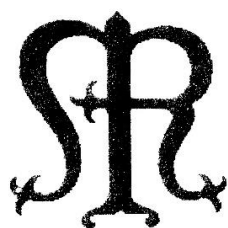


Newsletter #2

Friday 4th March 2022 to Friday 18th March 2022



St Mary's Church Eccleston /

St Mary's Church Pulford

[Eccleston and Pulford Churches](#)

Email:

Warden@ecclestonchurch.org

PulfordChurchWarden@ecclestonchurch.org



Upcoming Services

- **6/03/2022 10:30 at Pulford.**
Holy Communion.
Rev. Canon Ian Davenport.
- **13/03/2022 10:30 at Eccleston.**
Choral Communion.
Rev. Andrew Malcolm.
- **20/03/2022 10:30 at Pulford.**
Holy Communion
Rev. Robin Mosley
- **27/03/2022 10:30 at Eccleston.**
Choral Communion.
Rev. Chris Samuels.

Dear Reader,

The parish newsletter will be emailed once a fortnight.

In this edition Rob Hughes starts his series of contemplations for Lent and Jeanette Howe writes about a recent school trip to Eccleston Church.

Kind Regards

Stephen Hutchinson

Important News and Reminders

Food Bank:

A reminder from Rachel Williams

Top ten items needed at the foodbank as of 25/1/22

- Tinned meats, fish, desserts and puddings.
- UHT milk and UHT fruit juice
- Custard
- Instant coffee (small jars please)
- Jams and spreads
- Instant mashed potatoes.
- Pasta sauce
- Biscuits

The list changes from time to time. Both donation stations are emptied on the last service in the month and for those parents who receive the magazine we collect from school the last week of each half term.

Face Masks

Since January 27th it is no longer obligatory to wear face coverings in church. However, if you feel you would still like to wear a face covering for personal reasons that is perfectly fine too.

In the Community

Messy Church – Eccleston Primary School. Saturday 26th March 3pm to 5pm.

“We are delighted to be holding our first Messy Church for some time. As this is the day before Mothering Sunday, it will have a Mothering Sunday theme. Do come along and create something beautiful for a special grown up in your life”.

Katie Prescott. Head teacher Eccleston Primary School.



Messy Church logo © Bible Reading Fellowship 2021.

See messychurch.org.uk

Rob Hughes Contemplations for Lent

Introduction: Are Love Languages Biblical?

I listened to an audio reflection about 'love language' a few days ago, which prompted my theme for Lenten contemplation. It was about how love language translates into the way we live our faith.

So, what is meant by Love Language? Well, in his book, "**The 5 Love Languages – the Secret to Love that Lasts**", the author, Dr Gary Chapman, identifies five of them:

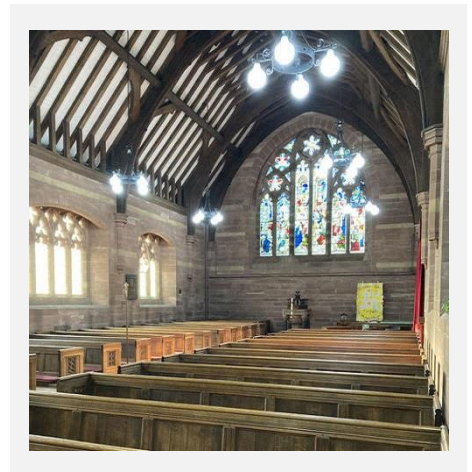
- *Receiving Gifts,*
- *Physical Touch.*
- *Words of Affirmation.*
- *Quality Time.*
- *Acts of Service.*

And before going any further, it's important to explain that the author is saying that each of us has a **preferred** way of expressing our love to someone; he's not suggesting that we 'don't do the other stuff' as well; 'that all depends' on the situation...

