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Newsletter #40

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August to Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023

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

[Eccleston and Pulford Churches](#)

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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 for his contribution this week.

Kind Regards

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

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Figure 1- Jacob's Ladder

## 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
Sun. 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug. (Trinity 12)		11.15am Holy Communion.
Sun. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept. (Trinity 13)	9.45am Holy Communion.	
Sun. 10 <sup>th</sup> Sept. (Trinity 14)		11.15am Holy Communion
Sun. 17 <sup>th</sup> Sept. (Trinity 15)	9.45am Holy Communion	11.15am All-age Morning Worship.
Sun. 24 <sup>th</sup> Sept. (Trinity 16)		11.15am 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

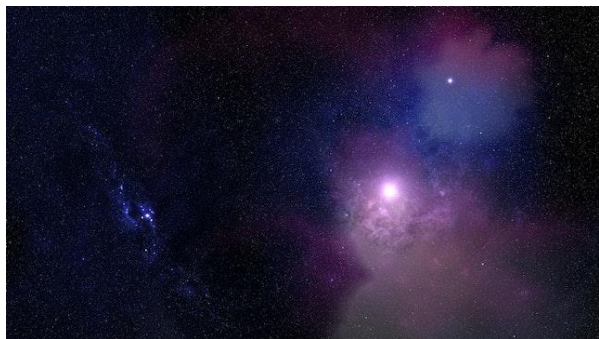
### Urgently Wanted

- 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: Being Content with the Wonder-Full?



***"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth..."*** spontaneously; out of nothing at all, as an act of His will and His love.

Theologians and modern science have since queried the 'created-in-six-days' bit, and for the last few decades, physicists and cosmologists have asserted, with increasing confidence, that the birth (the creation) of the universe was a spontaneous act - 'a Big Bang' of compressed matter - releasing pure

energy, that then 'froze' into matter again!! More recent research seems to suggest that even this isn't 100% accurate, and talks about periods of 'inflation', which goes way over my head! I'll have to await a "Noddy's Guide" to be written...

As quickly as modern science thinks it can explain the physics of 'life, the universe and everything', someone else finds new and compelling evidence that modifies (sometimes even contradicts) current theories.

As you may remember from previous homilies (and in spite of a passion for science and technology) I'm somewhat concerned, as a Christian, that humankind seems to be getting more and more wrapped up in what science can tell us about 'how creation happened', and how everything 'ticks', and less inclined towards enjoying the mystery, splendour and wonder, with gratitude and contentment. We still revel in new discoveries, facts and theories - and I'm not immune to that fascination, in spite of my concerns...

But facts and theories are not the be-all-and-end-all. They can deny 'the spiritual' - the 'wonder', the 'mystery' of it all. And maybe we should consciously make ourselves pause from time to time - and simply 'wonder' **why** creation happened, and what life should really be about. This is more in the realms of philosophy, faith and belief - loosely termed 'things spiritual'.

Albert Einstein had this to say on the subject: *"It is therefore easy to see why the churches have always fought science and persecuted its devotees. On the other hand, I maintain that the cosmic religious feeling is the strongest and noblest motive for scientific research"*.

Now the Bible tells us that The Church - the Body of Christ - is a relatively new creation: **created by Jesus Christ** out of Jews and Gentiles. He also created the structure and positions (the first disciples/apostles) that would allow it to 'function' at the start, and to continue to function forever (which will require the active support and involvement of committed Christians).

The "**how**" of creation will, I guess, always be open to debate and might well continue to motivate quests for more facts and figures, theories and proof. Time will tell. But it's when we look **why the universe was created**, we can perceive that:

- **Science** has nothing to say about it, and many scientists and cosmologists feel that there was no need for 'divine intervention' at all. On the other side of that coin, there are scientists (and non-scientists) who accept a Creator-God as the simplest explanation!
- **The Book of Genesis** tells us **WHY** (extracts from Genesis 1): **"God created mankind in his own image...God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number... I give you...all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food..."**

Physical aspects of creation aside for a moment, St Paul introduces a quite different perspective - a new creation - in the context and person of Jesus Christ's New Creation: *"By him all things were created...things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him"*.

