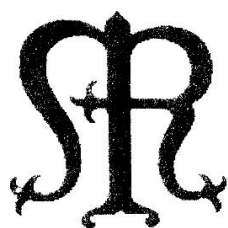


Friday 1st April 2022 to Friday 15th April 2022



St Mary's Church Eccleston /

St Mary's Church Pulford

[Eccleston and Pulford Churches](#)

Email:

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Dear Reader,

The parish newsletter is available to download from the church website as well as being emailed once a fortnight.

In this edition we have details of the forthcoming services, the results of Chris Talbot's coffee morning, a foodbank update, Rob Hughes continues his series of contemplations for Lent and Jeanette has submitted a prayer and her own poem/illustration created during a silent retreat in North Devon.

Also included is a poster from the local history group.

Kind Regards

Stephen Hutchinson



Upcoming Services

- **3/04/2022 Sunday 10:30 at Pulford Church**
Parish Communion
Canon Chris Samuels.
- **10/04/2022 Sunday 10:30 at Eccleston Church**
Choral Communion.
Rev. Chris Samuels.
- **15/04/2022 Friday 2pm at Eccleston Church.**
Good Friday. The Service of the Cross.
Rev Robin Mosley.
- **17/04/2022 Sunday 10:30 at Pulford Church**
Parish Communion for Easter Day.
Rev. Robin Mosley.
- **24/04/2022 Sunday 10:30 at Eccleston Church**
Choral Communion.
Rev. Robin Mosley.
- **1/05/2022 Sunday 10:30 at Pulford Church**
TBA

Important News and Reminders

Chris Talbot's Coffee Morning.

The Eccleston Coffee morning at Chris Talbot's house raised over £700 for the Ukraine appeal. It was a beautiful sunny morning and some lovely cakes were made by the Ladies of the village.

Food Bank:

A reminder from Rachel Williams

Urgently Wanted

- Tinned Meats, Tomatoes, Desserts & Potatoes
- UHT Milk & Juice
- Custard
- Small Jars Instant Coffee
- Jams and Spreads
- Instant Mashed
- Cereal Bars
- Instant Pasta & Instant Noodles

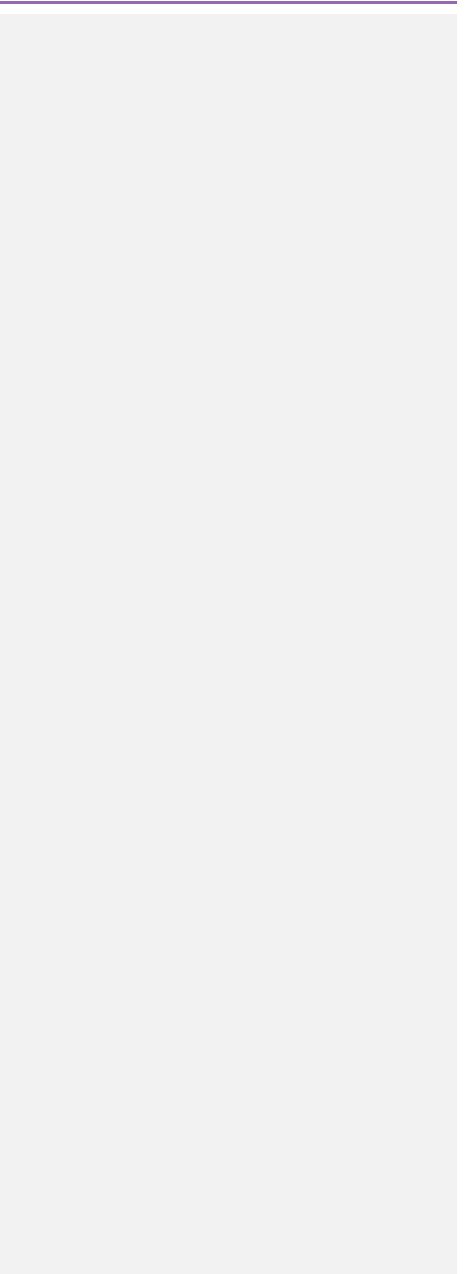
Wanted

- Tinned Meat, Fish, Vegetables, Potatoes, Tomatoes, Custard & Fruit
- Cuppa Soup
- Pot Noodles
- Instant Pasta & Pasta Sauce, Mashed Potato, Coffee & Custard
- Biscuits
- UHT Milk and Fruit Juice
- Breakfast Cereal

Plenty Of

- Pasta
- Baked Beans

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.



Rob Hughes' contemplations for Lent:

Love Language #4 – Acts of Service.

In the home-and-family sense, when actions may be seen to speak louder than words, even assistance with the daily routine (especially without needing to be asked) can will be interpreted as a loving act of service. Things that make someone else's life a bit easier on birthdays, holidays, or when they're not up to the mark - simply making a cuppa for your loved one can make a world of a difference. So, this language is cherished by people who might define acts of service as acts of love and appreciation in things we do, rather than just in things we say.