What he **is** proposing, though, is that we might well have (an albeit mistaken) tendency to assume that 'everyone else' shares the same preference as we do. In my experience, his hypothesis rang true as soon as Sue and I realized that we were 'serious about each other'. I used to buy lots of things for her (and still do, but less so) – when all she really wanted was 'doing stuff together' (quality time, which we now have more of, since our retirement from work).

The text in the audio included a short statement from the Book of the Prophet Hosea 6 – in essence, a reflection on God's view about what He expects from us, relative to how we express our love for Him: "**For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings**". So, over this season of Lent, I'd like to share with you a series of short homilies, which explore how these 'earthly principles' might translate into our living faith – as practicing Christians and disciples...

In your personal and family life: How do you like receiving love from your family and friends, and how do you show your love for them? When showing love, is that specific or unique to the person you are loving, or 'mostly the same way'?



Background.

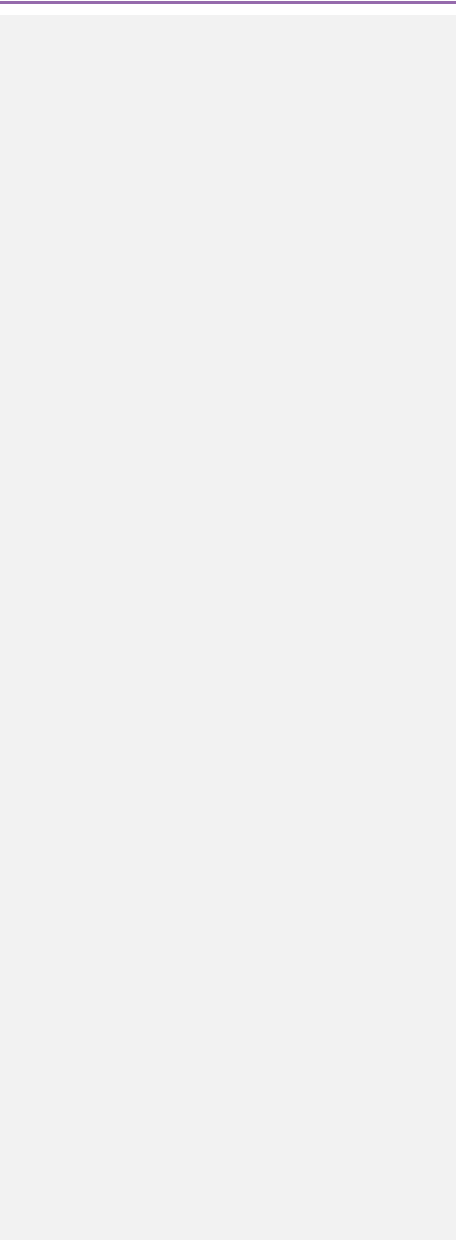
According to Dr Chapman – and in the ‘earthly / human’ sense – the way we love our spouse, or family, or friends is how we’ll naturally ‘express’ it – but if our loved-ones don’t ‘naturally respond’ to love in the same way, they might not feel ‘as-loved-as- we-might-think. Indeed, they might even feel **un**-loved on occasion.

The book further explains how, and why, showing love to someone needs to be specific or unique to the person we’re loving – and unique to specific situations... So, in human terms, I guess this is relatively straightforward to equate-to (even if we may not entirely agree with all of the principles). So, there’s nothing set in stone, and it’s recognised – expected, even – that we can all respond positively to any of the love languages – depending on the context of the ‘loving situation’.

I sense that it might be less obvious that we have, in a very real sense, been **recipients of God’s love language throughout time**, which is what I’d aim to explore over the next few weeks, and the purpose of the Lenten theme: **Are Love Languages Biblical? In my view, most certainly!** Jesus did an incredible job demonstrating God’s love-in-action, in ways that were uniquely tailored to every situation that he faced during His ministry.

I’ve come to understand that these five love languages are **uniquely focused on the receiver, not the on the giver**; the giver isn’t looking for anything in return (though might hope to receive love in return, of course, but in a way that’s as meaningful to them). and that’s what gives them biblical significance.

