

Friday 8th December to Friday 22nd December 2023



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

[Eccleston and Pulford Churches](#)

Email:

rector@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

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 Rob Hughes and Andrew Pridding for their contributions this week.

Kind Regards

Stephen Hutchinson (hutch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org)

Contents

Parish information.....	3
Church Service Dates Times and Locations.....	4
Important News and Reminders	5
Food Bank.....	5
Christmas Fair.....	5
Rob Hughes Homily: Jesus the Carpenter.....	6
Official Facebook pages for Eccleston Church and Pulford Church:.....	9
Two Sparrows.....	10
Religious Painting of the week: "Cross in the Mountains" by Caspar David Friedrich".....	11
Adverts.....	13
Pulford and Poulton Local History Group Talks (Held at Pulford Village Hall).....	13
Pulford Church App.....	13
Eccleston Bell Ringers 1920.....	14
Eccleston Bell Ringers 2023.....	14
Reader/Intercessor/Sidesperson Rota.....	15

Parish information

Rector:

Pulford/Eccleston	Revd. Dr Stephen Torr	Rector @ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
-------------------	-----------------------	--

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
-------------------	---------------	--

Planned Giving Officer / Treasurer

Pulford/Eccleston	Bridget Marsden	Treasurer @ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
-------------------	-----------------	---

Safeguarding Officer

Pulford/Eccleston	Hilary Garrard	Safeguarding @ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
-------------------	----------------	--

Electoral Roll Officer

Eccleston	Andrew Wilkinson
Pulford	Clare Willan

Organists and Assistants

Pulford/Eccleston	Derek Whatling /Dennis Jones
-------------------	------------------------------

Director of Music

Eccleston/Pulford	Maureen Richards	mothemusic@gmail.com
-------------------	------------------	----------------------

Tower Captains

Eccleston	Andrew Pridding
-----------	-----------------

PCC Secretary

Pulford/Eccleston	Andrew Wilkinson
-------------------	------------------

Newsletter/Website

Pulford/Eccleston	Stephen Hutchinson	Hutch @ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
-------------------	--------------------	---

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 PULFORD	St Mary's ECCLESTON	Reader	Prayers	Sides-person
Sun 10 th Dec. 2 nd of Advent		11.15am HC	Ann Short	Mo Richards	Jeanette
Sun 17 th Dec. 3 rd of Advent	9.45am HC & 6pm Carol Service.		Paul Williams	Rob Hughes	?
Sun 24 th Dec. Christmas Eve		11.15 AM HC	Steve Hutch	Nayland	Terry
Sun 24 th Dec. Christmas Eve		4 PM Crib Service		Nayland	TBC
Sun 24 th Dec. Christmas Eve	Midnight HC 11.15 PM		Sue Payne	TBC	?
25 th Dec Christmas Day		10am HC	Hilary G	Helen Rebekah	Hilary G
31 st Dec. 1 st of Christmas		11.15am HC	Anne B	Steve Hutch	Steve Hutch

HC = Holy Communion, **MW** = Morning Worship.

The Rota for readers/intercessors and sidespeople for 2023 and 2024 will be viewable at:

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

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

Rachel would like to especially thank everyone from both Churches and Ecclestone Primary School for their spectacular generosity during the Harvest Festival Service. Between the school and the parishes a massive 135kg of food was given to be distributed locally.

Christmas Fair

The Christmas Fair at Ecclestone Village Hall was well attended and managed to raise over £600 this year. Thank you to everyone on the Christmas Fair team who helped with this.

Rob Hughes Homily: Jesus the Carpenter.

In the last homily, we considered the topic of Christ the King of Kings. This week, I've been pondering the earthly realities-of-life for Jesus of Nazareth (the man).

I don't know about you, but I sometimes catch myself, from time to time, getting so wrapped up in my belief in Jesus Christ - the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, that I forget (at least until Good Friday, Advent and Christmas) that he was a 'real person' - a human being, just like you and me.

He was, **in fact**, born the same way as any little baby today - tiny and vulnerable; a baby who needed feeding, washing and clothing; encouraged, and maybe scolded from time to time. We can read in the Bible that, as a young boy, he was seen as 'gifted' - confident and knowledgeable about the scriptures, and with a thirst for learning more.

So even though he might have been seen in some ways as 'special', he would have, first and foremost, perceived as being 'just Joseph and Mary's son' to the villagers. A normal human being, within a normal family environment.

For sure, he was, indeed, the birth-son to Mary, 'stepson' to Joseph; and a brother to his siblings (about whom we know next-to-nothing in any detail). And as Joseph is hardly mentioned in the New Testament beyond the nativity, it's probably safe to assume that he died a while before Jesus left home to start His ministry. That would have left Jesus (the young man) the head of the household, a practicing Jew, and a carpenter by trade. (**See the text from St Mark's Gospel following the homily**).

Or was he? Well, the 'New Testament' was written in Greek, and the Biblical scholar, Dr. Ken Campbell, has pointed out that the Greek word *tektōn*, that most of our Bibles translate as 'carpenter' (for example in Mark 6:3), should more accurately be translated as "builder" - someone who was familiar with stone, and wood, and sometimes metal, to create new things, or repair or upgrade existing ones. If this is so, that would have made Jesus, like Joseph

before him, and alongside him, multi-skilled 'practically', and a business partner (with his dad) in the building trade.

So, it's likely that Jesus and Joseph essentially operated as a 'sole-trader partnership' (and I can equate to that at a personal level). They'd no doubt have been involved with negotiating bids; securing supplies; storing and working with the right materials at the right time; buying, and making or repairing tools. And hopefully earning a living.

