



PARISH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW WESTHOUGHTON

St Bartholomew

St Thomas

St George

Sunday 6th June 2021 The First Sunday after Trinity

TODAY'S SERVICES

9:15am **NO SERVICE** at St. George's Church

11.00am Holy Communion at St Bartholomew's

Revd Carol Pharaoh

9:15am Service at St. Thomas

Revd Angela Wynne

We pray for:

Those who are ill: Cassie Buono, Brian Cato, Christopher Davies, Christine Greenhalgh, Jenny Harris, Keith Haworth, Mario Heaton, Edith Ibbotson, Joan James, Patricia James, Mike Johnson, Eileen Marsh, Jean Partington, Norman Sidlow.

Those who have died recently: Ian Grundy, William Wilcox

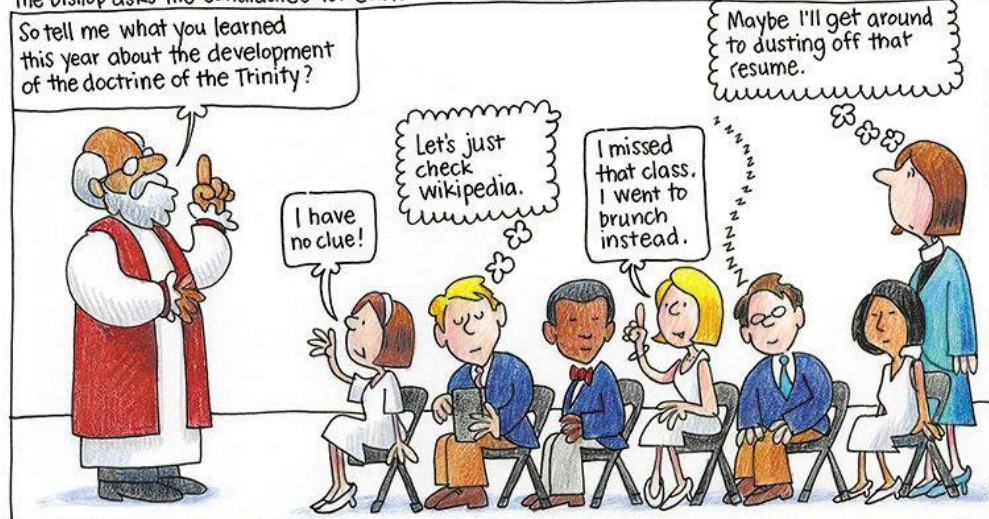
And on their anniversaries this week we remember: John Berry, Ralph Chapman, George Fairclough, James Littler, Joseph Partington, John Pemberton, Richard Smith, Joan Southworth, Darryl Woodward.

This week:

Sunday services at St Thomas' continue this week at 9:15am and St. Bartholomew's at 11:00am.

The choir will be singing at St. Bartholomew's again this week including the final hymn in memory of Richard Shepherd – see later in this pewsheet. It's a fine hymn so it will appear in the services once congregational singing is back on the agenda.

The Bishop asks the candidates for Confirmation a few questions.



THIS SUNDAY THERE IS NO SERVICE AT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH: the school hall is having the roof replaced over the half-term holiday and to allow the work to proceed smoothly, we have agreed to cancel today's service. Services will return as usual on Sunday 13th June at 9:15am; if there is any change to this, we'll let you know.

This week the daily readings come from St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians. There's a few introductory notes to explain how it came to be written, what it's all about and why it might actually be his fourth letter to them. St Columba and St. Barnabas feast days also fall this week, so we've included some articles about them. St Columba's abbey on Iona is well worth a visit whenever Scotland lets us in again. Daily prayers this week come from St Columba's own writing and from the Iona community.

There are also the notices at the end.

