

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> August to Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024



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

[Eccleston and Pulford Churches](#)

Email:

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

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[PulfordChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org](mailto: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/rota/>

*Please feel free to email suggestions for future newsletter articles.*

Thank you to Rob Hughes for his homily this week, to Helen Allison for allowing me to republish Peter Jackson's interesting article from May 2011 and to Robin Glaze for allowing me to use his photos of the stained glass windows at Eccleston.

Kind Regards

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

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## Eccleston & Pulford Parish Contact Information

<b>Rector</b>	<b>Revd. Dr Stephen Torr</b>	<a href="mailto:Rector@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org">Rector@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org</a>
<b>Associate Minister</b>	<b>Revd. Holly Torr</b>	<a href="mailto:messychurch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org">messychurch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org</a>
Pulford Wardens	Sue Payne & Bridget Marsden	<a href="mailto:PulfordChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org">PulfordChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org</a>
Eccleston Wardens	Steve Hutchinson & <b>vacancy</b>	<a href="mailto:EcclestonChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org">EcclestonChurchWarden@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org</a>
Vergers	Julie Rowland & Sue Payne	
Messy Church	Revd. Holly Torr	<a href="mailto:messychurch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org">messychurch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org</a>
Home Worship & Silent Church	Rob Hughes	<a href="mailto:SilentChurch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org">SilentChurch@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org</a>
Licensed Lay Minister	Jeanette Howe	<a href="mailto:Jeanette@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org">Jeanette@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org</a>
Treasurer	Bridget Marsden	<a href="mailto:Treasurer@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org">Treasurer@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org</a>
Safeguarding Officers	Hilary & Jeanette	<a href="mailto:Safeguarding@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org">Safeguarding@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org</a>
Electoral Roll Officer	Clare Willan	
Organist	Derek Whatling	
Director of Music	Maureen Richards	<a href="mailto:mothemusic@gmail.com">mothemusic@gmail.com</a>
Tower Captains	<b>vacancies</b>	
PCC Secretary	Jeanette Howe	
Newsletter/ Website / Admin	Stephen Hutchinson	<a href="mailto:admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org">admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org</a>
Pulford Village Hall Hire and <b>Pulford Church Keyholder</b>	Pete Gosmore	<a href="mailto:PulfordVillageHall@gmail.com">PulfordVillageHall@gmail.com</a>
Eccleston Village Hall Hire	Jeff Brett Roberts	<a href="mailto:JeffBrettRoberts@hotmail.co.uk">JeffBrettRoberts@hotmail.co.uk</a>
Sidesperson	<b>vacancies</b>	<a href="mailto:HilaryGarrard@btinternet.com">HilaryGarrard@btinternet.com</a>

## Church Service Dates Times and Locations.

**PLEASE REFER TO WEBSITE FOR LAST MINUTE UPDATES**

<https://ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org/rota>

Date	When and Where	Reading	Reader	Prayers	Preacher	Sides-person
Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> Sep.	9.45am Pulford HC	Deut. 4:1-2, 6-9	Sue	Paul	Rev Ian D.	n/a
Sun 8 <sup>th</sup> Sep.	11.15am Eccleston HC	Isaiah 35:4-7a	Anne B.	Hutch	Rev Steve	Hutch
Sun 15 <sup>th</sup> Sep.	9.45am Pulford HC	Isaiah 50:4-9a	Paul	Jeanette	Rev Steve	n/a
Sun 15 <sup>th</sup> Sep.	10.45 am Harvest Messy Church <i>Pulford</i>					
Sun 22 <sup>nd</sup> Sep.	11.15am Eccleston Trad HC	Jeremiah 11:18-20	Hutch	Mo	Rev Steve	Hutch
Sun 29 <sup>th</sup> Sep.	9.45am Pulford HC	Joel 2:21-27	Terry	Rob	?	n/a
Sun 29 <sup>th</sup> Sep.	After Service at Pulford Church - Harvest Lunch					



**For up-to-date service times, please refer to the website by scanning the QR code on the left.**

## Important News and Reminders

### Vacancies

We are looking for **tower captains** for both Eccleston and Pulford Churches. There is also a vacancy for an additional **Church Warden** at Eccleston Church.

We are also looking for a **social media admin** (i.e. someone to be in charge of updating the Facebook pages for Eccleston and Pulford Church).

