

EGERTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH NEWSLETTER

June July August 2024

DESIDERATA

GO PLACIDLY amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexatious to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is as perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.

Max Ehrmann





On the third day, He rose again, He ascended into heaven...

Any football supporters reading? If your team were to win the FA Cup, for how long would you celebrate? If your country were to win the World Cup, for how long would you talk about that?

For us Christians, our 'hero' – Jesus – did something which we are still talking about 2000 years later. He rose again, which we celebrate at Easter. Traditionally, the Easter season lasts for 50 days (7 Sundays).

Before we rush on to celebrate, let us not forget the Ascension.

Luke recorded it twice. Firstly and briefly, in Luke 24:50-53; secondly and more fully, in Acts 1:1-11.

This year, the Sunday Lectionary omits the Ascension, hence the reason why I am mentioning in this pastoral letter.

Before you continue to read, please take a moment to read the accounts of Ascension in the Bible.

On one level, we can look at the Ascension as a farewell event. If we go to any railway station or airport, we will see many people saying goodbye: some for a short time, others for much longer; and others still for whom it is probably farewell forever.

This man, this Jesus, whom the Disciples had lost once when He was crucified, they are losing Him again. The human emotions of painful separation and grief in the story are palpable.

And into this fragile human moment, God acts supernaturally: Jesus is taken up into Heaven and became hidden from their sight.

While reflecting and writing this sermon, it occurred to me that in Bolton – like in many places around the world - we have a wonderful example and a very real metaphor for the meaning of the Ascension.

Winter Hill the highest point in Greater Manchester and on top of it stands this huge TV transmitter. Some days, one can see Winter Hill clearly; sometimes, the top of the mast is hidden in cloud.

Why mention this? The TV signals which come from the Winter Hill transmitter, they are there whatever the weather, even if we cannot see the transmitter itself because it is obscured in cloud. And so it is with Jesus in the Ascension: He disappeared from their sight into the clouds, and even though we cannot see Him, His presence remains with us.

The 20th Century theologian, Karl Barth, called the Ascension "an historical turning point". The Ascension is Jesus re-gathering His followers. Jesus did not choose learned or powerful people to be His Disciples: He chose every day, working people; He chose the outcasts; He chose us.

In Jesus' last conversation with His Disciples, their goals are still earthly: they ask him about the restoration of Israel, a political goal. Jesus broadens their horizons and commissions them to continue His work.

In today's reading, did you spot the appearance of angels? When we read the Gospels which tell the story of Jesus' time on Earth, angels appear at key moments to guide the humans on their next step when confronted with God's powerful actions. The angels tell them that Jesus will return! The Disciples needed a nudge, for they were staring into the sky. The angels speak to them, assure them and they begin their descent of the mountain to begin Christ's Church.

And at that moment, there on that mountain top, it all begins. The Ascension is about Jesus is completing His journey and us beginning ours. Jesus becomes human, is born as a baby, lives His life, is tried and executed. He rises from the dead, and in the Ascension, Jesus is going home.

Jesus, who is both fully Divine and fully human, in the Ascension forever changes the doorway between Earth and Heaven. Jesus, a human-being, entered heaven! That is the amazing mystery of the Ascension: a human-being entered glory and is with God. And because Jesus did,

We can, too!

*Revd. Walt Johnson, Minister
in the Bolton & Salford Mis-
sional Partnership*

ASCENSION

And if I go,
while you're still here...
Know that I live on,
vibrating to a different measure
--behind a thin veil you cannot see through.
You will not see me,
so you must have faith.
I wait for the time when we can soar together again,
--both aware of each other.
Until then, live your life to its fullest.
And when you need me,
Just whisper my name in your heart,
...I will be there.



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Brunch 27th April 2024

It nearly didn't happen!

'Helpers' were few on the ground right up to the day before but our leader, Roma, came up trumps and pulled it all together.

So, with delicious food, excellent company, and the obligatory raffle and tombola the event came together and an outstanding £500 plus raised.

Of course, the funds are important towards the work of the church but, at least as important is the community importance. The worth, the value of our community coming together, sharing time together, sharing food together, laughing together as debates go on as to who has won the 'best' (or other!) prize. Remember just two years ago we were in the throws of lockdown. Deprived of human contact, our friends, our neighbours even our family. It was quite horrible so let's appreciate the opportunity to catch up with people, have a chat, have a grumble – yes, it is normal to moan and groan (not too much!) - and put the world to rights. How lovely it was to see a baby join us yesterday. How I wish more children would come. Remember children can fill up their tummies for free. I looked down the counter and it was truly full of fabulous dishes, potato hash, a firm family favourite; veggie lasagne, always popular; cheese pies, we never have enough; the sweetest ham (don't ask me how I know!) and I thought how fortunate we are. So many people are hungry and this was a feast!