While services and attendance at church is limited, these pewsheets and on-line services will continue. Do keep any news, views and feedback coming. Please also check our Team YouTube channel for online services:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDx266HLh9ShYeBJnON8ODg>

Ed



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The Collect:

God of truth, help us to keep your law of love and to walk in ways of wisdom, that we may find true life in Jesus Christ your Son. **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading 1 Samuel 8. 4 - 11

⁴All the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. ⁵They said to him, 'You are old and your sons do not follow in your ways; appoint for us, then, a king to govern us, like other nations.' ⁶But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, 'Give us a king to govern us.' Samuel prayed to the LORD, ⁷and the LORD said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. ⁸Just as they have done to me, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so also they are doing to you. ⁹Now then, listen to their voice; only – you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.'

¹⁰So Samuel reported all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king. ¹¹He said, 'These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots;

New Testament Reading: 2 Corinthians 4. 13 – 5. 1

¹³Just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture – 'I believed, and so I spoke' – we also believe, and so we speak, ¹⁴because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

¹⁶So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, ¹⁸because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

¹For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Gospel Reading:

Mark 3. 20 - end

²⁰The crowd came together again, so that Jesus and his companions could not even eat. ²¹When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, 'He has gone out of his mind.' ²²And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, 'He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.' ²³And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, 'How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. ²⁷But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

²⁸Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin' – ³⁰for they had said, 'He has an unclean spirit.'

³¹Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. ³²A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, 'Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.' ³³And he replied, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' ³⁴And looking at those who sat around him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.'

The Post Communion Prayer:

Eternal Father,

we thank you for nourishing us with these heavenly gifts:

may our communion strengthen us in faith,

build us up in hope,

and make us grow in love;

for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



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Homily: Alan Morris

Grant, O Lord, that in the written word and through the spoken word, we may behold the Living Word, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

Prior to beginning this homily I decided to look up some commentaries on Mark's Gospel to see what the "experts" had to say. It seemed the consensus of opinion was that this particular passage was one of the most difficult to understand in the bible. Not a good start and even the author didn't seem to be much help. Most of the passage is just the words of Jesus. Being the first gospel written around 65 AD there could well have been people still alive who had seen or heard Jesus during his earthly ministry. The author seems in a hurry to record these saying while relatively fresh and I wonder if he found the words as confusing as we may do today. The other three gospel writers could add more flesh and commentary to Mark's "bare bones".

Yet, there is much to be discovered from the account. At the beginning of the chapter we hear that Jesus had asked his followers to prepare a boat for him as he was concerned that he could be caught in a potential crush and we find him unable to take a meal, again because of the press of the crowd. We are all aware of crowds and there seems to be an element of mass hysteria on this occasion. My own father and grandfather were at Burden Park in March 1946 when 33 people died and around 400 injured and they never forgot the experience. More recently we heard about the Lag B'Omer festival in Israel when 45 were killed and many more injured in a panic stricken crowd.

We may ask why so many people had come to see and hear Jesus. He was already beginning to get a reputation as a healer, miracle worker and orator. Had they come seeking cures, curiosity, expecting a miracle or to hear some prophesies. This was no palm waving, hosanna crying crowd. As in any crowd, especially demonstrations, there would undoubtedly be hecklers, those on the fringe ready to disrupt for their own ends and those who saw the opportunity for a little petty larceny. More serious though were the authorities ready to catch out Jesus with questions, the answers to which could be taken out of context and used to have him imprisoned or even put to death.

During the present pandemic we have become used to the absence of crowds except for those who have broken the rules. However, the crush of the crowds has been superseded by the growth of scams, tweets and twitters which have proved to be as dangerous and perhaps more vitriolic than physical crowds and seems to lack a Christian voice in response.

In the crowds in the gospel reading were representatives of both secular and religious authorities and leaders with one thing on their minds. How to silence this man who did what they could not do. Especially as Jesus had recently driven out demons or evil spirits from those who were known as possessed. This they could not do and their authority was being, as they believed, undermined. Mental illness was thought to be caused by evil spirits, hence their belief that they could only be exorcised by the evil one. So they attempted to say that Jesus was in league with Satan when he was able to sure those afflicted. Exorcism has been relegated to the realms of Hollywood and Hammer Studios but was once and incredibly is as far as I know still part of the Anglican faith although strictly governed and controlled in its use. The term exorcism is now more often referred to as Deliverance Ministry and is associated with the Healing Ministry. Not "bell, book and candle" but by prayer, working in conjunction with the medical profession and counselling; and I only include this observation because I know it has worked.

