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²⁹ The brothers went back to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. They told him about everything that had happened. ³⁰ They said, “The governor of that country spoke rudely to us. He thought that we were spies! ³¹ We told him, ‘We are honest men, not spies. ³² There are twelve of us brothers, all from the same father. But one of our brothers is no longer living, and the youngest is still at home with our father in Canaan.’

³³ “Then the governor of that country said to us, ‘Here is a way to prove that you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me. Take your grain back to your families. ³⁴ Bring your youngest brother to me. Then I will know if you are honest men or if you were sent from an army to destroy us. If you are telling the truth, I will give your brother back to you. I will give him to you, and you will be free to buy grain in our country.’”

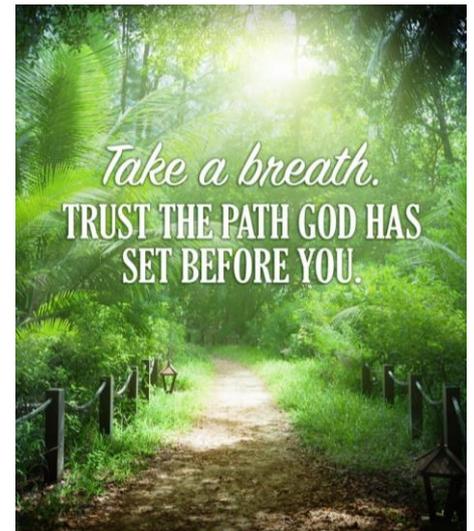
³⁵ Then the brothers started taking the grain out of their sacks, and every brother found his bag of money in his sack of grain. When the brothers and their father saw the money, they were afraid.

³⁶ Jacob said to them, “Do you want me to lose all of my children? Joseph is gone. Simeon is gone, and now you want to take Benjamin away too!”

³⁷ But Reuben said to his father, “Father, you may kill my two sons if I don’t bring Benjamin back to you. Trust me. I will bring him back to you.”

³⁸ But Jacob said, “I will not let Benjamin go with you. His brother is dead, and he is the only son left from my wife Rachel. It would kill me if anything happened to him during the trip to Egypt. You would send me to the grave a very sad, old man.”

*Lord. I thank you for the gifts you have given me,
especially for life, love, family and friends.
Help me to know myself better and to know my talents,
as I pray, study and decide on my life's work.
Help me to see and understand the path that you have opened for me.
help me to choose a life's work
which will be in response to my potential and your plans for me.
Give me a generous heart to respond to your challenging call
and the strength to follow you wherever you lead me. **Amen.***



Thursday 8th July

Genesis 44. 18 – 21, 23 – 29 & 45. 1 - 5

Judah Pleads for Benjamin

¹⁸ Then Judah went to Joseph and said, “Sir, please let me speak plainly with you. Please don’t be angry with me. I know that you are like Pharaoh himself. ¹⁹ When we were here before, you asked us, ‘Do you have a father or a brother?’ ²⁰ And we answered you, ‘We have a father—he is an old man. And we have a younger brother. Our father loves him because he was born while our father was old. This youngest son’s brother is dead, so he is the only son who is left from that mother. Our father loves him very much.’ ²¹ Then you said to us, ‘Bring that brother to me. I want to see him.’

²³ But you said to us, ‘You must bring your youngest brother, or I will not sell you grain again.’ ²⁴ So we went back to our father and told him what you said.



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²⁵ “Later, our father said, ‘Go back and buy us some more food.’ ²⁶ We said to our father, ‘We cannot go without our youngest brother. The governor said he will not sell us grain again until he sees our youngest brother.’ ²⁷ Then my father said to us, ‘You know that my wife Rachel gave me two sons. ²⁸ I let one son go away, and he was killed by a wild animal. And I haven’t seen him since. ²⁹ If you take my other son away from me, and something happens to him, I will be sad enough to die.’

Joseph Tells Who He Is

45 Joseph could not control himself any longer. He cried in front of all the people who were there. Joseph said, “Tell everyone to leave here.” So all the people left. Only the brothers were left with Joseph. Then he told them who he was. ² Joseph continued to cry, and all the Egyptian people in Pharaoh’s house heard it. ³ He said to his brothers, “I am your brother Joseph. Is my father doing well?” But the brothers did not answer him because they were confused and afraid. ⁴ So Joseph said to his brothers again, “Come here to me. I beg you, come here.” When the brothers went to him, he said to them, “I am your brother Joseph. I am the one you sold as a slave to Egypt. ⁵ Now don’t be worried. Don’t be angry with yourselves for what you did. It was God’s plan for me to come here. I am here to save people’s lives.