The first of these – **Gift**ing – follows this introduction; next time, I’ll be adding some thoughts about the Love Languages *Physical Touch* and *Words of Affirmation*.



Contemplation 1 – The Love Language of Gifting.

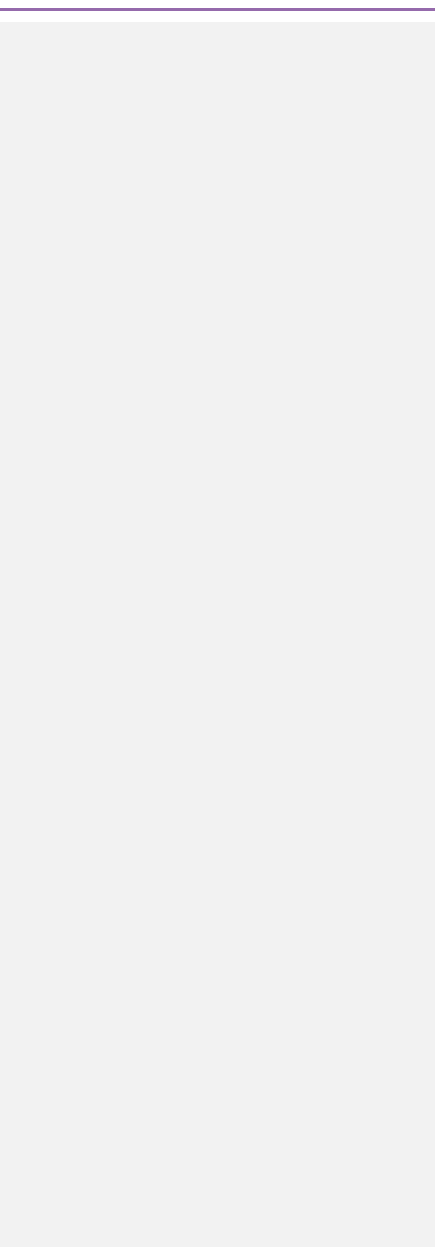
The person who responds naturally to this language will typically appreciate the love and thoughtfulness - the reason for it - and the effort made to give it. In essence, actions speak louder than words (though not always! Especially if you prefer **words of affirmation** - but more about that in a later contemplation).

It rarely matters precisely what that gift may be - other than being specific and thoughtful, rather than lavish or expensive. A single rosebud on Valentine's Day can mean more than a bouquet; a replacement strap for a worn-out wristband can mean more than a new watch... The **act of giving** a gift tells your loved one that you care enough to think about him-or-her, and prepared to go out of your way to get something to make them simply smile.

Is this 'Biblical'? Frankly, **yes, it is - surely.** It occurs to me that perhaps gifting might well have been pretty much top-of-the-list (maybe next to service?) for Jesus... We see throughout the New Testament That Jesus loved to give good things to his people.

- The gift of food to eat 'to the 4,000' as we can read in **Matthew 15.**
- The gift of bread and fish 'to the 5000, reported in **Luke 9.**
- Jesus gave the gift of healing and sight to a blind man, as told in **John 9.**
- He gave the gift of life to Lazarus - and raised him the dead, as we're told in **John 11.**
- Crucially, He **enabled** the gift of the Holy Spirit to his disciples (then) and to all of us (for all time), as a result of the ultimate gift - of sacrificing His life on the cross, that resulted in the amazing events that followed the first Easter Day - **Luke 24.**

This list could go on and on. But it's clear that Jesus was a giver of gifts - even though they were not always appreciated at the time... Gifts available to everyone who choose to believe; and always gifts of a lasting nature.



Jeanette's review of the Eccleston Primary School visit to Eccleston Church.

After planning a church visit with the Head teacher of Eccleston Primary School Katie Prescott, Mo Richards and I welcomed around 40 of the youngest children from 'Rabbit' class on Friday 11th February.