And it was also wonderful to welcome back Jean (Harfield) to her rightful place on the home-bake stall. Jean has had a tough few years and we have missed her and of course, we still miss Brian.

So, on behalf of everyone there, a huge thank you to all those who contributed to yesterday's successful event, whether you cooked, served, stood behind the stalls or contributed to the prizes or cleared up.

Here's to the May brunch. Who's free?

CF
This is a fairly typical menu!



Amazing Event April 2024

What could Pulmonary Fibrosis; Healthcare UK; Fishing; Home Instead; Adult Learning Opportunities; Crystal Life Planning; beautiful scented candles; Bolton Hospice; Fancy Glasses; Film club; Tropic Cosmetics and facial care and Mark Logan MP possibly have in common? Well, amongst other exciting stalls they all came and showcased their services and products at an event for 'mature' persons at Egerton URC and what a brilliant, informative and pleasant afternoon it proved to be. Here are my thoughts on just a couple of the stalls.

Some of you, like me, may have never given much thought to fishing! However, I have appreciated the recent **Gone Fishing** programme with Bob Mortimer and Paul Whitehouse and the beautiful and remote locations they took us to showing us beautiful scenery, the opportunities to relax, communicate and forge relationships with others. Whether it is dads and lads, and lads learning skills from their dads as with Paul and his dad as a boy or, more recently Paul passing on his skills to his amiable friend Bob, both exuberant when they land their catch then so gently returning them to the water. But now, in 'maturity' their discussions focus more on their vulnerabilities following their brush with life threatening heart conditions, a recurrent theme throughout the series.

So, I couldn't resist finding out a little more when I saw stallholder 'Off the Scale' fishing lessons. I had already realised that fishing is much more than simply 'catching fish' but in these post lockdown days of isolation and mental health problems, even in our young, I was excited to hear all of the physical, mental and social benefits associated with fishing. They already have extensive links from primary and secondary schools, SEND and SEMD schools to care and residential homes; rehabilitation of offenders and local councils and more. Sounds great. To find out more why not visit their **website offthescale-oe@gmail.com**



Our **MP Mark Logan** had a steady queue at his stand throughout the event with people wanting to speak to him, (potholes I wonder?) but I will personally be forever indebted to him for his continued support to raise awareness of Pulmonary Fibrosis (PF) which I, for one, live with. Mark came on board as soon as I contacted him during lockdown, and his disbelief at what he was hearing was palpable. Like so many others, he knew so little about the terminal condition which affects at least 70,000 people, and their families, in the UK and who had been treated shabbily to say the least. Since then, he has, visited the **Bolton Pulmonary Fibrosis Support Group** and has met members of our group, some of whom are sadly but inevitably, no longer with us, and listened carefully to some of their quite horrendous stories. Mark has continued working with us and the leading charity **Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis** and together they arranged an MP drop-in for us to speak to MPs at Portcullis House, Westminster. We spoke to some 33 MPs from all parties, who were keen to offer their support and we asked them to get actively involved in 5 specific things locally and nationally; Post about the drop in on their social media and share a press release with their local newspaper; to get in touch with their local commission group; write to the sec of state for health and social care to ask what action is being taken to improve care for pulmonary fibrosis patients; ask a parliamentary question and meet with their local PF support

It sometimes seems we hear nothing good of our MPs but I have gained a new found respect for them having met Mark and on behalf of the Pulmonary Fibrosis community locally and nationally I thank him sincerely.

Finally, it would be most remiss of me not to thank **Catherine Cointre from Crystal Funerals** who hosted this event and who are planning to host more in the future and I would strongly recommend coming along. It was good! For those of you who thought it would be all about funerals it was most definitely not. There is so much available in our communities but how do we find out about them? We all have our own concerns and worries about our own local areas so how good is it to have your local MP on hand to chat to and share your concerns with in a relaxed environment. There was so much more on the day than I have mentioned but they were all just as informative and provide brilliant services. I wish I could tell you about them all, but you'll just have to come to the next one. Oh also, how could I forget, delicious afternoon tea boxes were also available. What's not to like?

CF

May 2024





Christian Aid Week 2024 – 12-18 May

Seven days, so many ways to make a difference.

Every Christian Aid Week, people across Britain and Ireland raise funds, act and pray for their global neighbours in a celebration of hope for a fairer world.