*God, I know you love me and have great plans for me.
But sometimes I am overwhelmed by the thought of the future.
Show me how to walk forward one day at a time.
May I take heart while I search openly, learn about the choices,
listen to others for advice and pay attention to my own feelings.
By doing these things, may I hear your call to a life that will let me love
as only as I can.
And let me serve others with the special gifts which you have given me.
Amen*



Friday 9th July

Genesis 46. 1 – 7 & 28 - 30

God Assures Israel

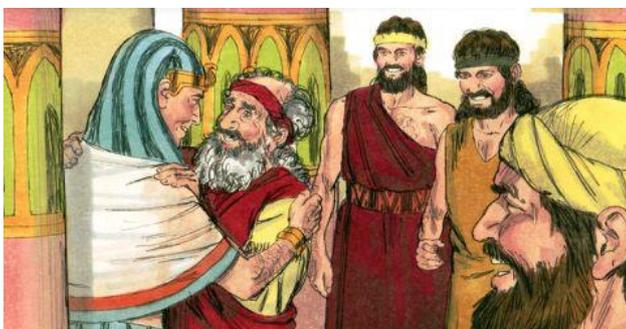
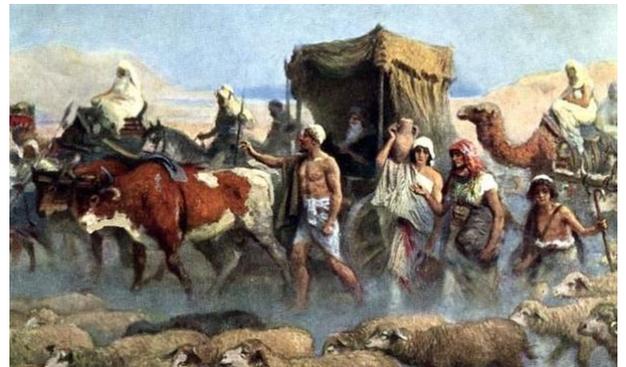
46 So Israel began his trip to Egypt. First he went to Beersheba. There he worshiped God, the God of his father Isaac. He offered sacrifices. ² During the night God spoke to Israel in a dream and said, “Jacob, Jacob.”

Israel answered, “Here I am.”

³ Then God said, “I am God, the God of your father. Don’t be afraid to go to Egypt. In Egypt I will make you a great nation. ⁴ I will go to Egypt with you, and I will bring you out of Egypt again. You will die there, but Joseph will be with you. His own hands will close your eyes when you die.”

Israel Goes to Egypt

⁵ Then Jacob left Beersheba and travelled to Egypt. His sons, the sons of Israel, brought their father, their wives, and all their children to Egypt. They travelled in the wagons the Pharaoh had sent. ⁶ They also had their cattle and everything they owned in the land of Canaan. So Israel went to Egypt with all his children and his family. ⁷ With him were his sons and his grandsons, his daughters and his granddaughters. All of his family went with him.



Israel Arrives in Egypt

²⁸ Jacob sent Judah ahead to speak to Joseph. Judah went to Joseph in the land of Goshen. Then Jacob and his people followed into the land. ²⁹ Joseph learned that his father was coming. So he prepared his chariot and went out to meet his father, Israel, in Goshen. When Joseph saw his father, he hugged his neck and cried for a long time.

³⁰ Then Israel said to Joseph, “Now I can die in peace. I have seen your face, and I know that you are still alive.”

*Let nothing disturb you,
Nothing frighten you;
All things are passing,
God never changes.
Patient endurance
Attains to all things:
Who God possesses
In nothing is wanting:
Alone God suffices.*



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Saturday 10th July

Genesis 49. 29 – end & 50. 15 - 26

²⁹ Then Israel gave them a command. He said, “When I die, I want to be with my people. I want to be buried with my ancestors in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. ³⁰ That cave is in the field of Machpelah near Mamre in the land of Canaan. Abraham bought that field from Ephron so that he could have a burying place. ³¹ Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried in that cave. Isaac and his wife Rebekah are buried in that cave. I buried my wife Leah in that cave. ³² That cave is in the field that was bought from the Hittites.” ³³ After Jacob finished talking to his sons, he lay down, put his feet back on the bed, and died.

The Brothers Are Still Afraid of Joseph

¹⁵ After Jacob died, Joseph’s brothers were worried. They were afraid that Joseph would still be mad at them for what they had done years before. They said, “Maybe Joseph still hates us for what we did.” ¹⁶ So the brothers sent this message to Joseph: “Before your father died, he told us to give you a message. ¹⁷ He said, ‘Tell Joseph that I beg him to please forgive his brothers for the bad things they did to him.’ So now Joseph, we beg you, please forgive us for the bad things we did to you. We are the servants of God, the God of your father.”

That message made Joseph very sad, and he cried. ¹⁸ His brothers went to him and bowed down in front of him. They said, “We will be your servants.”

¹⁹ Then Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. I am not God! I have no right to punish you. ²⁰ It is true that you planned to do something bad to me. But really, God was planning good things. God’s plan was to use me to save the lives of many people. And that is what happened. ²¹ So don’t be afraid. I will take care of you and your children.” And so Joseph said kind things to his brothers, and this made them feel better.

²² Joseph continued to live in Egypt with his father’s family. He died when he was 110 years old. ²³ During Joseph’s life Ephraim had children and grandchildren. And his son Manasseh had a son named Makir. Joseph lived to see Makir’s children.

