



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 is also 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 Helen Allison, Rob Hughes and Julie Rowland for their contributions this week.

Kind Regards

Stephen Hutchinson (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 and Bridget Marsden	PulfordChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org
Eccleston	John Richards (assistants Julie Rowland & Steve Hutchinson)	EcclestonChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

Licensed 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 Officers

Pulford/Eccleston	Jeanette Howe/ Hilary Garard	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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Village Hall Bookings

Pulford	Pete Gosmore	PeterGosmore@gmail.com
Eccleston	Jeff Roberts	JeffBrettRoberts@hotmail.co.uk

Church Service Dates Times and Locations.

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

All services are on **Sunday** unless indicated otherwise.

Date	When and Where	Reading	Reader	Prayers	Sides-person
Thur. 28/03/24	Pulford 7.30pm HC	Exodus 12.1-14	Paul W.	Rob Hughes	n/a
Fri. 29/03/24	Eccleston 2pm Sung Hour at Cross	Isaiah 52.13-53 Psalm 22. 1-21 Hebrews 10.16-25	Jeanette, Garth Andrew W.	Steve Torr	Garth
31/03/24	Eccleston 11.15am All Age	Acts 10.34-43	Hilary	n/a	
07/04/24	Pulford 9.45am HC	Acts 4.32-35	Margaret	Rob	n/a
14/04/24	Eccleston 11.15am HC	Acts 3.12-19	Anne B.	Nayland	Nayland
21/04/24	Pulford 9.45am HC	Acts 4:5-12	Paul W.	Jane Y.	n/a
21/04/24	Eccleston Messy Church	n/a	Clare	Hilary	
28/04/24	Eccleston 11.15am HC	Acts 8:26-40	Penny	Hutch	Penny



HC = Holy Communion,

MW = Morning Worship.

*N.B. Communion will **not** be served at **All Age** services. These are services aimed at a younger audience. The prayers, sermons and hymns will be much shorter and aimed at a younger audience.*

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 Williams]

Official Facebook pages for Eccleston Church/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

Rob Hughes Homily: Christ the Gardener.

In previous homilies, I've referred to Jesus as a creator - "there at the beginning", with God (John 1/1). And then as a character in history - as a (human) carpenter. In a more recent homily, I've referred to Him as the King (of and for) all mankind, as our saviour and spiritual leader - yet a servant-king...



But the first time Jesus was seen in public, soon after He had emerged from the tomb, Mary Magdalene mistook Him to be the gardener. And it's only in St John's Gospel that a garden is mentioned in the context of the resurrection account. In many ways, this might seem an odd bit of detail that we can simply take for granted. Why 'a gardener'? Why not just a casual passer-by, or maybe a grieving follower of Christ paying his last respects at the tomb?

Well John's gospel is different from the others, being profoundly spiritual in its focus - and referred to as such because it tells the story of Jesus in symbolic ways that appear to differ, at times, from the other three. And at least one renowned New Testament scholar (N.T. Wright) speculates that John is, indeed, pointing to something quite remarkable - linking the Easter Day 'gardener' story with the creation accounts...



The premise is this. When God created humankind (Adam and Eve) to "fill the earth", sin didn't yet exist; but humankind was destined to not just inhabit the earth, but to take care of it. God needed humankind to "work at it", learn from their labours, and move creation forward. That raises the tasks of 'tending the earth's many resources', and harvesting its bounty, to the very high levels.

So right from the start, God is said to have created a garden (a safe haven that's full of many resources) for humankind to live in, and in which to flourish. Genesis further describes (in relatively few verses), how 'we' managed to take advantage of it all, ignore 'the guidelines and limits' (by becoming 'sinful'), and messed things up. We still do... and who was it who said we either learn from history, or are compelled to relive it?

And in spite of the first Christmas, that heralded the birth of The Saviour, Christ's message of love, hope, and spiritual righteousness and fulfilment are continually taking second or third place to humankind's insatiable quest for knowledge ('answers'), prestige, power and physical safety and comfort - all of which are transitory.

But on that first Easter Day, following the events of the empty tomb - immediately following Mary's encounter with 'a gardener' - everything began to change. Christ's resurrection 'pressed the reset' button for humankind to grasp the difference between earthly (right-for-self) living and righteous (right-with-God) living. Once - for all time and for all people - Jesus inaugurated the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven.

So it is that in His first appearance to humanity after His resurrection, Jesus is initially mistaken to be a gardener. And scholars speculate that John's take on this points to the beginning of 'a new creation' - and reaffirms: the goodness of the 'first' creation; and the goodness of the intent to provide a safe haven - physically and spiritually - for the whole of humankind, forever.

If that's so, surely, every time we celebrate the anniversary of the resurrection of a Saviour, maybe we should acknowledge, and reaffirm, our intention to take better care of, the physical resources that still exist... And to draw upon the spiritual resources from Easter Day's 'Re-Creation'.

