

## DIRECTORY

### Team Ministers

Team Rector	Canon Dr Chris Bracegirdle	01942 859251
Team Vicar	Revd Angela Wynne	01204 468150
Curate:	Revd Kirsty Screeton	01942 575383
Reader Emeritus	Alan Morris	01942 817871
Reader	Christine Radford	01942 790091
Reader	Elaine Simkin	01942 810762

### Parish Wardens

Margaret Dolphin	01942 790415
Edward McHale	01942 812193

### Deputy Wardens

St Bartholomew	Christine Andrews	01942 817146
	Joyce Cunliffe	01204 697652
St George	Pat James	01204 492994
	Sarah Barry	01942 840441
St Thomas	Tim Browning	07827 275262
	Janet Perfect	01942 814090

[www.westhoughtonchurches.org.uk](http://www.westhoughtonchurches.org.uk) Follow us on Twitter @Wparishchurch and on Facebook

For all enquiries relating to baptism and weddings, and for other routine matters, please come to the parish office at St Bartholomew's Church on any Monday (other than Bank holidays) 6pm - 7pm.

### Sunday Services across the Team through September

St Bartholomew's:	8.00am (2nd & 4th Sundays) 11.00am each week
St Thomas's	8.00am (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays) 9.15am each Sunday
St George's	<b>9.15am</b> each Sunday
St John's	8.00am (1st & 3rd Sundays) <b>9:30am</b> each week
St James's	8.00am (2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays) <b>10:45am</b> each Sunday
St Katharine's	8.00am & 11.00am each Sunday

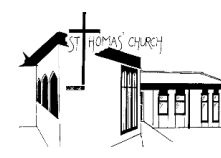
Items for inclusion in future newsletters should be sent to the parish office:  
[westhoughtonparish@outlook.com](mailto:westhoughtonparish@outlook.com)  
or given to Edward McHale, churchwarden and Director of Music  
[www.westhoughtonchurches.org.uk](http://www.westhoughtonchurches.org.uk)

## Parish of St Bartholomew Westhoughton

St Bartholomew

St Thomas

St George



## NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2017

### Remembrance Day

On a past Greek holiday, we called at the mountain village of Metsova in the Pindos mountains. We were informed that during the Second World War, this Alpine village had been bombed mercilessly because of it being considered a centre of the resistance fighters. It had been rebuilt in the original style and now no trace of the conflict remains except at least one that we discovered almost by accident.

This took the form of a memorial cross just off the main square and, although we could not translate the Greek inscription, the picture at the base in relief was more than adequate. The relief depicts a group of men facing a firing squad. Each is dressed in the typical shepherd's cap, long woollen coat and bobbed footwear of the area, the features of each are clearly and individually shown and each leans with a quiet dignity on their shepherd's crook or shorter walking stick. In contrast, intentionally or otherwise, the firing squad is shown from behind, identical in shape, size and uniform and faceless. It seems to suggest that how money that can never be found to fund health, education, transport etc. can be found in abundance in times of war to fashion an impersonal killing machine from otherwise "ordinary" men and women.

The way the relief had been designed made quite a statement as well as being a memorial to those who had died.

The flowing morning, by one of those strange coincidences, in Michael Palin's book "Sahara" that I had taken as holiday reading, I came to his chapter on Tobruk. Not many books bring tears to my eyes these days, but this one did as Palin described a reunion and memorial service of mainly octogenarians in the war graves cemetery in Tobruk. In describing the ordered neatness of the cemetery he remarks on one or two inscriptions. It seems that two in particular are worth bearing in mind as we parade our flags, bang our drums and lay our wreaths on Remembrance Sunday. The first was "*Fight to build as we have fought to destroy.*" The second was translated from the Arabic on the headstone of each of the four Libyans buried there, which instead of "*Rest in Peace*" simply reads "*He is Forgiven.*"

Alan Morris

Dear friends

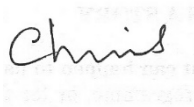
It was 25 years ago this month that the Church of England General Synod voted to make the way possible for women to be ordained as priests. For many of us this was a welcome and long overdue decision and since the first ordinations in 1994, it has been a delight to work alongside such gifted and godly colleagues (not least amongst them, my current colleagues in our team). Since then and more recently, we have seen women ordained and consecrated as bishops and again, the church is greatly blessed by their ministry.

Of course there are and always have been some who, in good conscience, cannot accept the ordination of women as priests and bishops. The Church of England has committed itself, through its Mutual Flourishing agenda, to ensuring that this constituency of the church continues to be part of the whole church's life. One of the great strengths – perhaps the greatest – of the Church of England is its ability to hold together those of divergent views and it continues to try to do this, not only with issues of ordination but also with ethnicity, sexuality and age. Please pray continuously and frequently for our church and for its leaders working through these issues.

I have always been particularly struck by the way in which God calls us – lay and ordained – to serve Him in the most unexpected of ways. His call can come at unexpected (and sometimes unwelcome) times and to do things and be people we would never have expected. I know that I am not alone in my strong conviction that God looks beyond all the boundaries and categories that we use to define people and in each one of us seems a beloved child for whom He wants the very best.

What does God want of you? Welcome or not, will you be obedient to his call?

With very best wishes

Chris

### Other news

At the meeting of the Diocesan Synod in October, Chris was elected as Chair of the House of Clergy. As well as becoming vice president of the synod, this is a representative role for the clergy of the diocese, working closely with the Bishop and the wider church.

From January 2018, Chris has been appointed as Greater Manchester chaplain to the Royal British Legion.

## Remembrance Day

During the Second World War, a group of British soldiers was fighting to liberate a town in occupied France. During the battle their sergeant was killed and the men, spotting a church in the distance, carried his body there to ask the priest if they could bury him in the churchyard there. The priest refused – the soldier was not from the village, not even French and not of their religion. The soldiers, saddened by this refusal, buried their sergeant outside the graveyard but as close to the wall of the churchyard as possible, marking the grave with a simple headstone as best they could.

Ten years on, as a reunion, they journeyed back to the town to pay their respects but circling the churchyard wall they could not find the grave. At the Parish house, the same priest answered the door. “We were wrong,” he explained to them; “your sergeant is now within our churchyard.” The soldiers asked where they had moved his body. “He hasn’t moved at all,” explained the priest, “we have. We’ve expanded our walls outwards. We want a church large enough to accommodate everyone that comes, whatever their background.”

*Ed*

Amy, aged six, wrote a letter which read, “Dear God, how did you get invented?” Her father sent a letter to the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, who wrote back to the young girl, saying, “I think that God might reply a little like this: ‘Nobdy invents me, but lots of people discovered me and were quite surprised. They discovered me when they looked round the world and thought it was really beautiful or really mysterious and wondered from where it came. They discovered me when they were very quiet on their own and felt a sort of peace and love they hadn’t expected.

*Supplied by Ailsa Maddison*

## St. George's Café Church – November Dates

This meets on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October from 3:25 – 4:15pm. Organised by St. George's church members, we meet for half an hour to worship sharing in song, prayer, conversations and snacks. All are welcome to attend – children **MUST** be accompanied by an adult at all times.



Extra volunteers to help at this would be much appreciated [simply brewing up or making drinks would be a big help].

The next meetings will be on Thursdays 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November.