I am in no way a theologian but it seems we like to pick and choose what we believe. We believe in a God of love and forgiveness, as for angels it is a question of take them or leave them, but as far as the devil is concerned we often dismiss this belief as mythology and confined to the Old Testament. Yet we only need to think of the temptations in the wilderness and if Jesus was tempted, who are we to escape similar temptations? In fact in the prayer that Jesus taught to his disciples and which we use at almost every service the words "deliver



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us from evil" remind us of its presence in the world. If there is no evil in the world then the concept of a God who so loved the world would be a non-starter and unnecessary. Think of the words of the Compline or night service which contains this prayer "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil is prowling round like a roaring lion, seeking for someone to devour, resist him strong in the faith" (1 Peter 5.8.9)

However it was William Cowper who said "the devil trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon their knees". Strength in numbers! Maybe it is something akin to this when Jesus goes on to speak of the unity of believers when he turns to the crowds and say these are my mother, brothers and sisters. We have heard the phrase time and time again during the pandemic "we are all in this together" not just through and after Covid but in the struggle against the evils of the world in whatever form they are manifested. As Jesus remind us "whoever does the will of God is my brother, my sister, my mother." What a responsibility but what a privilege.

Heavenly Father, you have shown through the Bible the wonder of your love for us in Christ Jesus. Help us to understand your word with our minds and apply it in our lives, for his name's sake. Amen

Intercessions

Lord, you have warned us that a house divided against itself will not long be able to stand. Help us, we pray, for the Church which is one in the greatness of your love, but divided by the littleness of our own. May we become less preoccupied with those things that divide us, the better to concentrate on those we hold in common. Help us to see ourselves as rays from the one sun, with you our common source of life, and may we transmit your light all over the earth through your heavenly grace.

Lord, without whose help we can do nothing good, in your mercy: hear our prayer

Lord of truth and judgment, lead us in freeing our world from the evil that threatens us. At the point of crisis, lend us your discernment that we may see the way that leads to peace. When we are overwhelmed by the growing gulf between rich and poor, the memory of your Son, who lived without material wealth, inspires us with hope that the true strength of the gentle and merciful will overcome the brittle force of the fearful and powerful, and that at the last the unrecognized will indeed inherit the earth.

Lord, without whose help we can do nothing good, in your mercy: hear our prayer

Lord, we ask you to bless our families, friends and neighbours. Help us in our relationships with them, and fill us, we pray, with love and forgiveness to any who have offended us. May we receive them in love, acknowledging that we too have need of healing and pardon in our turn. Lord of community, whose call is more insistent than ties of family or blood, may we also never neglect our service beyond our own immediate circle to your greater glory.

Lord, without whose help we can do nothing good, in your mercy: hear our prayer

Lord, we pray for all those whom we love who suffer in body, mind or spirit. May their pain be lessened, or may they find the strength to endure. Comfort them with your presence, we pray, and help them to hold fast to that which is good, and not to lose heart.

Lord, without whose help we can do nothing good, in your mercy: hear our prayer

Lord, extend our vision, we pray, so that we may look beyond the immediate to the eternal. We remember before you all those who now see you in that glory which is beyond measure as they join you with the multitudes beyond number.

Lord, without whose help we can do nothing good, in your mercy: hear our prayer



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1. In a world where people walk in darkness
Let us turn our faces to the light,
To the light of God revealed in Jesus,
To the Daystar scattering our night.
**For the light is stronger than the darkness
And the day will overcome the night.
Though the shadows linger all around us,
Let us turn our faces to the light.**
2. In a world where suffering of the helpless
Casts a shadow all along the way,
Let us bear the Cross of Christ with gladness
And proclaim the dawning of the day.
For the light ...
3. Let us light a candle in the darkness,
In the face of death, a sign of life.
As a sign of hope where all seems hopeless,
As a sign of peace in place of strife.
For the light ...

Words: **Robert Andrew Willis** (born 17 May 1947) who is an Anglican priest, theologian, chaplain and hymn writer. In November 1992, he was instituted Dean of Hereford moving in 2001 to be the Dean of Canterbury.

