
Newsletter #39

Friday 11th August to Friday 25th August 2023



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

[Eccleston and Pulford Churches](#)

Email:

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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:

<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 Jeanette Howe & Rob Hughes for their contributions this week.

Kind Regards

Stephen Hutchinson (hutch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org)

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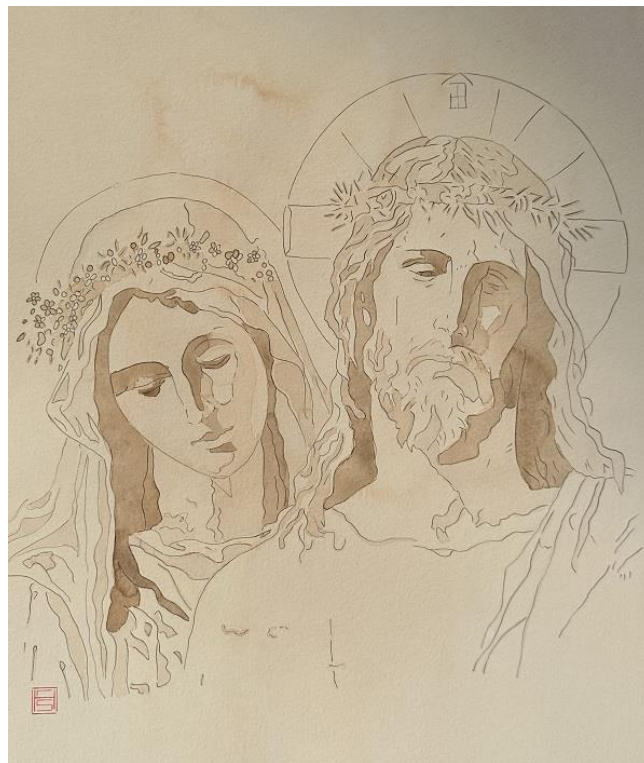
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Parish information

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 (assistants Julie Rowland and Steve Hutchinson)	EcclestonChurchWarden @ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

Lay Minister

Pulford/Eccleston	Jeanette Howe	Jeanette @ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
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Planned Giving Officer / Treasurer

Pulford/Eccleston	Bridget Marsden	Treasurer @ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
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Safeguarding Officer

Pulford/Eccleston	Hilary Garrard	Safeguarding @ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
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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	
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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 13 th August (Trinity 10)		11.15am Choral Holy Communion
Sunday 20 th August (Trinity 11)	9.45am Holy Communion	11.15am All Age Service
Sunday 27 th August (Trinity 12)		11.15am Choral Holy Communion.
Sunday 3 rd September (Trinity 13)	9.45am 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>

Important News and Reminders: Food Bank

A reminder from Rachel Williams. 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: Humility or Humiliation.

Sue and I have just been watching the repeats of "The Great British Bake-off" – and it was on one of these programmes I heard about the origins of the phrase "eating humble pie". Apparently, it's derived from times when the servants in well-to-do households prepared freshly-baked meat pies for the master's table – using, of course, the prime cuts of meat – typically venison or beef. The left-over meat and offal were the "umbles" (itself a corruption of the French term for "deer's innards"). And these would be baked into pies, for the kitchen staff and the other servants.



However, *umble* pie came to be regarded, by everybody, as extremely tasty and nourishing. It became a sort of delicacy in its own right, not just as food for the masses, so to speak, but for anyone who would not be too proud to simply enjoy it. A pie for 'the have's", as well as the "have-not's"... And it's in this context that it occurred to me that there's a huge difference between humility ("humble-ness") and humiliation, and how easy it can be for pride (lack of humility) to precede a humiliating fall...

We recall that Jesus mentions a man who was invited to a wedding and sat in "a *place of honour*". He wasn't invited to sit there, but automatically assumed, and deemed himself worthy, of a place at the top table - conveying to everyone else at the party that he was one of the most important of the guests there. This self-opinionated and proud man soon found himself humiliated when the host came and said, "Give your *place to this person*". The man, humbled and "with *shame*", went to sit in the lowest place at the wedding table.

