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Newsletter #34

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023

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## St Mary's Church Eccleston / St Mary's Church Pulford

[Eccleston and Pulford Churches](#)

Email:

[rector@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org](mailto:rector@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org)

[EcclestonChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org](mailto:EcclestonChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org)

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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:

<https://www.ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org/category/newsletters/>

*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 Rob Hughes and Rachel Williams for their contribution this week.

Kind Regards

Stephen Hutchinson ( [hutch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org](mailto:hutch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org) )

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## Parish information

### Rector:

Pulford/Eccleston	Revd. Dr Stephen Torr	rector@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
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### Church Wardens:

Pulford	Sue Payne (assistant Bridget Marsden)	PulfordChurchWarden@ ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
Eccleston	John Richards (assistant Julie Rowland)	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	

### 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.

All services will be led by the Reverend Dr Stephen Torr.

Please see <https://ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org/services> for up-to-date service times.

Date	St Mary's Church PULFORD	St Mary's Church ECCLESTON
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> May Pentecost		11.15am Choral Holy Communion Service
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> June Trinity Sunday	9.45am Holy Communion	
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> June (Trinity 1)		11.15am Choral Holy Communion Service
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> June (Trinity 2/ Father's Day)	9.45am Holy Communion	11.15am All Age service.
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> June (Trinity 3)		11.15am Eccleston Choral Holy Communion

## Official Facebook pages for Eccleston Church and Pulford Church:

There are now 2 official pages for Eccleston and Pulford Church on Facebook. There were already 2 unofficial pages, but these new official pages, it is hoped, will be more relevant to the Church and its activities.

Eccleston Church: <https://www.facebook.com/EcclestonChurch>

Pulford Church: <https://www.facebook.com/PulfordChurch>

## Rob Hughes Homily: Fact (or Friction)

It's often said that "fact is stranger than fiction", and being a lifelong fan of science -fact and science-fiction, I've found that to be largely true... It's also been said that yesterday's fiction has become today's reality; that's also true, to a point, but not always for the good ..... Most recently, scientists in-the-know have been voicing concerns about the potential mis-use of artificial intelligence, for example; and debates about genetic engineering have led to little agreement about the ethics, let alone the ongoing research and application in spite of this \*\*\*.

One of my all-time favourite films has got to be "Jurassic Park" ... Kids of all ages (myself included, having never bothered to grow up) seem to have an absolute fascination for dinosaurs. I'm also fascinated by witty or thought-provoking film scripts - and there's a two-minute scene in Jurassic Park that steals the show for me. Geoff Goldblum (a specialist statistician) says to Richard Attenborough (the sponsor of the genetic engineering of extinct species):



*"Gee, the lack of humility before nature that's being displayed here staggers me.... I'll tell you the problem with the scientific power that you're using here. It didn't take any discipline to attain it. You read what others had done, and took the next step. You didn't earn the knowledge for yourselves, so you don't take any responsibility for it.... \*\*\* Your scientists are so preoccupied whether or not they **could**, they didn't stop to think if they **should**."*

The pursuit of science is nothing more, and nothing less, than the pursuit of knowledge. How we tend to use that knowledge seems to become more problematic - because the more we think we know, the more we find we find there's even more to explore and find out. The more we find out, the more we expect science to provide all the answers in terms of health, wealth and easier living (by this I mean instant access to immediate solutions to all our problems; instant cures; better health; longer life, and inexpensive food, power and transport).

What we want is seemingly endless... And yet, in spite of all the advances in science - in spite of everything we think we know, something that we can't even see - a virus - still had the capacity to bring a whole planet to its knees!

It occurs to me that we spend, maybe even waste, a great deal of our time 'looking for answers'; especially looking to science for solutions, or to blame science when 'it all goes horribly wrong'. The tragedy is, the answers to all that really **matters** is already visible, observable, touchable, here and now... No science is required: we only have to use our senses... And for as long as we continue to look to science alone to provide us with what we **want**, we're in danger of forgetting that God already provides us with the things that we **need**. A bountiful planet and each other! There's little room in this too-busy world to appreciate the wonders of nature (God's Creation).

Pursuit of 'scientific knowledge' isn't to blame; it isn't inherently wrong - indeed we've been created to be curious and explore! But it's important for us to be curious about the 'right things', too, and for the 'right reasons'.



We're all part of a universe that came into being a very long time ago; that's probably seen by many as a well-established scientific fact these days. There are other theories, by the way, and the philosophical question remains unresolved: whether the universe came about as the result of Divine Action (creative love), or was it the result of 'the laws of physics' (and be in some way scientifically-provable)?