Music: **Richard Shephard** In 1985, he moved to York, becoming headmaster of York Minster School and later became Chamberlain of York Minster and Director of Development at York Minster, co-ordinating fundraising, and raising more than £20 million to restore the Great East Window. He also wrote a great deal of fine music including hymn tunes and simple pieces for choirs to longer and more ambitious works.

I wrote about this hymn for Candlemas in the Parish February newsletter. Sadly, Richard Shephard died on the 20th of that month at the age of 71. The choir will be singing this hymn at the end of Sunday's service *in memoriam*.



Background: Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians

Who wrote the book?

It's clearly by St. Paul (see [1:1](#); [10:1](#)). It is stamped with his style and contains more autobiographical material than any of his other writings. He wrote it at a vulnerable time in his life. He had learned that the church at Corinth was struggling, and he sought to take action to preserve the unity of that local body of believers. The letter is full personal comments as Paul revealed details about the persecution he had suffered for the sake of Christ as well as about a mysterious thorn in the flesh that kept him reliant on God.



When?

The available evidence indicates that the years AD 55 – 56 are a reasonable estimate for the writing of this letter. From [1Co 16:5–8](#) it may be concluded that 1 Corinthians was written from Ephesus before Pentecost (in the late spring) and that 2 Corinthians may have been written later that same year before the onset of winter. [2Co 2:13](#); [7:5](#) indicate that it was probably written from Macedonia, possibly Philippi ([Acts 20.1](#)).



Where are we?

After sending Timothy off from Ephesus to deliver the letter of 1 Corinthians, Paul, in his concern for the church, made a quick visit of his own to Corinth which didn't achieve much. Afterward, Paul returned to his work in Ephesus, where he wrote a sorrowful letter to the Corinthians that has not been preserved (see [2 Corinthians 2:1–11](#); [7:8](#)). Paul then departed for Macedonia. Once there, he received a good report from Titus regarding the Corinthians ([7:13](#)), which led Paul to write a fourth letter to them, titled "2 Corinthians" in the Bible.

Why is Second Corinthians so important?

It's a letter of deep pastoral concern and love, written to repair a damaged relationship. When Paul left Corinth, having founded the church there, newcomers arriving in the city attracted the local Christians to a style of faith that he considered to be a distortion of the gospel. Corinth had been a difficult place for Christianity to take hold. Paul's first letter to them had addressed a host of problems in the church and impressed some of the leaders there. Others resented his tone and seemed keen to find other leaders. A visit that Paul made probably from Ephesus [[Acts 19.10](#)] had led a clash as he thought the church there was being led astray by false teaching.

What's the big idea?

The church at Corinth had recently been struggling with divisions and quarrels. But for a majority of the believers, the problem had been solved by the time Paul wrote 2 Corinthians. Many had repented of their sinful ways and had come back into unity with one another and with the leadership of Paul. However, Paul still felt the need to articulate a defence of his apostleship and his message. Some in the church had apparently taken his meekness among them to be a sign of moral weakness or lack of authority ([2 Corinthians 10:1–2](#)). These accusations led Paul to defend himself by arguing that he was on the same level of importance as the other apostles, that he had deep knowledge of the Christian



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faith, that he had suffered profound physical punishment in the name of Christ, and that he had received visions and revelations from God (11:1–12:13).

Is it just one letter?

It seems that Paul wrote up to four letters to the Corinthians, so 2 Corinthians may be cut-and-paste of two or three shorter letters. There are some abrupt changes of subject in the first few chapters and chapters 10 – 13 have a much harsher tone than the rest of the letter. It may be that news reached Paul of further troubles at Corinth while he was composing this letter and he added the final chapters in response to this. None of the earliest Greek manuscripts split this into separate letters.

How do we apply this?

Just as Paul wrote to the Corinthians in the wake of their repentance from divisions and quarrels, the message for today is clear: living in unity requires us to forgive one another. Second Corinthians reminds us that even as Christians, we hurt each other and need to forgive those who wrong us (2 Corinthians 2:7). Just as Paul reminded us of Jesus's ministry of reconciliation (5:17–19), we must seek to reconcile relationships in which disunity reigns. Look out for the pitfall of disunity with leaders and other believers in your own life while striving to live among all people in humility.