This year's appeal runs from **12–18 May** and is focussing on the organisation's work in Burundi, one of the most densely populated and poorest countries in Africa. Heavily reliant on agriculture, it's also one of the least prepared to combat the effects of climate change, including droughts, floods and landslides. The global cost of living crisis has intensified the challenges: more than 70 per cent of the population live in poverty and more than half of children are chronically malnourished.

Christian Aid has been working in Burundi since 1995 when it first offered humanitarian assistance to people surviving the civil con-

flict. Now, alongside local partners, the organisation helps establish Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs). These community-led groups mean people can save and borrow money, making small businesses possible, offering reliable and diverse incomes so families can eat regularly, get medicine when they need it, and build safer homes.

Thirty-five-year-old Aline Nibogora is the chairperson of a VSLA which supports some 25 families in a remote village, in Makamba Province. Aline escaped an abusive marriage only to find herself on the streets begging for a place to stay.

Her life changed when she went to a three-day, **Christian Aid-funded community workshop**. With a small start-up loan, **Aline** began trading avocados and peanuts locally. She's now a grocery wholesaler and living on her own plot of land where she's building a home for her family. In the next five years she hopes to expand, so one day she can buy a mill. This will provide a source of income without the need to transport heavy goods over long distances.

"I don't want my children to have a painful life like mine, remembering it makes me weep. I could never have dreamed I would one day have a brick house and be a successful businesswoman, able to feed and clothe my children. This is a plan and I will do it; I am a woman who is an achiever."

This Christian Aid Week – from 12-18 May – supporters are once more stepping up, knowing that every prayer, every gift, every action helps transforms lives.

There are **seven days and so many ways** to make a difference – whether that's church services, special collections, Christian Aid Big Brekkies, or even a Bible readathon. For those who like a physical challenge there's a new option for 2024 with the chance to take part in 70k in May. You can cover the distance in any way you like, take part by yourself or with a group, and share your progress on a dedicated Facebook page. Find out all the ways you can support Christian Aid Week by visiting the [Christian Aid website](#).

What could your donations buy?

£5 could buy a savings book for a member of a VSLA, setting them up to start their own small business and become financially independent.

£30 would help a family buy two Jerrycans to collect water from the river to carry back to their farm. Jerrycans provide irrigation to crops, especially during the dry season, maintaining food production for the family.

£50 would mean a vulnerable family can purchase a water storage tank. Water can then be stored for a few days rather than travelling to the communal water point, allowing instant access to water for washing, cleaning and cooking.

£100 could help a woman set up her own small business with a starter kit; including money to purchase her first few items to sell. This means she could supply local grocery shops or restaurants with vegetables, set up a roadside shop, or buy maize to sell in bigger markets like Bujumbura.

£100 could also help buy a family a bicycle meaning easier transport to school, quicker access to medical treatment in emergencies or support carrying produce from farm to market.

Please give as generously as you can in the Christian Aid Envelopes in Church



Welcome to St Andrew's

An Anglican church in the beautiful resort of Puerto Pollensa. Our services are in English. Our congregation is made up of local residents and regular and occasional visitors to the island. We are a group of ordinary people who seek to serve and follow Jesus Christ in our everyday lives. The church is not a place for 'perfect' people – we

know we all make mistakes and do things wrong. But we also know we are loved and have been forgiven by God. If you would like to know more about us, or would like to talk with someone about the Christian faith or other matters,

please feel free to contact us.



Learning to love one another with the love of Jesus and reaching out to the community where we live

From the website of St. Andrew's

Church is hard.

Church is hard for the person walking through the doors, afraid of judgment.

Church is hard for the prodigal soul returning home, broken and battered by the world.

Church is hard for the woman who looks like she has it all together, but doesn't.

Church is hard for the couple who fought the entire ride to service.

Church is hard for the single mum, surrounded by couples holding hands, and seemingly perfect families.

Church is hard for the widow and widower with no invitation to lunch after service.

Church is hard for the deacon with an estranged child.

Church is hard for the choir member overwhelmed by the weight of the lyrics in that song.

Church is hard for the man insecure in his role as a leader.

Church is hard for the single adult praying God brings them a mate.

Church is hard for the teenager, wearing a scarlet letter, ashamed of their mistakes.

Church is hard for the sinners.

Church is hard for me.

It's hard because on the outside it all looks shiny and perfect. Sunday best in behaviour and dress. However, underneath those layers, you find a body of imperfect people, carnal souls, selfish motives.

But, here is the beauty of church.

