

St Mary's Church Eccleston /

St Mary's Church Pulford

[Eccleston and Pulford Churches](#)

Email:

EcclestonChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

PulfordChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

Dear Reader,

The parish newsletter as well as home worship guides for those unable to attend the service in person, are available to download from the church website as well as being emailed once a fortnight.

For up-to-date service information please see the church website.

<https://www.ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org/services/>

Please feel free to email suggestions for future newsletter articles. Thank you to John Richards the Eccleston Church Warden, and Rob Hughes for their contributions this week.

Kind Regards

Stephen Hutchinson (hutch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org)



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Parish information

Rector:

Pulford/Eccleston

Church Wardens:

Pulford	Sue Payne	PulfordChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
Eccleston	John Richards	EcclestonChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

Lay Minister

Pulford/Eccleston	Jeanette Howe
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Planned Giving Officer / Treasurer

Pulford/Eccleston	Les Hocking
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Electoral Roll Officer

Eccleston	Andrew Wilkinson
Pulford	Clare Willan

Organists and Assistants

Pulford/Eccleston	Derek Whatling /Dennis Jones
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Director of Music

Eccleston/Pulford	Maureen Richards	mothemusic@gmail.com
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Tower Captains

Eccleston	Andrew Pridding
Pulford	Jane O'Connor

PCC Secretary

Pulford/Eccleston	Andrew Wilkinson
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Newsletter/Website

Pulford/Eccleston	Stephen Hutchinson	Hutch @ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
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Church Service Dates Times and Locations.

Date/ Sunday	St Mary's Church PULFORD	St Mary's Church ECCLESTON
27 th November		11.15am Joint Sung Communion Service <i>Priest. Canon Stephen Attwater</i>
4 th December	09.45am Joint Holy Communion Service <i>Priest. Canon Ian Davenport</i>	
11 th December		11.15am Messy Church and All Age Communion Service <i>Priest. Canon Chris Samuels</i>
18 th December	9.45am Holy Communion Service <i>Priest Canon Ian Davenport</i> 6:30pm Service of 6 Lessons and Carols with Handbell Ringers	11.15am Service of 9 Lessons and Carols <i>Priest. Rev Maureen Pickering</i>
25 th December	9.45am Communion Service for Christmas Day <i>Rev Robin Moseley</i>	11.15am Communion Service for Christmas Day <i>Reader. Jeanette Howe</i>
2023		
1 st January	09.45am Joint Holy Communion Service <i>Priest. tba</i>	
8 th January		11.15am Joint Sung Communion Service <i>Priest. Canon Stephen Attwater</i>
15 th January	09.45am Holy Communion Service <i>Priest. Canon Stephen Attwater</i>	11.15am Sung Communion Service <i>Priest. Revd. Elizabeth Inall</i>
22 nd January		11.15am Joint Sung Communion Service <i>Priest. tba</i>
29 th January		11.15am Joint Sung Communion Service <i>Priest. Canon Chris Samuels</i>

Important News and Reminders: Food Bank

A reminder from Rachel Williams.

Rachel will be gathering up the November Foodbank donations next Sunday 26th November from both churches. She would like to push for an earlier Xmas collection date of December 18th to ensure our contribution may be distributed before Christmas.

Rachel would very much like to push home the ever-increasing need for our contributions. Here are a few of the facts being highlighted on the Foodbank website:

3507, Emergency Food Parcels issued in 6 months to 30 September 22 - up 60% on pre pandemic levels

7617, Local people in crisis fed

2828, Feeding the equivalent of 2828 local children.

The charity is very grateful for all donations - but especially non cook items such as crackers, Ryvita, Fish/meat pastes, Instant pastas/rice/soups and toiletries (toothpaste and brushes).

They have PLENTY of dried Pasta, Baked Beans

Urgently Wanted

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

Also Wanted

- Cuppa Soup, Pot Noodles, Pasta Sauce, Biscuits, Breakfast Cereal

Rob Hughes Homily: Forgive - and forget?