Structure of the letter?

- Chapter 1 – 2:13 – personal background covering Paul's own behaviour
- Chapter 2:14 – 5:10 – a description of true Christian ministry shaped by the cross of Christ
- Chapter 5:11 – 7:4 – an appeal to the church at Corinth to be reconciled to God
- Chapter 7:5 – 16 – news from Corinth of troubles resolved
- Chapter 8 – 9 – collecting money for other Christians
- Chapter 10 – 13 – Paul's coming visit / those deceiving the church / a call to be ready at all times



The Corinthian Canal



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Monday 7th June

2 Corinthians 1. 1 – 7

1 Greetings from Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus. I am an apostle because that is what God wanted.

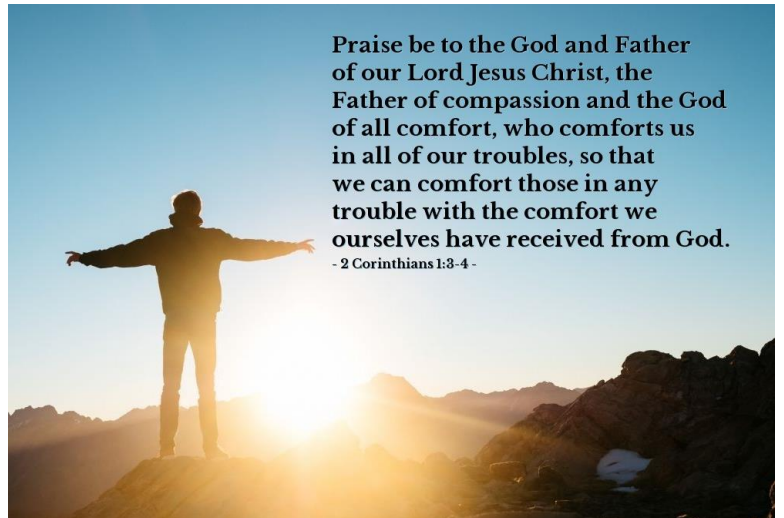
Greetings also from Timothy our brother in Christ.

To God's church in Corinth and to all of God's holy people throughout Achaia.

2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul Gives Thanks to God

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Father who is full of mercy, the God of all comfort. **4** He comforts us every time we have trouble so that when others have trouble, we can comfort them with the same comfort God gives us. **5** We share in the many sufferings of Christ. In the same way, much comfort comes to us through Christ. **6** If we have troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation. If we are comforted, it is so that we can comfort you. And this helps you patiently accept the same sufferings we have. **7** Our hope for you is strong. We know that you share in our sufferings. So we know that you also share in our comfort.



Paul greets the Christians at Corinth and introduces himself as an apostle and Timothy as his brother in Christ. Timothy was not an apostle but a Christian leader. Paul writes to the church in Corinth meaning a group of people - the Greek Old Testament uses 'church' to describe the Israelites as they gathered in front of God. 'Achaia' is now the country called Greece except for the region called Macedonia. As Paul greets the people, he prays that God will give his love to them freely in the original translation.

Paul had an experience of great pain but knows the comfort of God. 'Comfort' here is more than mere sympathy, it means to give help and hope. God comforts us so that we can comfort other people. Paul's pain helped him to give comfort to other people; if he received comfort, he could pass it on to others. The Christians in Corinth were suffering pain for their trust in Christ as Paul was. Paul was confident, however, that if they had to suffer troubles like him, they would also receive the comfort that he had received.



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Tuesday 8th June

Today the church remembers Thomas Ken, Bishop and hymnwriter [July 1637 – 19 March 1711] who was Bishop of Bath and Wells and chaplain to King Charles II and one of the fathers of modern hymn writing. We include his famous morning and evening hymns below.



