

St Mary's Church Eccleston /

St Mary's Church Pulford

[Eccleston and Pulford Churches](#)

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## Upcoming Services

- **29/05/2022 Sunday 10:30 at Pulford Church**  
Parish Communion.  
Revd. Fr. Andrew Malcom
- **5/06/2022 Sunday 9.45 at Pulford Church**  
*Queens Platinum Jubilee Service* led by  
Revd. Robin Mosley
- **5/06/2022 Sunday 11.15 at Eccleston Church**  
*Queens Platinum Jubilee Service* led by  
Revd. Canon Chris Samuels.
- **12/06/2022 Sunday 11.15 at Eccleston Church**  
*Choral Communion* led by Rev Canon Stephen Attwater. **[Joint Service]**
- **19/06/2022 Sunday 9.45 at Pulford Church**  
*Parish Communion*
- **19/06/2022 Sunday 11.15 at Eccleston Church**  
*Choral Communion* led by Rev Canon Chris Samuels.

Dear Reader,


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

In this edition Rob Hughes provides part two of his excellent homily about Stillness, Jon Williams writes about the lovely new side gate at Eccleston Church, and to conclude, one of my favourite prayers that I keep returning to time after time.

**Please note that in June, the service times are changing. Pulford Services will be at 9.45am, Eccleston Services at 11:15am. For up-to-date service information please see the church website [Services – St Mary's Church Eccleston and St Mary's Church Pulford \(ecclestonchurch.org\)](#)**

Kind Regards

Stephen Hutchinson



**SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING  
AND CELEBRATION**

**On the occasion of the  
70th anniversary  
of the accession to the throne of  
HER ROYAL MAJESTY THE QUEEN**

**SUNDAY 5TH JUNE 2022  
at 11.15am**

**ST MARY'S CHURCH ECCLESTON  
Conducted by  
Canon Christopher Samuels  
former Chaplain to HM the Queen.**

**EVERYONE WELCOME**



## Important News and Reminders

### 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

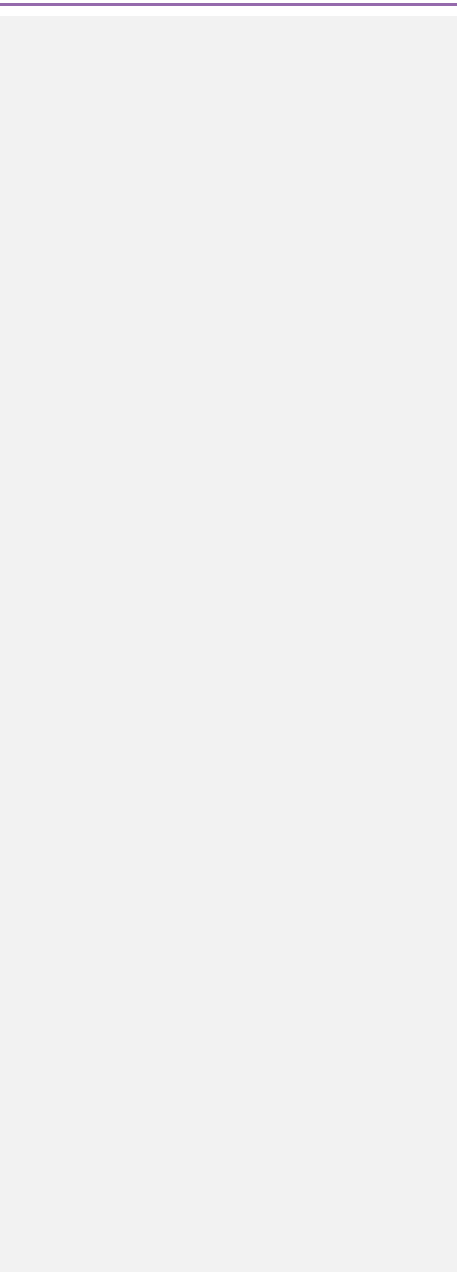
#### Wanted

- 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 Homily – Stillness

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In my previous Blog, I spoke about 'seizing the day' - which is, basically, about being fully 'present' - fully aware - in the here-and-now. This implies that we're not (in that moment) regretting things in the past, nor worrying about things (that might never even happen anyway) in the future. I promised last time to follow up with something about living in the moment. And may I say, upfront, I am still (I hope) a practicing Christian, but over the past three years or so, I've come to deeply respect the wisdom of Buddhism for Christians - and discovered that there are many Christian books on the subject! But the context of this homily is a potential resumption of Silent Church, as a number of parishioners have expressed an interest since Roger's retirement (and mine). More information will follow; in the meantime, here goes!



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Early in his ministry, Roger introduced us all to the expression, at the beginning of every in-church and Zoom service, "Let's be still". And he tended to open silent church with: "we simply wait on God, in silence". To some extent, Jeanette and I perpetuate this.

'Stillness'; 'living in the moment'; 'mindfulness'; 'presence'; 'seizing the moment'; 'awareness - are often mis-interpreted as much the same thing - but they're not - not at all! Inviting stillness has a special and most profound meaning in the context of quietening our always-too-busy minds, especially in anticipation of public or private worship, or at silent church meetings.