If anyone wishes to volunteer for any of these roles, please contact either the Rector, any of the Churchwardens at [admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org](mailto:admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org)

### 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]

## Katie Prescott moving on.



*Figure 1 Stone Carving at Eccleston School*

Katie Prescott, the former head mistress at Eccleston Church of England Primary School is moving on, and we would like to thank Katie for her 14 years of hard work, devotion to teaching and her dedication to the school and pupils

Those wishing to contribute towards a leaving gift for Katie can do so using either of the following options:

- 1 - Through the treasurer (Bridget Marsden),
- 2 – Directly through the Eccleston Church of St Mary’s bank account (remembering to add a suitable reference e.g. ‘For K. Prescott’):

The Eccleston Church of St Mary’s bank details are as follows:

Account Name: **Eccleston & Pulford PCC**  
Sort Code: **60-40-08**  
Account Number: **79937926**

- 3 – Or by putting money in the collection box at the back of the church in the box labelled “For Katie Prescott”.

## Rob Hughes Homily - "To give, or not to give, that is the question"

There's a short story about a young boy happily walking along a beach, as the tide was receding, and picking up each stranded starfish in turn, and popping it into a nearby rock pool. A man was walking along the beach, and he said to the lad: "You know there are millions of these starfish around, and you can't possibly save them all". To which the boy replied simply, "But I can help this one, now", and promptly popped it into the pool with the others.

How true that message is in real life situations, isn't it? We can't help everyone all the time... nor do we have all the answers.



And it's in this context that I mention a cause particularly close to my heart: the increasing number of homeless people we come across on the streets - in Wrexham and Chester, for example (the cities I most often visit). And this short homily tries to address, if only partially, a question I'm often asked these days (as a volunteer at The Salvation Army Centre in Wrexham): "Is it always right to give homeless people money when we're out and about. Or is it better to get them a cup of coffee so that they can't spend the money on drugs or booze?"

**There's no simple yes-or-no answer to that...** except to say, I understand the potential dilemma - indeed, I'm often faced with a choice that's basically a snap decision, tinged with potential guilt, if I just walk on by because I'm not sure what to do. And in truth, it's impossible to accurately weigh up each situation we might come up against... So, it becomes a judgement call - and who are we to judge?

Well, I've come to know quite a few homeless people, in fact, as I help out in the kitchen at the Salvation Army Centre in Wrexham. We provide breakfasts for those who pop in, and can often serve up to thirty people in a morning. So - at least on Friday mornings and they all come across as pretty decent people, who just need a bit of company, as well as some hot food.

I have to say that when I see them out-and-about in town, they're usually well behaved and nearly always say hello. But, in truth, not always... which raise the question again about 'giving them money'. But I've come to realize that we **should not base a decision** (to give, or not to give) on preconceptions, prejudice, or ethical or moral judgements!! Why? Because:

- It's simply not what followers of Jesus should default-to when faced with need...
- In reality, how can we possibly know for sure what any money we might give will be spent on? Maybe it will, indeed, fund the 'next snack; we mustn't just assume the use of other less-wholesome, substances
- But we also have to acknowledge that we may also have a duty of care not to cause further harm
- it's 'tricky', especially as, conversely, we can't automatically assume that 'another cup of coffee' or a bacon 'butty' is what they need 'here and now'
  - maybe, maybe not - because even this well-intentioned 'gift' may actually cause similar harm - that we're trying to avoid!

The point being, there's no way to know for sure. But that's true in everyday life, isn't it? But one thing **is for sure** - we **can** trust on the guidance of the Holy Spirit - even though we might find it hard to discern on the spur of the moment.

I've learned to consider the thorny question to 'give-or-not' in a different way... by reframing the question; I hope this might help: in the silence of our hearts, what are we **moved towards doing, there and then**. What does our heart say, **at the time, in that situation**:

- giving money?
- the offer of a hot drink or food?
- or simply offering a word or two (that might just be the encouragement needed to seek help from, say: The Salvation Army; or food bank: or any other charitable organization you may know about).

More often than not, the fact that we choose not to ignore the situation, but choose to pause for a moment - to simply show that we care. This can, in itself, be what's needed - and sufficient **at that time**. Whatever conclusion we come to, and even though we may never know the outcome, we can trust the Holy Spirit to move things on in the most helpful way.



In the meantime, the question we (maybe) have to ask ourselves is this: do we really trust that God can-and-will, through His Holy Spirit within us all, magnify any-and-every well-intentioned action or gift-from-the heart?

To be certain, when addressing need in God's Kingdom:

- no effort is ever wasted, no matter how large or how small
- no donation too large or too small
- no words of care and support are ever insignificant to, nor go unnoticed by, the One who cares for us all.