2 Corinthians 1. 18 - 22

¹⁸ But if you can believe God, then you can believe that what we tell you is never both yes and no. ¹⁹ The Son of God, Jesus Christ, the one that Silas, Timothy, and I told you about was not yes and no. In Christ it has always been yes. ²⁰ The yes to all of God's promises is in Christ. And that is why we say "Amen" through Christ to the glory of God. ²¹ And God is the one who makes you and us strong in Christ. God is also the one who chose us for his work. ²² He put his mark on us to show that we are his. Yes, he put his Spirit in our hearts as the first payment that guarantees all that he will give us.

Jesus is not a person who keeps changing his mind – his word is true and trustworthy. He was the Person about whom Timothy, Paul and Silas had preached. God says that Jesus is the 'yes' to all his promises. Jesus proves that all God's promises are true.

People who sold things used the words 'to stand firm' in business. This meant that they would keep their promises. The mark of possession was a 'seal.' This was a piece of wax that they put on an official piece of paper to show ownership. A 'guarantee' was a payment of part of a sum of money as a sign that the full amount would be paid in the future. God gives us the Holy Spirit as that seal and guarantee to show that we belong to him.

1. Awake, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run;
Shake off dull sloth and joyful rise
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

2. Glory to thee, who safe has kept
and hath refreshed me whilst I slept;
grant, Lord, when I from death shall wake,
I may of endless light partake.

3. Wake, and lift up thyself, my heart,
and with the angels bear thy part,
who all night long unwearied sing
high praise to the eternal King.

4. Awake, awake, ye heavenly choir,
may your devotion me inspire,
that I like you my age may spend,
like you may on my God attend.

5. Lord, I my vows to thee renew;
disperse my sins as morning dew,
grant my first springs of thought and will,
and with thyself my spirit fill.

6. Direct, control, suggest this day
all I design, or do, or say;
that all my powers, with all their might,
in thy sole glory may unite.

1. Glory to thee, my God, this night,
for all the blessings of the light:
keep me, O keep me, King of kings,
beneath thine own almighty wings.

2. Forgive me, Lord, for thy dear Son,
the ill that I this day have done;
that with the world, myself, and thee,
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.

3. O may my soul on thee repose,
and with sweet sleep mine eyelids close;
sleep that shall me more vigorous make
to serve my God when I awake.

4. When in the night I sleepless lie,
my soul with heavenly thoughts supply;
let no ill dreams disturb my rest,
no powers of darkness me molest.

5. Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host:
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.



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Wednesday 9th June

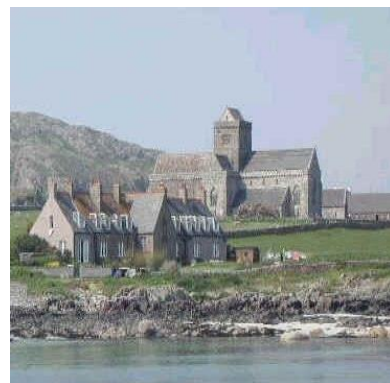
Today the church remembers St. Columba, Abbot and Missionary.

St. Columba:



Imagine I'm standing in front of a weather map showing all the isobars and cold or warm fronts. There's one coming in from the south east from Kent moving northwards across London and Wessex and another off the west coast of Scotland heading south through Northumbria.

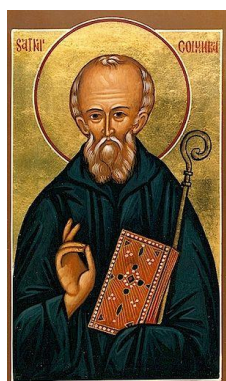
This is how Christianity came to Britain; St. Augustine, sent by the Pope, bringing the Roman version to Canterbury and northwards [see 26th May] and Columba and his followers bringing the Celtic version via Ireland, Scotland and northern England.



Lying off the west coast of the Isle of Mull the tiny Isle of Iona, barely three miles long by one mile wide, has had an influence out of all proportion to its size on the establishment of Christianity in Scotland, England and throughout mainland Europe.