A prayer adapted from the *thisischurch* website, at a time when winter is turning to Spring and blossom brings out a wave of colour; yet a time when the forecast for our global climate is barely improving. We pray:

- That we will be inspired to marvel afresh at God’s creation and all that he has provided for us; for thankful hearts and a renewed wonder at God at work in our fields, our gardens and in all our open spaces
- For help to understand the small acts that we can do to protect our creation and climate; for a willingness to try and to persevere
- For World Leaders and Governments that they may be active in their commitments to reduce Global Climate Change; for the small endangered nations, that they may be helped and sustained
- For organizations and individuals working to protect our environment, its wildlife and the future of our planet; for scientists and researchers giving thanks for their knowledge and enthusiasm
- For an end to wanton destruction of our rain forests, jungles and oceans which provide a haven for natural life and protection of our atmosphere
- That the world will listen and respond to the urgent warnings we all hear and that God’s natural world can be restored

[Rob Hughes. 2024]

Memorials of Old Cheshire (free e-book)

Some rather obscure and interesting stories from old Cheshire can be found in a book called “Memorials of Old Cheshire”. The book is free to download and read from the Gutenberg.org website. Chapters include one of the most comprehensive essays on the Chester Mystery Plays I have ever read, as well as essays on the “Siege of Chester”, two Cheshire Saints (St. Werburgh and St. Plegmund), the “Walls and Rows of Chester”, Cheshire Castles, Cheshire Crosses, and Cheshire Customs, Provers and Folk-lore.

[Memorials of Old Cheshire, by Barber, Edward & Ditchfield, P. H. \[eds.\]—A Project Gutenberg eBook](#)

Rectories of Eccleston

This fascinating article by Peter Jackson originally appeared in the November 2009 edition of the Parish News. Thank you to Helen Allison for allowing me to republish.

Readers will note the change of subject heading. Research into the late Georgian and early Victorian Rectors is under way, but some aspects are elusive. Consequently, whilst this is ongoing, I have been investigating the Rectories which the Rectors have occupied over the centuries.

The earliest, identified to date, is post-Reformation and relates to William Harrison, Rector of Eccleston 1616 to 1625. An Inventory of his goods includes information relating to his Rectory which, according to a contributor to "Cheshire Sheaf" in 1930 must have been "a house of some size". The second identified was that "Parsonage" which Charles Mytton, Rector (1776-1801) built from his own funds. Whether this replaced the Rectory mentioned in Harrison's inventory is not known. The Mytton family were wealthy, however, and the "Parsonage" may have been an early example of the emerging status of the Clergy in 18th and 19th Centuries. This building is thought to be that mentioned in White's Cheshire Gazetteer 1860 which refers to a commodious brick build residence situated west of the (then) Church.

The third example is that building now known as "Old Rectory" build c1896 to a design by T M Lockwood. The first occupant of this splendid building was the Reverend George Robbins, Rector (1880-1906).

The fourth example is the current Rectory, a mid-Georgian farmhouse, the first occupant being the Reverend Hurlow (1952-1957).

The great Rectories of the Georgian and Victorian age were too expensive to heat, light and generally maintain, particularly when the current standard, and woefully inadequate, stipend system was introduced and when domestic labour became more expensive. Most of these large and impressive dwellings have passed into private ownership.

A recent article in the Sunday press showed three Rectories which had recently come on the market at prices ranging from £850,000 to £2.5 million. They included the Georgian Rectory at Coddington, which was typical of the hey-day of Rectory and Vicarage provision, which sadly has now passed into history.

[Peter Jackson, November 2009]

Photos of Eccleston Churches.



Figure 1 Old Eccleston Church 1888 (courtesy of Julie Rowland)



Figure 2 New Eccleston Church 1905 with steeple.

Prayer of St Benedict

Gracious and holy Father,
Grant us the intellect to understand you,
Reason to discern you, diligence to seek you,
Wisdom to find you, a spirit to know you,
A heart to meditate upon you.
May our ears hear you; may our eyes behold you,
And may our tongues proclaim you.
Give us grace that our way of life may be pleasing to you,
That we may have the patience to wait for you
And the perseverance to look for you.
Grant us a perfect end – your holy presence,
A blessed resurrection and life everlasting.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.



Figure 3 Illustration by Treyer Evans

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 talk on “Iron Mad Jack - Brymbo” by Brian Gresty at Pulford Village Hall (CH4 9ES) on **Wednesday 17th April** at 7.30pm. Tickets are £5 (non-members) and £3 for members. For details of up-and-coming lectures please contact 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](#)

Cemetery Map

A reminder to anyone who might be interested in Eccleston Cemetery. The map of the cemetery is now complete. I have added the location and names of all graves. If anyone wishes to add a short tribute, or photo to the pin, please contact me at admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

Also please contact me if there are any errors or omissions.

<https://www.ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org/cemetery-map/>

Pulford cemetery has been mapped by the public on the FindAGrave.com website ...

[St. Mary's Churchyard in Pulford, Cheshire – Find a Grave Cemetery](#)

Reader/Intercessor/Sidesperson Rota

If anyone would like to volunteer for the reader/intercessor/sidesperson rota, please either speak to Hilary Garrard, either of the church wardens or email admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

Duties of the sidesperson include

- ***greeting people*** as they enter the church
- ***handing out hymn books/service sheets and collecting them at the end of a service.***
- ***inviting people to communion (for Holy Communion Services)***
- ***recording the total number in the congregation.***
- ***Putting the correct hymn numbers in the hymn boards.***
- ***Taking the plate money to the vestry for counting.***

If any of the readers/intercessors do not want to appear as sidesperson, please speak to Hilary/either of the church wardens or email admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org

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

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

Foxhills Events

To Print off a full list of foxhills you can download their brochure from the following link: [Foxhills events. – ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org](https://www.ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org/foxhills)