To my way of thinking, Paul is saying that: Christ created, and is the head of, the Body-of-His-Church; more than this, though, he's saying that Christ is not only responsible for starting things off, so to speak; **He is that new creation**. So, in everything to do with The Church, Jesus Christ has supremacy. And in no way need this be at odds with our belief that God came first; that God created the universe and everything, and everyone, in it. The ministry of Christ Himself is an act of God's Grace; and so is His Church; and so are we.

Can the spontaneous creation of the universe ever **actually** be explained in scientific terms? I don't know; I doubt it, but no longer preoccupied with the **how**. I no longer feel that this has any bearing on how we may individually **perceive** God's Creation - and simply marvel at its beauty, complexity, and endless mystery. And simply be grateful for God's first act of Love and Grace.

He wants people to inhabit the planet and harvest its resources; to exercise sound stewardship, and share those resources... Just as He wanted His Son to be the founder of the New Creation - His Church. And it occurs to me that this has nothing to do with 'the how' of creation - but everything to do with 'the why'. The creation of The Church is a new creation - another act of God's Grace, yet created with-and-for Jesus, for us.

I found this short prayer (the source was unattributed) which for me summarizes what we can only marvel at, and why we should simply 'wonder, and enjoy':

***Lord God, this world,  
your creation,  
rolled into a sphere,  
packaged in sunshine,  
gift-wrapped in love,  
Given to us,***

***Thank you, Lord God***

***Amen***



### **Colossians 1.15–20**

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, in him all things hold together.

He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

**[Rob Hughes]**

## Eccleston – a brief history

The name Eccleston is derived from the Latin *ecclesia* + Anglo Saxon *tun* – Church in the village.

The settlement of Eccleston, mentioned in the Domesday Survey ordered by William the Conqueror, stands on the line of the Roman road, Watling Street from Chester to Wroxeter (Shrewsbury) and London. Eccleston parish also contained the township of Eaton and according to an 1860 Directory “a walk thither from Chester is a favourite exercise with the citizens who come to see the picturesque village with its Gothic style houses”. The 1861 census gives a combined total of 405 inhabitants.

In Edwardian times small river craft plied the Meadows and Groves in Chester and further upstream to Eccleston and the lawns of Eaton Hall. Hence the saying '*all above the Dee Bridge is for dalliance and sport; below it is a great canal for commerce*'!

The church of St Mary belongs to the Grosvenor family and contains the family vault. In 1899 the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke ordered the demolition of the old church and the building of the present one. The church register, dating from 1593, records:

Year	Record of Payment	Amount	Today's' Value
1634	To Geo Beeston for hanging the Mad Dog	0£ 2s 6d	12.5p
1648	Paid for killing fox cubs	0£ 0s 6d	2.5p
1666	Drink for Ringers when we beat the Dutch	0£ 0s 6d	
1670	Morning Drafts for Slater and his men	0£ 1s 0d	5p

The family supports the school and a hundred years ago sent table linen to be embroidered by the pupils, while two senior pupils took the headmaster's wheelbarrow to collect the school's annual allocation of books from a Chester shop. The Directory also lists a Post Office, a blacksmith and three farmers tilling the Belgrave Moat Farm. Close by the Church was found a hoard of 43 Roman denarii.

In 1645, during the siege of Chester, the parliamentary forces of Sir William Brereton occupied Eccleston, while the defending Royalist army under the Governor of Chester, Sir Nicolas Byron, build a fort in Handbridge to strengthen its Dee Bridge defenses. The site of this fort is uncertain but probably stood where Belgrave Place/United Reform Church now stands.