[Rob Hughes – August 2024]

## Silent Church Update

It's pleasing to report that our first Silent Church at St Mary's, Pulford was supported by four people (plus myself).

In deciding to resume Silent Church, we were not necessarily expecting to attract 'large numbers', so to speak. But I hope I'm speaking on behalf of those already 'in the groove' when I say, if there are 'four-or-more', rather than 'two or three', the experience 'feels' much different - it's a spiritual statement that's impossible to explain in words.

So, thank you to the 'already-regulars' at both church locations; it means a great deal to be with you fortnightly. And may I extend a warm invitation to others to pop in, even if only out of curiosity, and experience peace and quiet (guaranteed), and in all probability, inspiration towards further participation.

Take care and stay well - and I hope to see you soon.

***Reminder - The next couple of Silent Church sessions will be at***

- Pulford Church, 7pm, Tuesday September 10<sup>th</sup>, followed by
- Eccleston Church 7pm, Wednesday September 25<sup>th</sup>).

For further information, don't hesitate to contact Rob.

He can be emailed at:

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

## St Mary's Eccleston - St Agnes

Looking up at the stained-glass windows of Eccleston Church, the North wall features a window dedicated to St Agnes. It shows St Agnes, in one hand holding a palm branch (an attribute of her martyrdom) and in the other, the Bible. At her feet is a lamb (the symbol of her innocence).



Figure 2 - St Agnes

St Agnes of Rome (291 AD - 304 AD) was born in 291 into Roman nobility and raised as a Christian. She suffered martyrdom on 21<sup>st</sup> January 304 aged only 12 or 13 during the reign of the Roman emperor Diocletian.

Despite pleas from her father to deny God, she refused, was tried and sentenced to death. After attempts for her to be burned at the stake failed, she was beheaded. A more detailed (and even more harrowing) account of her short life can be found at Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes\\_of\\_Rome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes_of_Rome)

[Stephen Hutchinson. August 2024]

## Hymn of the week.

During his sermon last Sunday, the Rev Steven Attwater wanted to draw people's attention to the beautiful last couple of verses of the hymn by Charles Wesley, "O Thou who camest from above":

"Jesus, confirm my heart's desire  
To work and speak and think for thee:  
Still let me guard the holy fire,  
And still stir up thy gift in me.

Ready for all thy perfect will,  
My acts of faith and love repeat,  
Till death thy endless mercies seal,  
And make my sacrifice complete."



Figure 3 - Number 4 Park St, Chester, currently in use as a Dental Surgery.

## Views on 'The Reformation' by Peter Jackson

*This article written by Peter Jackson originally appeared in the May 2011 Parish Church Newsletter.*

The Reformation is, erroneously, attributed to King Henry VIII whereas, in fact, the movement towards a Protestant breakaway date from a much earlier date with Wycliffe and the Lollard Movement. Luther, together with the long and bitter controversy regarding the translation of the Bible into English, made major contributions.

In fact, the English Reformation was political rather than religious with Henry, having matrimonial difficulties which he could only resolve by breaking away from Rome, forbidding not only appeals to Rome but also payment of the first year's income from parishes to Rome.

This he achieved in 1530 and by the Act of Supremacy (1530) became the first Supreme Head of the Church of England. In 1535 and 1539 the smaller and larger monasteries were suppressed. Here, Henry, ever with an eye to the main chance, saw an opportunity of lining his coffers with the accrued assets of the monasteries and he proceeded with this with gusto.

It is said that by far the principal asset in terms of value turned out to be, not works of art and monetary reserves, but the lead which was taken from the monastic buildings. Indeed, Henry might be said to have been the greatest "scrap metal thief of all time". Certainly, he destroyed the abbeys and monasteries by his vandalism, as the various buildings, in their present condition testify.

The Church of England, has been seen as a comfortable Church, imposing no great compulsions upon its members. This is brought out, by the popular Press, from time to time, and I had always thought of it as a modern concept. I was surprised, therefore, in reading an extract from a 16<sup>th</sup> Century book which set out the post Reformation abolition of idolatrous images, relics, wall paintings and stained glass. I note that, where stained glass was concerned, it was to be knocked out and replaced by plain glass.

Stained glass, it was said obscured the true light of God. But there was, as in all things, a snag. Plain glass was in short supply and thus very expensive. Because of these factors, Churches were allowed to keep their stained glass until clear glass, at an affordable cost, became available.