Acts of service, surely, is a requirement of discipleship, and many, if not all, the Epistles state as much. A typical example from the opening words of The Letter of James - "**James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ**". And in Chapter 2 he goes much further - faith and action going hand-in-hand: "**What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, 'Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well' — but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?**" In the face of actual need, simple words of comfort may be insufficient, unless followed up with a practical 'gift' of further action, appropriate to the circumstances...

Here is a small selection of biblical examples of Christian service (from a vast choice in the New Testament):

- Hebrews 13 says, "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God".
- Jesus "worked the works of His Father who sent Him" (John 9:4).
- "Jesus performed great miracles" (John, Chapters 2, 6 and 21)

It's next to impossible to include such an enormous list of examples of love-through-service in a brief contemplation; they are many and varied, and quite literally the theme of the whole of the New Testament. They revolve around one supreme act of service - we have a Servant-King - who said this (to his disciples then, and says to us, now): "**... whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many**" (Mark 10).

Surely, acts of service have a strong biblical foundation. So, what about the fifth and final 'love language, Quality Time?

Love Language #5 – Quality Time.

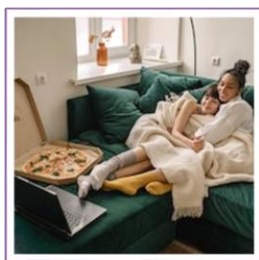
In a home-and-family ('worldly') sense, this love language is all about giving your loved one(s) your undivided attention, without the usual distractions of texting; our apparently insatiable compulsion for seeing 'what that email alert's all about'; the television switched on in the background (especially if unwatched). This is about having meaningful conversations, or simply exchanging news, thoughts and ideas, or confiding joys and concerns. Or (in some ways the most powerful of all, companionable silence!

In the biblical sense, and as Christians, we believe that God is within us (in the Person of The Holy Spirit) **all the time**. So, what's Quality Time all about in that context? Given that the poet, Helen Steiner-Rice summed up the difficulties like this: "*In this fast-moving world, of turmoil and tension, with problems and troubles too many to mention - our days are so crowded, our hours so few, there's so little time and so much to do*".

Our minds are incredibly busy all the time, so it's extremely hard to sit down quietly without something springing into our minds that detracts from giving undivided attention to anything, and often even distracts us in our prayer-time. Talking ourselves into 'zero thought' is impossible, and has the opposite effect if we try. But as making time for God is our goal, He is the means to make it happen - the Gospels, tell us:

- Jesus said (Matthew 6): "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you", and, "When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you".
- A text from James 4 comes with a warning: "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded".
- Paul says this - "demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we **take captive every thought** to make it obedient to Christ." (2 Corinthians 10 - Taking your thoughts captive, here, simply means choosing and focusing on what you need to think about at the time.

Quality time to ourselves, and with others, must be the result of choosing to focus our thoughts on the right things. Paul mentions things that are "true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable". When we think about those things, God promises to give us His peace.



It takes a great deal of personal discipline and patience to **make time** to be still and quiet, and simply wait - to allow the many and inevitable thoughts to come and go without engaging with them.

It's far from straightforward - but spending (dare I say **making**) quality time to simply be with God is required of us, as a practice - just as Jesus told us, and practiced Himself in person, twenty centuries ago: 'In these days Jesus went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God'.

My next contemplation (probably after Easter) will expand upon the theme of stillness.

In the meantime, may I wish our readers a happy and joyful Easter Season. *Rob*

Local History Group Announcement

Pulford & Poulton Local History Group

**on
Wednesday 20th April**

*The History of the Ellesmere
Port Boat Museum
by Diana Skilbeck*

**in Pulford Village Hall at
7.30pm**

Admission: £2 Members £3 others.
(including refreshments)

Website: www.pplhg.org.uk



A prayer written by John Polhill for a Tearfund Lent Devotion, submitted by Jeanette.

"Creator God,

*Bless the tears we shed for the resources we have
squandered.*

Bless the sigh we breathe out for the atmosphere.

*Bless the head we hang for the creatures lost and
exploited.*

*Bless the hands we wring for the things we have broken
and wasted.*

Bless us as we lament.

Cradle us as we regret.

Restore us as we start afresh.

Amen".