Jesus says there's no place for pride in God's kingdom, because that very pride will ultimately bring humiliation. Consider what the book of Proverbs says about this: "*when pride comes, then comes disgrace, Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall*". More importantly even than this, Jesus also says, in no uncertain terms, that humility will bring its own rewards... So, when He says "*everyone who exalts himself will be humbled*", He's telling a profound truth about the difference between humility and humiliation. This is no longer about what I think, or what you think, this is a statement that God opposes pride. And if we exalt ourselves, He will humble us, too.

So, what does this parable tell us about Humility?

- Well Jesus was quite clear - "when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at table with you." If, in humility, we sit, in the lowest place, we convey to everyone else that we don't consider ourselves any better than anyone else. In God's eyes, that's true... And just as in this parable the host comes and moves the humble man to a higher seat, and honours him, we can expect precisely the same treatment from God. In His kingdom, humility brings honour.
- Consider what the book of Proverbs says about this: "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom". "One's pride will bring him low, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honour".

So, if this is true, **just how do** we cultivate humility in **our** lives, when society in general, and modern marketing in particular, both tell us that we can be so much better when we spend on this, that or the other? How do we adjust, or maybe we sometimes need to re-adjust, to being humble?

Well, there are three aspects of Biblical humility: think of ourselves less often; think of others more often; think of God most often:

- Consider that C.S. Lewis once said, "True humility isn't thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less."
- One way to foster humility in your life is to stop thinking of ourselves so much. Sadly, our television shows, movies, and magazines flatter us by telling us that we're wonderful – and we tend to believe it.
- The American celebrity hostess, Ann Landers, once commented: "Don't accept your dog's admiration as conclusive evidence that you are wonderful." If you want a true measure of your worth, get a cat!

God doesn't call us into His kingdom to set us up as the **most honoured** guests, but as most humble, yet honourable-and-honoured, servants. So, it's dangerous territory for us to think we're greater than we think we are; but it's also dangerous for us to then think too badly of ourselves, or feeling humiliated by our life situation. Jesus didn't walk around sounding like **Eeyore** from Winnie the Pooh and neither should His followers – and neither should we! We are a forgiven and redeemed people; we are set apart; we are beloved children of God.

That **is** something to be grateful for and, may I say, proud of? That being so, we're now free to start thinking of others more often. The amazing thing is that once we stop thinking of ourselves all the time, our minds will quite readily begin to think more about others. Pride says, "I want!" - and humility says, "Others need!" True humility puts the needs of others – and thinks about others – first, rather than last...

As Christians we might add – so what can I actually do to help? And that's where we turn to God, by **thinking of God most often**. An extremely difficult thing to do these days. Maybe we're 'just too busy' to realize that the Holy Spirit's already within us to guide us, so there's no need to waste time looking for Him! Our always-too-busy minds are never still – never silent and that can precisely why our minds too-often become self-obsessed, and endlessly preoccupied. Simply thinking of God more often, with patience and humility, is the same thing as making time to simply be still. But that requires discipline to simply "be", rather than continually "do".

True humility begins by going to the ultimate model of humility: Jesus Christ: the humble servant; the servant-king; the only saviour, who routinely put God first. Do we?

THE PRAYER of Saint Ignatius of Loyola:

**Teach us, good Lord,
to serve you as you deserve,
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labour and not to ask for any reward,
save that of knowing that we do your will.**

Amen.

[Rob Hughes]

Jeanette Howe Homily – Walter Brueggemann and God's Kingdom.

I first came across this American Theologian and Old Testament scholar when studying to become a Reader, and was inspired by his forthright and challenging perspective of what it means to preach. In the light of this, I purchased one of his books:

The Word Militant; Preaching a Decentering Word, 2010, Fortress Press.

He introduces the book by recognising that preaching is a risky business for the preacher because

1. Our congregations are teaming with people, who are often more knowledgeable than we are.
2. If we are faithful to the Word, we evoke resistance by those who have a passion to keep things as they were before; not to disturb present arrangements, and yet God wants to turn our lives upside down.
3. And in our self- exposure, because we are not what we should be; there are discrepancies between truth we endeavour to reveal in the Bible passages and way we live out our lives.

Reading past the introduction, he instructs us that preaching is not about making us and the congregation feel comfortable, but something that should knock us off balance with our present culture, until we can stand firmly in the reality of God's Kingdom.

William H. Willimon, comments that Walter Brueggemann, in his writings "speaks the biblical Word into our time and place ... always hears something for us to say that the world is literally dying to hear."