The alternative was to have an already draughty and unheated Church made even more draughty. This seems to me to have been an early example of the “comfortable” Church. A triumph, perhaps, of comfort over conscience! So, there is, after all, nothing new under the sun!

Compulsory attendance had been attempted throughout the early years of Reformation but without any great success. It re-appeared, in different forms, during the Victorian age, when tenancy agreements on the great estates required, as a condition, Church attendance. This is a reason why a comparison between Victorian statistics and modern numbers is so pointless.



*Figure 4 Tintern Abbey (as painted by Turner).  
A once proud Monastery brought to ruin by Henry VIII and the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536*

Church attendance may fall further. The German pastor, Bonhoeffer, executed by Adolf Hitler, held that we may one day come to a non-institutional Christianity. He saw Churches merely as an outward trapping of the faith which resides in each and every Christian being.

**[Peter Jackson – May 2011]**

## A Collection for John Richards.

The Parish Church Council are organizing a collection for our former Church Warden – John Richards. I am sure you will agree with me when I say how much all appreciate the hard work and devotion to duty, John has undertaken in keeping Eccleston Church going the past twenty years. This role, entirely voluntary and unpaid, goes largely unacknowledged. The sheer number of tasks done by a church warden are countless. I am sure John will agree that people don't notice the jobs done, only the jobs not done. It really is a full-time job, which John has been tirelessly doing since he started as Church Warden in 2004 with Eric Gittins. It is testament to his dedication as Church Warden that the quinquennial reports read so glowingly about St Mary's Church Eccleston. From arranging fuel deliveries, boiler servicing, roof inspections, PAT testing, fire extinguisher testing, paying in the plate takings every month, reading and submitting water and electricity meters readings, contacting tour guides, acting as the first point of contact for wedding / funeral requests, repairing the church fabrics and fittings when in need of repair, organizing the cleaning of the church, updating of the rectors board, arranging cover for a Rector on holiday, just to name a few of the countless tasks of a church warden. John also used to act as a regular sidesperson inviting people to share in the Holy Communion or to receive a blessing. John continues to offer his assistance and share his knowledge with the new church warden, who is very grateful for his continuing help.

Those wishing to contribute towards a gift for John in gratitude for all his hard work, can do so using either of the following options:

- 1 - Through the treasurer (Bridget Marsden),
- 2 – Directly through the Eccleston Church of St Mary's bank account (remembering to add a suitable reference e.g. 'For John Richards'):

The Eccleston Church of St Mary's bank details are as follows:

Account Name: **Eccleston & Pulford PCC**

Sort Code: **60-40-08**

Account Number: **79937926**

- 3 – Or by putting money in the collection box at the back of the church in the box labelled "For John Richards".

## Adverts:

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

There will be a talk entitled “*Discoveries in Old English*” by James Harvey at Pulford Village Hall (CH4 9ES) on **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September** at 7.30pm. Tickets are £5 (non-members) and £3 for members. For details of up-and-coming lectures please refer to the following link:

<https://sites.google.com/view/pulford-poulton-lhg/programme>

### 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](mailto:admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org)

***It is interesting to note, that the name Eccleston actually means "Church Town". In 1929, an excavation at the church, revealed 20 bodies which are believed to date from 390 AD. They are the earliest known burials in Cheshire. Part of the churchyard is unusual in that it is circular in shape, which indicates pagan origins.***

Please contact me if there are any errors or omissions in the cemetery map.

<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

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 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 let me know***

by emailing me at [admin@ecclestonandpulfordchurches.org](mailto: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-events)

## Christian Art.

For lovers of Christian Art, the following website is worth subscribing to

[CHRISTIAN ART | Daily Gospel Reading & Art Reflection](https://www.christianart.com/)



## Reminder – Current Pattern of Silent Church

In reintroducing Silent Church, we would hope to encourage others to take ‘about an hour’ or so, once a fortnight, to simply be with each other, and, more to the point, to simply wait on God together.

Silent Church is simply an environment that enables our mind activity (thinking too much) to take a break, enabling us to enjoy a quiet time of simply be-ing with God. Then to let the Holy Spirit-within reveal Himself in silence.

Pattern of Silent Church:

- Tuesday September 10th, 7pm Pulford Church.
- Wednesday September 25th, 7pm Eccleston Church.

For further information, don’t hesitate to contact Rob. He can be emailed at:

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

## 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>

Messy Church: [Eccleston / Pulford Messy Church Facebook](#)

***If there is anyone who would like to volunteer to be either the Pulford or Eccleston Church Facebook administrator, please email***

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