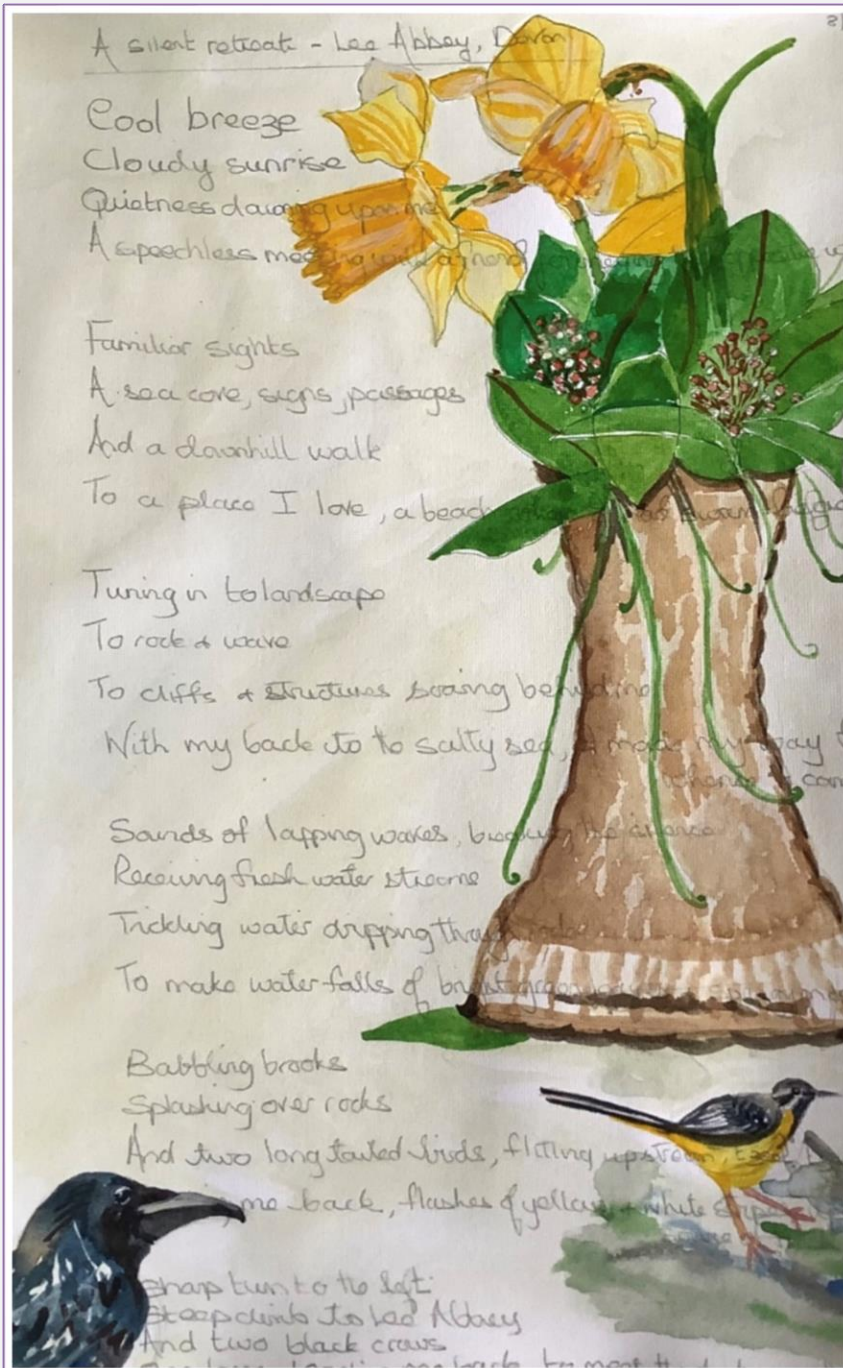
A Poem composed during a Silent Retreat.

Jeanette Howe has composed a lovely poem during a silent retreat she attended at Lee Abbey, Lynton, North Devon on March 22nd.

"You are God's temple and God's Spirit dwells within you- we are temples of God's Holy Spirit.



Figure 1 Lee Abbey Photo © Paul Buckingham (cc-by-sa/2.0)



Why silence? This gives us an opportunity to be still with God.

7:30 am a solitary walk to Lee Bay

Cool breeze
Cloudy sunrise
Quietness dawning upon me
A speechless meeting with a friend, returning from the shore.

Familiar sights
A sea cove,
Signs and passages
A downhill walk, a bay, where I have swum before

Tuning into landscape
To rock and wave
To cliffs and structures soaring behind me
Turning my back to the salty sea, I gaze, from whence I came.

Breaking the silence
The sound of gushing waves
Meeting fresh water streams trickling down
Through rocks, making tiny waterfalls over emerald flames

Upward, past a noisy brook
Splashing over rocks.
And two bright birds flitting upstream "tzeet!", "tzeet!"
Leading me back, wagging tails, lightening my mood with
flashes of yellow.

A sharp turn to the left
A steep climb to Lee Abbey
And two black crows, one lame
Leading me back, to silence, to meet my darkness and
brightness, some of which I hardly know.

From the first morning on a silent retreat". **Jeanette Howe.**



Figure 2 Lee Bay Photo © Ian Capper (cc-by-sa/2.0)