In previous blogs, I've mentioned how difficult it can be to stop thinking, particularly overthinking, once 'that nagging feeling' starts in our heads. Indeed, it's almost always counter-productive if we consciously try to 'get rid' of (what we judge to be) 'nasty thoughts. Thoughts, in themselves, are neither nasty, nor nice; good nor bad; they're just thoughts, and completely neutral; and they only exercise 'power' over us when they stir up an emotion; and it's only when we resist that emotion (i.e., instantaneously decide 'we don't want it') that the real problems start.

How many times have you heard it said (or said it yourselves) - "just stop thinking about it - let it go, once and for all". No matter how well-meaning, that advice is pretty much impossible to follow, and can become entirely counter-productive. Someone telling you not to think about pink elephants is a simple-enough and effective proof of something that's actually far more insidious! The same principle applies to forgiveness, especially when we advise others, or try ourselves to practice ourselves, "forgive and forget" ...

Whilst we might well, as Christians, wish and pray to forget all hurtful wrongdoings that we experience, forgiving and forgetting is often simply not possible for us. Indeed, I have a theory that 'forgiving and forgetting', in **one** respect, may not even be desirable. If we completely forget someone's wrongdoing, we're hardly able to claim that they're forgiven, when there's a sudden remembrance that pops into our minds that makes us angry again! Deep-down forgiveness is more about letting go of wrongs even though they might continue to hurt us. And in doing so (to my way of thinking), forgiveness does not have to equate to condoning the hurtful actions of others. What we **do** have to do, though, is not let the memories of the hurt ruin our own lives. And let's face it, there are many things going on in the world, and happen to us individually, that seem hard to understand, let alone forgive. It can be, of course, that the 'other party' might be completely oblivious to having done anything wrong, or simply be (knowingly or unknowingly) uncaring!

In any event, painful incidents tend to linger in our minds, and when they do, they can drain us of sufficient 'space' to find peace and happiness; the modern phrase for this is 'achieve final closure'.... There **is** a potential way forward; the 18th century English poet, Alexander Pope, gave us a hint when he wrote: "to **err is human, to forgive divine.**" But the reality remains that finding a way to forgive, without giving up our principles or compromising our values, is often no easy task. But as practicing Christians, we are called-upon to try.

God's forgiveness - divine forgiveness - **is** perfect; He offers to wipe the slate clean of our wrongdoings, which are never again held against us by Him. Though imperfect ourselves, we have a Christian responsibility to:

- recognise our own wrongdoings and do our best to turn away from them
- forgive others when we are wronged.

It's still hard to swallow, though, when those who cause harm are unwilling or unable to take the same responsibility. Even so, God knows none of us is perfect, which is why I'd suggest here that practicing forgiveness (in human terms) might require three entirely different approaches.

Scenario 1: describes a time when we realise harmful actions have been a genuine accident or mistake; or maybe a child or someone else simply didn't understand what they were doing - or someone else absolutely understands what they did, offers a sincere apology, asks for forgiveness

and promises that they will not repeat their mistake... In these circumstances, as Christians, we need to completely **exonerate** the offender - which means wiping the slate clean, entirely, and restoring the relationship as it used to be before the harmful actions took place.

In all such situations it's essential for Christians to accept a genuine apology and offer complete forgiveness in return, which helps **us** to feel better, and help the person who caused the hurt to feel better, too. "Win-Win". Furthermore, failure to offer forgiveness in these circumstances would be harmful to our own well-being.

Scenario 2: might well apply when the person who causes the hurt makes a half-hearted apology, or makes excuses, or otherwise implies that in some way 'we were to blame'. An apology (of sorts) may be offered, but may be qualified, and probably not what we might have hoped for; it may not even be fully authentic. This situation can be hard to swallow, and almost impossible to 'let go'. But the offender still deserves a considered response, rather than a knee-jerk reaction, all the same.

It's then that **forbearance** might stand a chance. Even when we bear no responsibility, we should exercise forbearance if the relationship matters to us or to someone else. It takes time to learn to no-longer-dwell on the offence, and to no longer carry a grudge, or to seek revenge, or to wish them harm. In a way, this is "forgive but not forget" - in truth, "trust, but verify." By using forbearance we're able to maintain ties to people who, while far from perfect, might still be important to us (or those we love), even though there remains an element of distrust or wariness in the relationship.