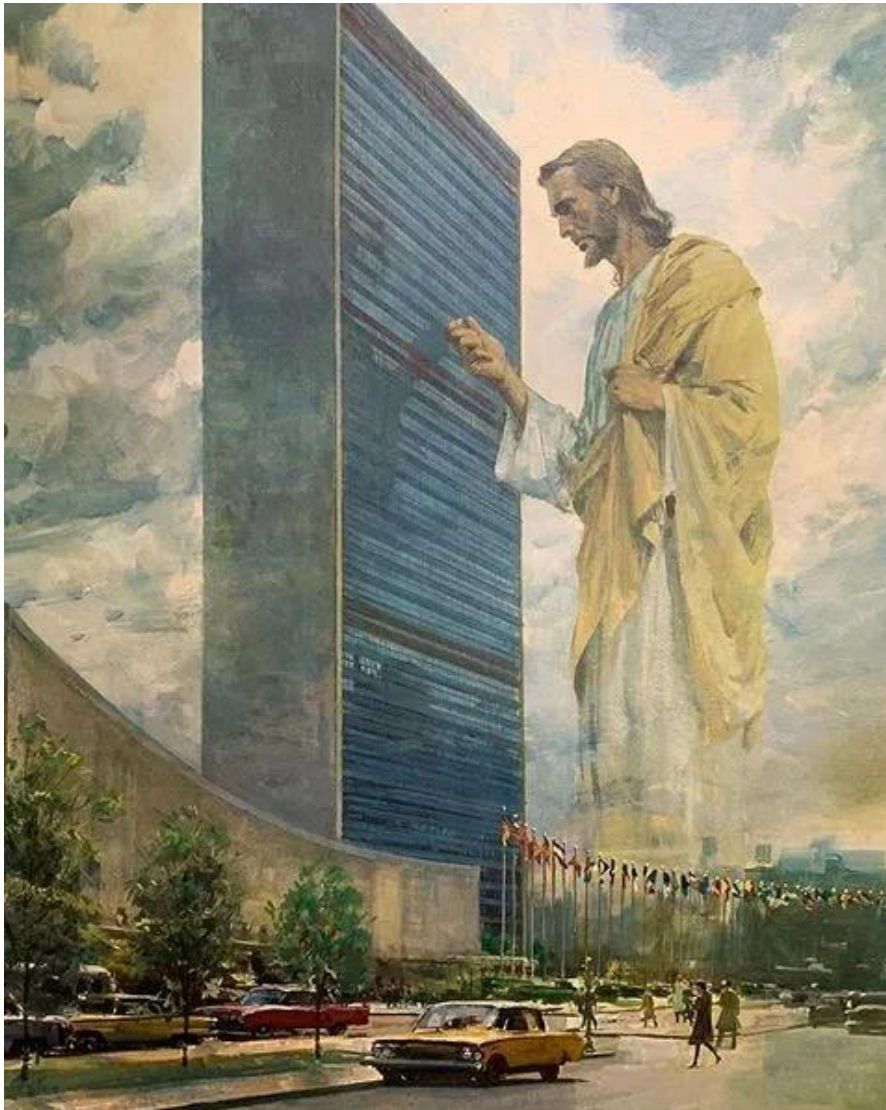
**[Reference: Eccleston extract taken from “The story of Belgrave Park and its environs”]**



## Christian Art of the week: “Prince of Peace” by Harry Anderson [1906-1996]

“Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News”

**Mark 16:9-15**



Here we see Jesus in a contemporary setting knocking at the United Nations building. This painting seems quite relevant to our modern world where there are still over 50 wars being fought across the world (According to Wikipedia [List of ongoing armed conflicts - Wikipedia](#) )

The artist Harry Anderson did not seek fame in his lifetime despite receiving many awards. Serving God through making artwork was his vocation.

[Reference: [Mark 16: 9-15 \(2021\) | CHRISTIAN ART | Gospel Reading & Art Reflection](#) ]

**[Stephen Hutchinson]**

# 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](mailto: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.