It's only then that the hard part starts! Project-managing the work-required to deadlines and specifications; getting paid (always good for a 'laugh!'), and contributing to family living expenses.

In modern day terms, an apprenticeship in the building trade can be up to 4 years; carpentry and joinery apprenticeships - 2 years each; a stonemasonry apprenticeship - between two and three years. And each apprenticeship programme would have the now-obligatory (and highly structured) on-job training... plus day- or block release to 'college'... And there's always the inevitable paperwork!!

Jesus (the young man) had to **learn the crafts on the job**, at the same time as being a devout Jew, becoming the head of the household, whilst also preparing for so-much-more in his real mission as The Christ...

By any earthly standards and whilst not forgetting His Divine nature - "**what a man**"! Destined to bridge the gap between Himself and humankind - and as a real-life example of what His Love 'really looks like'. Which is precisely why God chose for Jesus to grow up in the home of a peasant family - Mary, and her 'carpenter'-husband, Joseph. In doing this, surely, God was keen for us to understand that Jesus Christ was, firstly, a real man - he needed to be before he could effectively become The Christ.

He was 'real' - He could 'do stuff' (practical work, which included project- and 'household management'), as we can; he lived in a harsh world, and was subjected to distractions and temptations, as we are; he experienced frustrations and hardships, as we all do. **He was real, in every sense of the term** - and so better-able to enter His ministry, not only with an immense knowledge of the scriptures, but also with an impressive array of practical skills in recruitment, mentoring and coaching; and communication skills.

He was particularly adept at 'preaching' by using everyday language, about everyday realities, so that people could connect with the message. An impressive man, with no formal qualifications of any kind - yet with an incredible CV, even by any modern 'standards' we might apply in retrospect!

Jesus fully understood, respected, and harnessed the best (and sometimes even the worst) of, 'people at work', and experiencing the harsh realities of life. That, surely, gives great dignity, meaning and purpose to the work you and I do, too, in our 'everyday' - especially as we seek to follow the example of Jesus the Man, Jesus the 'Carpenter', and Jesus, the Christ...

So, if we ever ponder what God wants from us - 'what life's really all about', and wonder what can we possibly do that really matters - we can always turn to the Gospels and read about Jesus-the-Man, as well as Jesus-the-Christ. That the little baby would grow up to roll up his sleeves reminds us of the 'good-ness' and honourable nature of work. He invites us to do the same - to be ourselves, and use our knowledge, skills and experience in the service of others, and therefore in service to God.

If ever we need a reminder of the realities experienced by Jesus of Nazareth we can read this, ... A Prophet Without Honour - Mark 6:

“Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. “Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offence at him.

Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honour except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.” He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.”

[Rob Hughes]

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>

If there is anyone who would like to volunteer to be our church Facebook administrator, please email me at

admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

Two Sparrows



“Are not sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows”.

Matthew 10:29-31

Religious Painting of the week: "Cross in the Mountains" by Caspar David Friedrich".



Caspar David Friedrich was a German landscape painter. His paintings reduce the figures to a scale that according to the art historian Christopher John Murray, directs “the viewer’s gaze towards the metaphysical dimension”.

He is probably best known for his famous painting “Wanderer above a sea of fog”.

His first major painting was “Cross in the Mountains”. It is an altarpiece panel said to have been commissioned for a family chapel in Tetschen, Bohemia. The panel depicts the crucifixion in profile at the top of a mountain, alone, and surrounded by pine trees.

In 1808, the painting was met with criticism, as people were unhappy with the use of a landscape in a religious context.

Caspar David’s response to the criticism was to describe his intention in 1809, comparing the rays of the evening sun to the light of the Holy Father.

This was the first and last time that Caspar David offered an explanation of his art. His rest of his paintings are left to the viewer to interpret and ponder on the mystery and meaning behind the landscapes.

Adverts.

There have been several requests to return to including adverts in the Parish Newsletter. If anyone would like to advertise, please email:

admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

Pulford and Poulton Local History Group Talks (Held at Pulford Village Hall)

There will be a Quiz and Buffet at Pulford Village Hall (CH4 9ES) on **Wednesday 17th January** at 7.30pm. Tickets are £8 and can be purchased in advance from the Pulford and Poulton Local History Group. Email: info@pplhg.org.uk for details.

Their website is available at <https://pplhg.org.uk>

Pulford Church App

A Pulford Church tour guide is available for Android Phones only.

[Click here for Pulford Church Tour Guide for Android Phones](#)

Eccleston Bell Ringers 1920



Eccleston Bell Ringers 2023



L-R: Ian Danby, Eileen Greatbanks, Jon Williams, Helen Thomas, Jane Danby, Andy Hardingman, Andrew Pridding (Tower Captain). Seated: Lynda Whitlow.

Reader/Intercessor/Sidesperson Rota

At the last PCC meeting it was suggested that Eccleston Church return to having a sidesperson. It was suggested that either the reader or prayer lead for the service act as sidesperson to make things easy. If someone is already available to read then it saves having to try and organize an additional rota for sidespeople.

Duties of the sidesperson include

- ***greeting people*** as they enter the church
- ***handing out hymn books/service sheets***
- ***inviting people to communion (for Holy Communion Services)***
- ***counting the total number in the congregation.***
- ***Putting the correct hymn numbers in the hymn boards.***

If any of the readers/intercessors do not want to appear as sidesperson, please let me know

by emailing me at admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

The Rota for readers/intercessors and sidespeople is accessible at:

<https://www.ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org/service/details>