I think it's safe to say, as a society, even as a world community, we've all become prone to not only thinking all the time, but to over-thinking. Whether or not it's for some of the time, or most of it, we can only wonder and worry! But I've come to understand that, globally, thinking has become an addiction - we can't help it - and let's face it, the complexity and unpredictability of the times doesn't help a bit!



But the fact remains, in reality, we probably can't remember the thoughts we've been having during the day, and we certainly can't predict what's going to pop into our mind 'in a few minutes time', especially when we're preparing desperately hard to 'be still'. So, we might well be disappointed whenever we consciously try 'to be still' (during communal worship, private prayer or even Silent Church) - no matter how hard we might try, random thoughts still intrude, don't they? And yet, when we **need** to think about certain things, **we can choose** to think about whatever we want. That's what the mind's for! It enables us to 'do or best'; to enjoy what we're doing, in the present; we're meant to plan what we need (and can meaningfully) plan-for; and to recall the past (when we need to, learn from it) to aid our decisions.

This stuff is what the mind's for - it isn't meant to make us dwell on an unchangeable past, nor to lose sleep over an unpredictable future. Our minds are meant to help us live contentedly 'in the now'. But so often they don't do that.

But random thoughts need not be a major intrusion into a quieter mind generally. Indeed, random thoughts can become a minor (short lived) interruption to our ability to concentrate fully on one thing only. So, when we're invited to 'be still', we can, of course, immediately make a conscious decision to wind down spiraling thoughts - no problem! But it's an invitation, too, identify how to simply 'be' there-and-then; here-and-now. Which does, of course, during communal worship, participating in silent church (or similar) activities, or during private prayer in our homes. It isn't easy, so don't expect it to be.

I have found (as a practice, it takes time) that expecting, and allowing, random thoughts is half the battle, and that problems only really start whenever we try to dismiss random thoughts. It can't be done - they only get worse! So, I've found (especially from my experience of silent church with Roger, and during private 'meditation') it's best to expect random thoughts - allow them to be-as-they-are; there's no need to fight them or dismiss them - we simply need to choose what we really do want to think about - by re-centering our thoughts on whatever we're doing at the time.

What do we recenter on when we're invited to be still? That's not easy to explain other than by saying — simply **being** - with nothing to think about 'in the moment'; nothing to do until we choose (or absolutely need) to do it. We might have a short sentence of scripture. We can focus on being content to simply be alive, and safe, in the presence of a living God - who cares, and wants simply to be with us, too.

In 2 Corinthians 10: 5, St Paul has this to say: **"We 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"**. And in Philippians 4 he explains obedience to Christ: **"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things"**.

It is entirely possible to allow random thoughts, rather than dismiss them. With practice, it's entirely possible to (almost immediately) identify whether or not random thoughts relate to what is required of us as Christians. If they do, be content that the thought has come to you in the stillness; otherwise, set them aside - take them captive - and re-centre on whatever is true, noble, pure, lovely and admiral in the returning stillness of a quietening mind.

**[Rob Hughes]**

## A Memory to Kathleen 'Mary' Wood.



The old oak side gate will be a familiar sight to those entering the 'new graveyard' from its easterly approach having stood the test of time and witnessed the comings and goings of worshipers, residents, visitors, indeed all and sundry over generations and seasons alike.

It is likely that the gate was installed in 1899 the date on which the new church was completed as a replacement to its predecessor whose remains may be seen in the old graveyard opposite.

Sadly, our old gate though functional to this day is showing signs of distress, being expected considering its great age.

If on reading this you were to venture over to church, you will we hope be pleasantly surprised to see a new beautiful gate crafted and installed as an exact replica by our Master Carpenter, Mr. Ted Garrity of Timber Traditions, Whitchurch, Salop.



It is hoped that the gate will be enjoyed by all future generations similarly witnessing the passages of time and standing as a lasting memorial to the late Kathleen 'Mary' Wood who sadly passed away on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

Mary worshipped at St Mary's Eccleston together with her parents; her father Geoffrey Wood witnessing the church being constructed all those years ago as a child, living for some years in the rectory opposite.

In later life, Mary's parents returned to the village building Hillwood as their home in 1952 and becoming closely involved in church life. Her mother Kathleen remained there until the mid-1980's when she moved to live with Mary in Churton but continuing to worship at St Mary's similarly entering through the old side gate. Kathleen passed away at the grand age of 109!

Our thanks go to Timber Traditions (01948-519549) for their professionalism and meticulous approach in replicating such a beautiful oak gate.

**[Jon Williams]**



## A Prayer.

“When all within is dark,  
And former friends misprise;  
From them I turn to You,  
And find love in Your eyes.

When all within is dark,  
And I my soul despise;  
From me I turn to You,  
And find love in Your eyes.

When all Your face is dark,  
And Your just angers rise;  
From You I turn to You,  
And find love in Your eyes.”

**[Israel Abrahams, based on Ibi Gabirol]**