Church isn't a building, mentality, or expectation.

Church is a group of sinners, saved by grace, living in fellowship as saints.

Church is a body of believers bound as brothers and sisters by an eternal love.

Church is a holy ground where sinners stand as equals before the Throne of Grace.

Church is a refuge for broken hearts and a training ground for mighty warriors.

Church is a converging of confrontation and invitation. Where sin is confronted and hearts are invited to seek restoration.

Church is a lesson in faith and trust.

Church is a bearer of burdens and a giver of hope.

Church is a family. A family coming together, setting aside differences, forgetting past mistakes, rejoicing in the smallest of victories.

Church, the body, and the circle of sinners-turned-saints, is where God resides, and if we ask, God is faithful to come.

So even on the hard days at church,

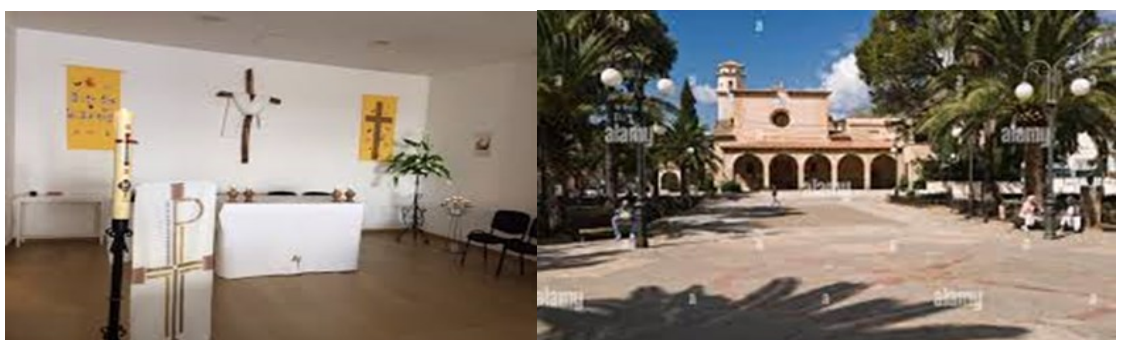
The days when I am at odds with a sister or brother. When I've fought with my spouse because we're late once again. When I've walked in bearing burdens heavier than my heart can handle, yet masking the pain with a smile on my face. When I've worn a scarlet letter, under the microscope. When I've longed for someone to hold, or fought tears as the lyrics were sung. When I've walked back in, afraid and broken, after walking away.

I'll remember, God has never failed to meet me there.

Poem (partially attributed to Jacob Waldron)

Written in the window of a St Andrew's Church, Puerto Pollensa, Mallorca

NB; the scarlet letter apparently refers to Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel 'The Scarlet letter' about a woman called Hester who was forced to wear a scarlet letter A (for adultery) on her dress.



What's on at Church

Monday Club ;2.00pm ; This is a Friendship Group— everyone is welcome. There is good chat, games, crafts , biscuits and occasionally cake!

Monday Yoga with Mike Doyle; 7-8pm

Slimming World ; Tuesdays am,5pm & 7pm Led by Ian Bunney
Tel. 07743 499292

Parents and Toddlers group ;Wednesdays (Term time only)
9.30– 11amLed by Lyn 07986 244222 Great fun for the children

The Cardiac group. 7.30pm Cardiac Support Group (3rd Wed of the month)

Speakers and refreshments. Anyone with a heart related problem will be warmly welcomed. David (Chair) Tel. 07941 608604

Thursday Club This is a Coffee Morning. 10-11am Chat and friendship. Come and join us.

Thursday Sound Bath; alternate Thursday evenings

FILM CLUB; The second & fourth Wednesday of each Month at 6.30pm with refreshments during the intermission. We are grateful to all the films that have been donated so far almost 200!

See Lindsey Torrance, Nigel Anderson or Stuart Bromley for more information

Friday Fitness and Age UK;

Saturday Brunch (4th Sat of the month)11..30– 1pm Enjoy a delicious lunch, raffle, tombola, cake stall

Sunday Worship 10am Followed by tea, coffee & chat.

Communion— 1st Sunday of the month

There is a calendar on the church website, for your reference.

Look out on Facebook for posts of upcoming events.

Subject: Thoughts On Politicians...

We hang petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office.

Aesop, Greek slave & fable author

Those who are too smart to engage in politics are punished by being governed by those who are dumber.

Plato, ancient Greek philosopher

Politicians are the same all over. They promise to build a bridge even where there is no river.