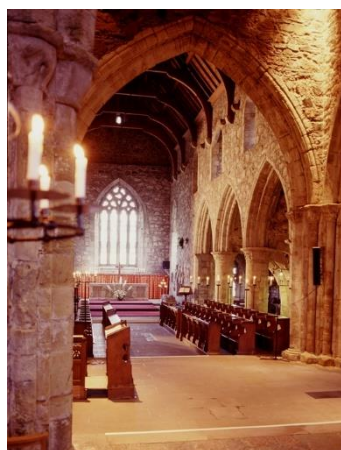
Iona's place in history was secured in 563 AD when St. Columba arrived on its white sandy beaches with 12 followers, built his first Celtic church and established a monastic community.

Once settled, the Irish monk set about converting most of pagan Scotland and northern England to the Christian faith. Iona's fame as a missionary centre and outstanding place of learning eventually spread throughout Europe, turning it into a place of pilgrimage for several centuries to come. Iona became a sacred isle where kings of Scotland (48), Ireland (4) and Norway (8) were buried.



So who was St. Columba? Born of royal blood in 521 AD in Ireland, he was the grandson of the Irish King Niall. He left Ireland for Scotland not as a missionary but as an act of self-imposed penance for a mess he had caused at home. He had upset the king of Ireland by refusing to hand over a copy of the Gospels he had illegally copied, this led to a pitched battle in which Columba's warrior family prevailed. Full of remorse for his actions and the deaths he had caused he fled, finally setting on Iona as the first place he found from where he couldn't see his native Ireland. One of the features on the island is even called "The Hill with its back to Ireland".

St. Columba however, was not the shy retiring type and set about building Iona's original abbey from clay and wood. In this work he displayed some strange idiosyncrasies, including banishing women and cows from the island. The abbey builders had to leave their wives and daughters on the nearby Eilean nam Ban (Woman's Island). He also banished frogs and snakes from Iona; how he accomplished this feat is not as well documented.



Over the centuries the monks of Iona produced countless elaborate carvings, manuscripts and Celtic crosses. Perhaps their greatest work was the exquisite *Book of Kells*, which dates from 800 AD, displayed in Trinity College, Dublin. Shortly after this in 806 AD came the first of the Viking raids when many of the monks were killed and their work destroyed.

The Celtic Church, lacking central control and organisation, diminished in size and stature over the years to be replaced by the much larger and stronger Roman Church. Even Iona was not exempt from these changes and in 1203 a nunnery for the Order of the Black Nuns was established and the present-day Benedictine Abbey was built.

The Abbey was a victim of the Reformation and lay in ruins until 1899 when its restoration started.

No part of St. Columba's original buildings have survived, however on the left hand side of the Abbey entrance can be seen a small roofed chamber which is claimed to mark the site of the saint's tomb.



THE FINAL WORDS OF ST COLUMBA

'Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing'



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2 Corinthians 3. 4 - 11

⁴We can say this, because through Christ we feel sure before God. ⁵I don't mean that we are able to do anything good ourselves. It is God who makes us able to do all that we do. ⁶He made us able to be servants of a new agreement from himself to his people. It is not an agreement of written laws, but it is of the Spirit. The written law brings death, but the Spirit gives life.

An Agreement With Greater Glory

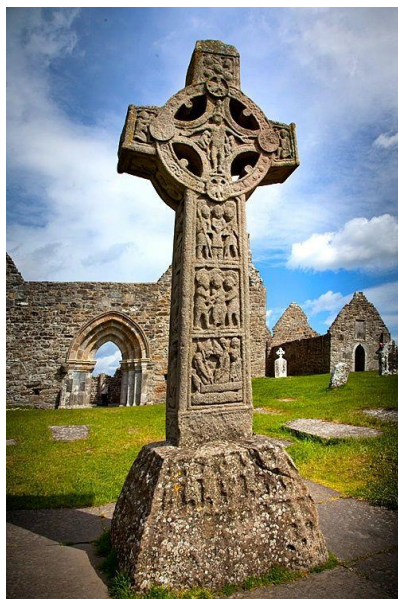
⁷The old agreement that brought death, written with words on stone, came with God's glory. In fact, the face of Moses was so bright with glory (a glory that was ending) that the people of Israel could not continue looking at his face. ⁸So surely the new agreement that comes from the life-giving Spirit has even more glory. ⁹This is what I mean: That old agreement judged people guilty of sin, but it had glory. So surely the new agreement that makes people right with God has much greater glory. ¹⁰That old agreement had glory. But it really loses its glory when it is compared to the much greater glory of the new agreement. ¹¹If the agreement that was brought to an end came with glory, then the agreement that never ends has much greater glory.