Our hope was to share with the staff and children, an understanding about our church and the joy of knowing Jesus, especially His Love for children.

Children explored the church, read from the children's Bible, said prayers and created beautiful stained glass window pictures (see photos below).



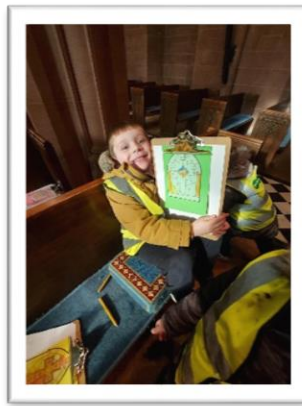
Quotes from the children:

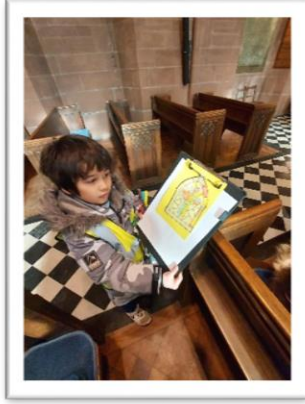
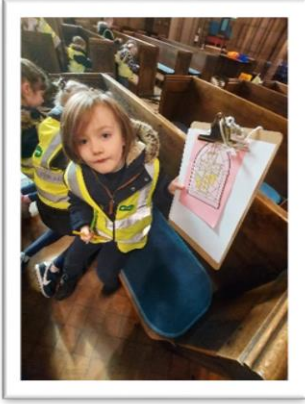
"It was so interesting!"

"I love the church."

"I want to go there again."

"It was magical."



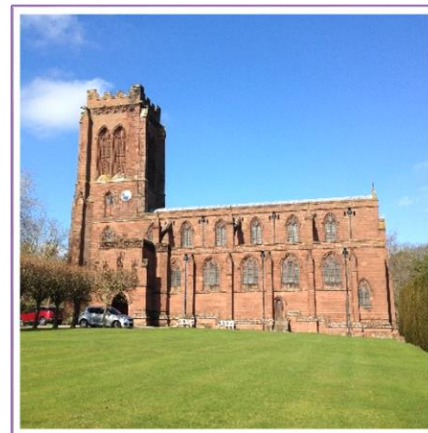
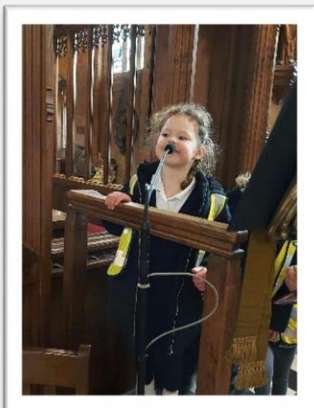


"The visit was really enjoyable and we hope the school community remember their visit for many years to come".

Jeanette Howe

A short service was held, led by Jeanette and the children. Mo then led everyone in the song "Jesus' Love is very wonderful".

Last of all, the children sang "Superman Grace" before leaving for lunch.



"Rabbit Class were delighted to visit our church and to learn all about it. Mrs. Howe and Mrs. Richards showed us all the important places in the church and most importantly, how we knew it was a place to worship God. We made stained glass windows, sang a hymn and said a prayer. Even the teachers learnt new things!"

Katie Prescott

Jeanette's Thought for the day.

In all creation, when God created the heavens and the earth, He said that "it was good" or "it was very good", until he saw Adam working in the garden; Genesis 2:18. Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

In a time when so many people are left in isolation with anxious thoughts, we too, can recognise that it is not good for them to be alone. During this season of Lent let us be a helper to someone we know, someone who is struggling in their loneliness.

An Anonymous Poem

On Sunday the Reverend Elizabeth Inall read quite a lovely poem. I was inspired to add some paintings to accompany the poem. I hope people like the poem as much as I did. Here's the end result. (Steve)