Nikita Khrushchev, Russian Soviet politician

When I was a boy I was told that anybody could become President; I'm beginning to believe it.

Quoted in 'Clarence Darrow for the Defense' by Irving Stone.

Politicians are people who, when they see light at the end of the tunnel, go out and buy some more tunnel.

John Quinton, American actor/writer

Politics is the gentle art of getting votes from the poor and campaign funds from the rich, by promising to protect each from the other.

Oscar Ameringer, "the Mark Twain of American Socialism."

I offered my opponents a deal: "if they stop telling lies about me, I will stop telling the truth about them".

Adlai Stevenson, campaign speech, 1952.

A politician is a fellow who will lay down your life for his country.

Texas Guinan. 19th century American businessman

I have come to the conclusion that politics is too serious a matter to be left to the politicians.

Charles de Gaulle, French general & politician

Instead of giving a politician the keys to the city, it might be better to change the locks.

Doug Larson (English middle-distance runner who won gold medals at the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris

I am reminded of a joke: What happens if a politician drowns in a river? That is pollution.

What happens if all of them drown? That is solution!!!

(Anonymous)

Sunday Flowers Rota

Thank you to Karen Anderson for taking over the flower rota. Please feel free to add your name to the rota or donate flowers in the memory of a loved one.



Please pray for those unable to attend church for whatever reason;

**Jean Harfield and family
Pat Rea and family
Barbara & Paul Adam
Barbara Good**

A man walks into a bar and asks the bartender, "If I show you a really good trick, will you give me a free drink?"
The bartender considers it, and agrees.
The man reaches into his pocket and pulls out a tiny rat. He reaches into his other pocket and pulls out a tiny piano. The rat stretches, cracks his knuckles, and proceeds to play a blues medley.
The rat finishes the medley and the man returns the rat and the piano to his pockets and the bartender gives him his drink.
After he finishes his drink, he asked the bartender, "If I show you an even better trick, will you give me free drinks for the rest of the evening?"
The bartender agrees, thinking that no trick could possibly be better than the first.
The man reaches into his pockets and pulls out the tiny rat and tiny piano again. The rat stretches, cracks his knuckles, and proceeds to play the blues again.
This time the man reaches into another pocket and pulls out a small bullfrog, which begins to sing along to the rat's music.
While the man is enjoying his drinks, a stranger comes over and offers him \$100,000 for the bullfrog.
"Sorry," the man replies, "he's not for sale."
The stranger increases the offer to \$250,000 cash up front.
"No," he insists, "he's not for sale."
The stranger again increases the offer, this time to \$500,000 cash.
The man finally agrees, and turns the frog over to the stranger in exchange for the money.
"Are you insane?" the bartender demanded. "That frog could have been worth millions to you, and you let him go for just \$500,000!"
"Don't worry about it," the man replied "the frog was just a frog, the rat's a ventriloquist."



IF

you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

~ Rudyard Kipling

Duties – May 2024-July 2024

Date *	Elder	Reading *	Reader	Preacher *
May 5th	Steve Swannell	John 15: 9-17	Rachel Cronshaw	Walt Johnson
12	Peter Crook	John 17:6-19	Rita Dunn	Ian Huddleston
19 Pente- cost	Ian Topping	John 15: 26-27& John 16:4b-15	Joan Hall	Adrian Yapp
26	Rachel Cronshaw	John 3: 1-17	Doreen Healey	Mark Cowling
June 2nd	Steve Swannell	Mark 2:23-3:6	Stuart Bromley	Andy Guthrie
9	Rachel Cronshaw	Mark 3:20-35	Karen Anderson	Walt Johnson
16	Peter Crook	Mark 4:26-34	Peter Crook	TBA
23	Ian Topping	Mark 4:35-41	Jane Austin	John East
30	Rachel Cronshaw	Mark 5:21-43	Rachel Cronshaw	Kath Knowles
July 7th	Steve Swannell	Mark 6:1-13	Rita Dunn	Adrian Yapp
14	Peter Crook	Mark 6:14-29	Joan Hall	Mark Cowling
21	Ian Topping	Mark 6:30-34,53- 56	Doreen Healey	Walt Johnson
28	Rachel Cronshaw	John 6: 1-21	Stuart Bromley	Kath Knowles

Do you have a good news story? (for the next edition)

Share your thoughts and prayers through our newsletter.

Sunday Worship and Sunday School

10am with Holy Communion on the first Sunday of every month

Minister: Rev Walt Johnson

Church Secretary: _____Mrs Roma Hooper

Church Treasurer: _____Mr Nigel Anderson