What do you think the world is dying to hear?

- That we are stewards of this planet and that we need to seriously address climate change and our failure to look after our planet.
- That Jesus wants us to live debt free and release us from slavery to rising debts, personal and national.
- That God loves us unconditionally and desires that we live joyful lives, with good mental health.

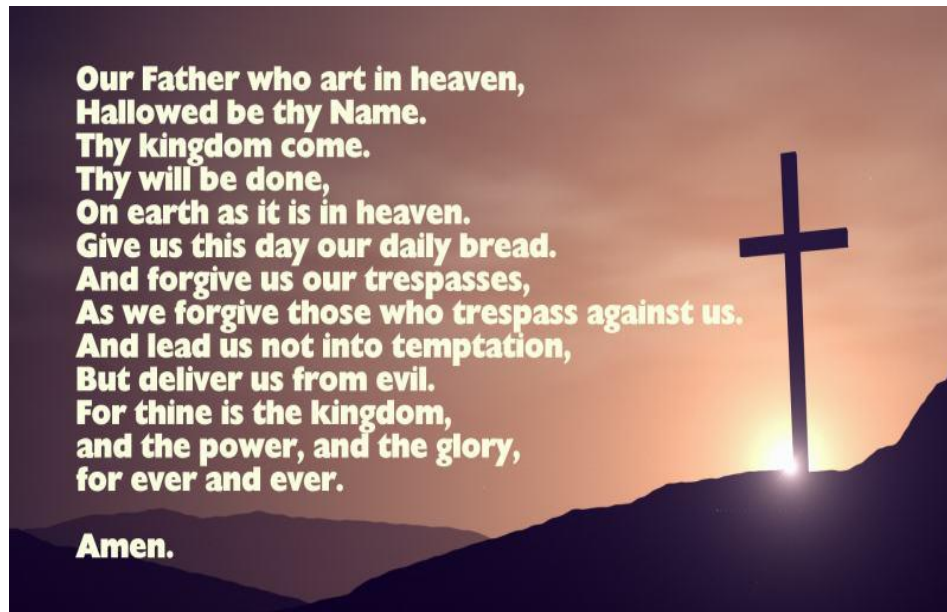
I often feel concerned about the world we live in, our culture and how busy we all are; life seems to revolve around endless lists of things to be done. Just recently, in my prayer time, I read a quote from Walter Brueggemann:

'Sabbath, is the refusal to let one's life be defined by production and consumption and the endless pursuit of private well-being.'

How often, do we remark that we need a rest, or others need to rest. I suppose, the important question must be, if we decide to rest, what does that rest look like? It might not be as restful as we hope!

Maybe, we could refuse to produce, consume or pursue, at least one day a week and instead we could be still for a while and listen to one another and to God, to live simply, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8b), and to pray that God's Kingdom will come.

[Jeanette Howe]



Jeanette Howe: What is Greenwashing?

Please click on this website for more information.

view.em.goodenergy.co.uk/?qs=ac469b3777c2b179a8adc38778fdda69d8a3bf7ccc385654e5055a8f6e5ac49bb5584a6501da7441702845180b954ba1e7859fe3948b2cbb5f03d20466d70afb53622014dbc10d032e9b256c9553e720

Christian Art of the week: Celestial Rose by Gustave Dore 1867.

Gustave Dore created over 10,000 illustrations. Some of his finest work was included in an illustrated Bible (1866) and Dante's *The Divine Comedy*.

Here is one of his illustrations from Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1867)



Pulford Church Poster



PULFORD / CHESTER



WELCOME TO ST MARY'S

Thank you for visiting St Mary's today. We are proud to be the heart of our village community, a place of peace and sanctuary, providing a space to encounter God in all walks of life. We hope you have enjoyed your visit. If you have any questions, please contact rector@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org



"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."
2 Corinthians 9:7-8

Gifts to our church are a response to God's generosity to us, and enable us to live out Christ's story in our local community.

If you would like to give a gift to St Mary's Church, simply scan your phone camera here:



Thank you for all you are able to give.

Alternatively, if you would like to give directly to our church, our details are:

Sort Code:
60-40-08
Account Number:
79937926
Account Name:
Eccleston and Pulford PCC.