Scenario 3: But how are we supposed to feel when the person who hurts us doesn't even acknowledge any wrongdoing, or unwilling to even try to understand, or care less, about how we feel? Any sort of apology seems hollow, doesn't it?

Hard though it may sound, forgiveness doesn't require us to exonerate the offender; nor does it require forbearance; nor does it demand that we have to continue the relationship. But "**release**" does enable us to turn away from allowing things to define our lives in terms of the hurt we've felt; it enables the release of ill-will and ill-feelings, and any sort of preoccupation with the negative things that have happened.

Release allows us to let go of the burden - the "stealth tax" that can weigh us down, and eat away at other relationships as well. If the offender doesn't know, or doesn't care, the only people hurt by the situation are the 'innocent parties!' And (sorry if this sounds harsh) we'll just be allowing the ones who hurt us to live, rent free, in our minds. The burden on us simply isn't worth it!


In conclusion, 100% forgiveness may well be divine, and something to which we can only aspire - but should persevere in the trying! But when we understand the dimensions of **exoneration, forbearance and release**, we find that it's within our ability to do it.

With, of course, prayerful help:


"Heavenly Father, I come to You today with a heavy heart, the weight of the un-forgiveness hanging on me. I pray that You would help me to let go of this burden that I have been carrying for far too long. Remind me how much you love and care for me, as well as, how much I have been forgiven. In Your Precious Name, Amen." AMY WHITAKER

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land – 29th May – 5th June 2023

A reminder that Canon Chris Samuels will be leading a trip to the Holy Land next year.




McCabe
PILGRIMAGES



**An Ecumenical Pilgrimage to
the Holy Land**

29 May - 5 June 2023
with Canon Chris Samuels (*An experienced tour leader*)

8 days based in Jerusalem & Galilee departing from Manchester



For details of the pilgrimage and contact details for Chris please click on the following link to see the brochure.

<https://mccabelive.eecsoftware.com/clientlibrary/mccabe/Images/0529%20Samuels%20MAN%20BROCHURE%20insurance%20for%20WEB.pdf>

To book a place visit ...[8 Day Holy Land Pilgrimage - McCabe Pilgrimages \(mccabe-travel.co.uk\)](https://mccabe-travel.co.uk)

and click on the "show all dates and availability" button. Chris's pilgrimage is the one listed for 29/05/2023.

Here is a link showing the fascinating beauty of the Holy Lands:

[Video of typical Holy Land tour](#)

Service this Sunday 27th November.

This Sunday 27th November our First Sunday of Advent service at Eccleston will include the baptism of three children Skye, a 10-year-old pupil of Eccleston school and 1 year old twins Teddy and Elle of Belgrave Park, Eaton Road, Handbridge.

Canon Stephen Attwater will also say a prayer of blessing for our recently fitted sanctuary lamp.



Figure 1 - The Sanctuary Lamp

This lamp, fitted in memory of Peter Jackson who, together with his wife Kath, many will recall, was a loyal member of our church choir for many years. Peter was also PCC Treasurer for many years. We are thankful to all who contributed to the work of installing this Sanctuary lamp.

During the service intercession prayers will be said which will include prayers for past members of our congregation Peter Jackson, Mary Croxton, and Mary Wood whose recent legacies have helped to enhance our beautiful church. (Please see photographs on the next page).

[John Richards, Eccleston Church Warden]



Figure 2 The Rectors of Eccleston Board



Figure 3 - The Sanctuary Lamp Memorial Plaque



Figure 4 - The Mary Wood Gate

Christian Contemporary Music

I thought it would be nice to end with some modern Christian music by a very accomplished singer called Taya Gaukrodger. You can listen to her song Canticle on YouTube at the following link (after a 5 second advert). I really love traditional hymns, but this song by Taya seems to capture the essence of contemporary Christian worship and is sung beautifully.

[Taya Gaukrodger - Canticle](#)