We can read what the Bible has to say about it all in the book of Genesis, and we can watch any number programmes on the TV that tell us about a 'Big Bang'. Which is right? Which, if either, should Christians believe? Or maybe neither is 'right'? **Or is there room for both?**

To my way of thinking, **of course there's room for both!** Surely, it stands to reason that as we believe that God is responsible for the whole of creation (and its underlying purpose), He's also the instigator of the principles that explain the processes, too. And He's given us the free will to be curious about questioning both.

One of the most influential scientists of all time, Isaac Newton (a Christian) had this to say about creation: "What we **know** is a drop; what we **don't know** is an ocean... Gravity explains the motions of the planets, but it cannot explain who sets the planets in motion'.

Another scientific genius, of more modern times, Albert Einstein (a pantheist) said: "He who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead; his eyes are closed".

- On the one hand, demonstrably, the Bible is clear about creation being a loving act of God. Some believe in the literal truth that it took Him six days, plus a well-deserved day off. Others regard the Genesis account as allegorical (which gets my vote). Some dismiss the whole Bible on the strength of their belief that "Genesis is just plain daft", which misses the point!
- On the other hand, cosmologists would have us believe that "they already know enough about the Big Bang, and evolution, that they (at least) can be sure that there was **no need** for any kind of divine will or action".

It seems to me that, in reality, science has only ever been discovering what the Bible has been saying for centuries - millennia. It's true, of course, that the Bible doesn't use scientific jargon (thank goodness - there's more-than-enough of that around already!), but that doesn't mean it's unscientific. The Bible just talks in the everyday-language of the times during which it was being written.

In saying all this, I'm not trying to imply that we shouldn't ask questions about what the Bible says about creation, about God, and about 'the meaning of life'. Indeed, as Christian disciples, we're **called upon** to: 'meet together in fellowship; read, discuss, listen to, and learn from, each other. So maybe we have a challenge, during Ascension-tide and Pentecost in particular (which science seems to stay silent about!) to reflect... not so much about the science behind **how** Creation started, but to **marvel at why, and how, we are here at all**, and that in spite of all our mistakes, lapses and wobbles, God still invites us simply to enjoy and share all the fruits of His creation!

And so, we pray:

***Lord Jesus,***

***Help us to sow our beliefs, and our faith in the divine, in the way we live, the way we speak, and in what we do. Teach us to count the many blessings we still receive every day, then teach us to make our days count for you.***

***Wake us up, Lord! Shake us up.  
Do whatever it takes to get our attention.  
Help us to get busy living for you.***

***Amen***

[Rob Hughes]

## Food Bank Donations

Rachel Williams has asked me to remind everyone that the foodbanks are still desperate for donations.

No one wants to live in a world where people are reliant on foodbanks for their food. Even the Trussell Trust that manage the foodbanks which cost £1,400 per week to run, hope to see a world where foodbanks are not needed anymore.

However, we live in a broken world where, people through no fault of their own, are forced to rely on foodbanks to feed themselves and their family.

This is not unique to this country, and foodbanks are increasing at an alarming rate all over the world as small farmers are no longer able to compete with supermarkets, and people become reliant on supermarkets (and supermarket prices) for their food.

In 2022/23 approximately 2.99 million people in the UK used a foodbank, an increase compared with the previous year. Between 2008/2009 and 2020/2021, the number of foodbank users increased in every year from just under 26,000 to more than 2.56 million.

The items they require are listed below. They have plenty of dried paste and baked beans, so would prefer items from the lists below:

### Urgently Wanted

- Non cook items such as crackers, Ryvita, Fish/meat pastes, Instant pastas/rice/soups and toiletries (toothpaste and brushes).
- Tinned Meat and Fish, Tomatoes, Desserts & Potatoes, UHT Milk & Juice, Custard, Small Jars Instant Coffee, Jams and Spreads, Instant Mashed Potato, Cereal Bars, Instant Pasta & Instant Noodles

### Also Wanted

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

Additional reading:

<https://www.trusselltrust.org/news-and-blog/latest-stats/end-year-stats/>



## Contemporary Christian Music Song of the week:

I want to end on a cheerful note so would like to share this song with everyone.

The very accomplished Christian musician Steffany Gretzinger has just released a lovely song called 'The Narrow Way'.

You can see the video that accompanies her song on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/ob2Wxc4pgyE>