

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 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

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

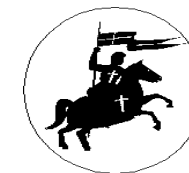
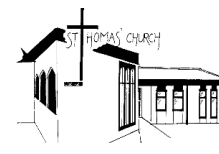
Items for inclusion in future newsletters should be sent to the parish office:
westhoughtonparish@outlook.com
or given to Edward McHale, churchwarden and Director of Music
www.westhoughtonchurches.org.uk

Parish of St Bartholomew Westhoughton

St Bartholomew

St Thomas

St George



NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2017

It has been announced that our team rector, Canon Chris Bracegirdle has been appointed as Vicar of St Peter (Bolton Parish Church) with St Philip Bolton and as Borough Dean of Bolton. It is expected that Chris will mark his final services with us on Easter Day 2018 before his induction at Bolton in April 2018.

There has never been a time
When God has not told his people that he loves them.
Right from the beginning,
And through all the ages, this is what he has told people everywhere.

But not all people have understood what God was telling them,
Even when God was saying directly,
Come and be members of my family.

So this word of God became human
And lived a human life like ours
So that we could hear and see and touch and feel what God was telling us.
The word was made flesh and lived among us.
In him we see the God who can't be seen.
In him we see that God loves us.

The Gospel of John, chapter 1, verses 1 – 18 Ed



Many Thanks

Many thanks to all who have contributed to this parish newsletter in 2017, particularly Chris, Kirsty, Alan Morris and Ailsa Maddison. We're always happy to receive contributions or details of events happening across the team so do keep sending them in.

Home Communion at Christmas

If you know of anyone who would like to receive communion at Christmas but is not able to get to church because of poor health or frailty, please let Chris, Kirsty, Angela or one of the churchwardens know. Please don't assume that someone else will have told us – we would rather we were all told six times than not at all!

Dear friends,

I have come to the conclusion, as I take time to reflect on how the secular world prepare and embrace the Christmas season that the true meaning of Christmas is not lost. However, I do believe that its meaning is often misunderstood (feel free to disagree). Every year, the Christian Church finds itself in conflict over one or two secular advertisements. Often this is due to the replacing of Jesus in the crib, or by placing the nativity scene against a new background, both therefore creating conflict against the real meaning.

It is no coincidence that the readings that have been occurring, and continue to do, incorporate both the story of Jesus' first coming and the teaching that gives us the hope of his second coming. As people of the Christian faith we live in and are called to share these messages of LOVE and HOPE. That's the love of God through Jesus' birth and the hope that Jesus will come again. Christmas is a season where people gather to watch nativities, sing carols about Jesus coming and remember what has gone before. But I feel that, unless the Bible passages leads, we tend to not be consciously aware or include the message of Jesus second coming it in our conversation. – Yes I am just as guilty as everyone else!

It interesting to note that it's often the secular advertisements, which have caused a bit of a stir, are the one that attract conversations between people of the different and no faiths. But, how often are these conversation had in relation to the nativity scenes that reflect the story, as told in the Bible. For example: the ones that sits in the high streets each year or in shop windows, the one that is on the front of a card you are sending or been sent, or even the one displayed at home alongside your tree and other decorations.

As people of faith we are called to share the message of Love and Hope to all and I believe Christmas is one of the easiest seasons for this, as it a celebration that many partake in and many embrace the season of goodwill. I started by noting that I believe the Christians meaning is not lost but sometimes misunderstood - Therefore, don't shy away from talking to people you meet whilst in front of a nativity scene and take the opportunity to proclaim the true message by sharing God's LOVE and (don't forget) HOPE with all. And as I write, I pray, and continue to pray, that where you may go and be this seasons you know the presence of God's Love and Hope in you and within all that you do this Advent and Christmas Season.

Kirsty

Come let us
Adore
Him +



**We wish everyone a very happy
and blessed Christmas and a
peaceful 2018**

Christmas Publicity

Please take away and distribute our December 2017 Advent and Christmas Service leaflet which gives details of all the services over this period.

Enclosed with it is a leaflet with details of the Church of England's Advent Campaign **#GOD with US** entitled "Your Christmas Journey" and the Bible Society's **#Advent Challenge** campaign.



MANY A TRUE WORD

With Advent come the inevitable Nativity Plays and of course, the things that often go wrong and cause many a laugh, if not embarrassment. My favourite and coincidentally one of the shortest is the following.

One young man was given the supporting role of a shepherd although he secretly wished for a speaking part. When it was his turn to approach the manger in his stripped dressing gown, towel bedecked head and bearing the obligatory fluffy lamb, he leaned over the cradle, looked at the tiny baby inside and overcome with the moment turned to his fellow shepherds and said "Eeeh, doesn't he look like his dad."

Supplied by Alan Morris

WordSearch Bible Study at St. Bart's

The final two sessions for this year are:

Tuesday 5th December 7:30pm The Historical Books part 2 "it's plots, plans and politics"

Tuesday 12th December 7:30pm Wisdom literature part 1 "Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs"

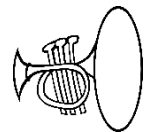
The course resumes after the Christmas break on Tuesday 9th January 2018.



Brass Band Concerts

Thursday 7th December 8:00pm: Christmas Concert by Wingates band at St. John's church, Wingates. Tickets £8 including refreshments.

Friday 8th December 7:30pm: Christmas with Salutation Brass at St James', Daisy Hill. Tickets £8 [accompanied under 18s free] – an evening of seasonal favourites, refreshments served.



Coffee Morning at St. Bart's

Sat 9th December 10:00am – 1:00pm

In aid of Bolton Hospice – all welcome



Pretoria Pit 107th Anniversary Commemoration Service

This will be marked with the usual service on **Thursday 21st December at 10:00am** at St. Bartholomew's church before moving to the memorial. Tea / Coffee served afterwards.