The Death of Joseph

²⁴ When Joseph was near death, he said to his brothers, “My time to die is almost here. But I know that God will take care of you and lead you out of this country. God will lead you to the land he promised to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

²⁵ Then Joseph asked his people to make a promise. Joseph said, “Promise me that you will carry my bones with you when God leads you out of Egypt.”

²⁶ Joseph died in Egypt when he was 110 years old. Doctors prepared his body for burial and put the body in a coffin in Egypt.

Father, you called St. Benedict to leave everything to follow you and made him a master in the school of your service: inspired by his life and teaching, may our hearts expand with love so that prompted by the Gospel, we may run with him along the path of true life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



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NOTICEBOARD:

Manchester Cathedral is looking forward to huge celebrations in July when a total of 37 people will be ordained over two days. Twenty-five deacons, the largest number ever ordained in a single year in Manchester, are a diverse group including 13 women, six people of BAME background and 11 under the age of 40.

Twenty-five deacons will be ordained by the Bishop of Manchester on 4 July and 12 priests will be ordained on 3 July.

After Covid forced last year's ordination services to be restricted to very small numbers of participants, this year's celebrations will be open to 350 invited family and friends, with appropriate social distancing measures in force to ensure everyone's safety.

Each of the 25 new deacons has been assigned to a parish, where they will begin their ordained ministry under the guidance of an experienced priest. [The full list of candidates](#) and details of where they will be serving is available here.

The Bishop of Manchester, The Rt Revd Dr David Walker, will ordain the deacons on Sunday 4 July. He said, "Among the most moving ceremonies in the Church's books are the ordinations of new deacons and priests. Women and men, who have heard and responded to God's call, come before their bishop so that their lives can be set apart for God's service.

"It has been a difficult time for the candidates as they faced uncertainty about whether the services could safely go ahead, but we are delighted that we can enjoy being together as a group for a very special weekend of ordination services.

"Individually, and as the largest cohort of deacons Manchester has had, these new ministers will both serve their particular communities, and help us reshape ministry across our diocese for the post-Covid era."

LIVESTREAMING OF ORDINATION SERVICES

The Cathedral ordination services will be livestreamed so that guests who cannot attend in person can view the whole service live. The services can be accessed through the [Cathedral Facebook page](#) (you don't need to have a Facebook account; just click the link)



Hannah Lane will be ordained deacon on Sunday 4 July at Manchester Cathedral. She has found Bury Parish Church and St Paul's to be a welcoming community.

"I've been part of choral worship, civic ceremonies, online worship and had lots of different pastoral encounters. Being in a town centre has been different to my home church in Wingates and each has something to teach me. My curacy is at the Turton Moorland Team near Bolton and I'm keen to get stuck into whatever I can!

"I was brought up as part of the church family at St John the Evangelist, Wingates. I drifted away from the church while I was at university, but after returning to worship in my mid 20s I started to feel that I should be doing something more. I initially explored a call to Reader ministry but realised that I wouldn't be able to balance full-time teaching and a part-time ministerial role and concluded that I should really test a vocation to full-time ordained ministry further.



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"I have been through the selection process (Bishop's Advisory Panel – BAP) twice. Reflection has taught me that the first BAP wouldn't have been the right time for me to embark upon training, but it was a hard thing to see. The Director of Vocations organised a placement for me at St Thomas Werneth and St Paul's Oldham. Through this I had new experiences of faith expression, saw more of the diversity of the Church of England, felt renewed and had an opportunity to grow into a more public role in leading services.

"I have completed my training at St Mellitus College with a placement at Bury Parish Church and St Paul's. The experiences I have had at college have been diverse and I have learned a lot from friends from different traditions. In Bury I found a welcoming community. Here I've been part of choral worship, civic ceremonies, online worship and had lots of different pastoral encounters. Being in a town centre has really shown me another side to the diocese and how we operate in different communities.

"My curacy is with the Turton Moorland Team and I am looking forward to learning more new things in another different community. Being out in the moors of Bolton and having a team that is spread quite widely will be a challenge but I am keen to get stuck into whatever I can.

"The people I have met on the journey so far have all shaped me in different ways and I can't wait to see what new things I learn from new people in the future as the journey continues."

Next Sunday: Trinity 6

Readings: Amos 7. 7 – 15 / Ephesians 1. 3 – 14 / Mark 6. 14 - 29

9:15 am Holy Communion Service St George's Church Revd Carol Pharaoh / Andy Jones
11:00am Holy Communion Service St. Bartholomew's Church Revd Carol Pharaoh / Andy Jones
9:15am Service of the Word at St. Thomas' Elaine Simkin

Do contact us if we can offer any help or support at this time.

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Team Vicar: Revd Angela Wynne 01204 468150 – revawynne@gmail.com

FACEBOOK – locate us by searching Westhoughton parish Follow us on twitter @Wparishchurch
@Westhoughtontowerbellringers

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