Paul now explains why he was so confident; he was sure that God had chosen him and God, not Paul, had changed peoples' lives at Corinth. Paul was now God's servant of the new agreement. Jesus made this new agreement between God and people when he died for us. The old agreement said that people must obey God's laws, but they were not able to do this. The new agreement gave the Spirit rather than written laws and brings a new life.

Paul talks about the difference between the old agreement and the new agreement. Lots of people opposed him and talked about the agreement between God and Moses. They said that it was the same as, or even better than, the agreement by Jesus. Perhaps the Christian Jews at Corinth still wanted Christians to obey the old laws and not follow the new agreement. Paul said that the old agreement was glorious but God only intended it to last for a short time. The new agreement of the Spirit was even more glorious. The old agreement told people what to do but could not help them to do it. The new agreement would bring life as the Spirit gave people power to do what God wanted. They could not go back to the past.

Collect for St Columba

*High King of Heaven,
Almighty Father of us all,
as your servant Saint Columba
established a community built on
love and trust,
so grant that in all humility
we may be your hands and your
voices here on earth,
working to build up the
community of faith
in the name of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.*



The Prayer of St. Columba

*Be a bright flame before me, O God
a guiding star above me.
Be a smooth path below me,
a kindly shepherd behind me
today, tonight, and for ever.
Alone with none but you, my God
I journey on my way;
what need I fear when you are near,
O Lord of night and day?
More secure am I within your hand
than if a multitude did round me stand.
Amen.*



Thursday 10th June

2 Corinthians 3. 15 – 4.1 & 3 - 6

¹⁵Yes, even today, when they read the Law of Moses, there is a covering over their minds. ¹⁶But when someone changes and follows the Lord, that covering is taken away. ¹⁷The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸And our faces are not covered. We all show the Lord's glory, and we are being changed to be like him. This change in us brings more and more glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

4 God, with his mercy, gave us this work to do, so we don't give up. ³The Good News that we tell people may be hidden, but it is hidden only to those who are lost. ⁴The ruler of this world has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They cannot see the light of the Good News—the message about the divine greatness of Christ. Christ is the one who is exactly like God. ⁵We don't tell people about ourselves. But we tell people that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we tell them that we are your servants for Jesus. ⁶God once said, "Let light shine out of the darkness!" And this is the same God who made his light shine in our hearts to let us know that his own divine greatness is seen in the face of Christ.



Paul said that he had every right to be bold as he has this hope of glory. After meeting God, Moses covered his face so that people would not see God's glory.

The old agreement was only for a short time but the Jews did not understand the books of Moses when they read them. It was really as if their minds were closed or covered up. God only removed the cover when they trusted Christ. What Moses wrote was true and great, but it was not complete. When Jesus came, he gave us God's complete truth. The old agreement is like a step to glory. The new agreement is the complete glory.

Paul here defends himself saying that his work was different from the work of those who opposed him. He had not visited the Christians at Corinth but that didn't mean that he had given up or lost hope. He told God's message in an honest manner and did not change the message about Jesus. Paul did not talk about himself, but about Jesus as God. Those who opposed him attracted attention to themselves and persuaded the Christians at Corinth to follow them. Paul here may be referring to his experience on the road to Damascus where he saw a light from heaven – the light of Christ revealing himself to Paul

A Blessing of St Columba

*See that you be at peace among yourselves, my children,
and love one another.
Follow the example of good men of old,
and God will comfort you and help you,
both in this world
and in the world which is to come. **Amen.***

*Kindle in our hearts, O God,
the flame of love that never ceases,
that it may burn in us,
giving light to others.
May we shine for ever in your temple,
set on fire
with your eternal light,
even your Son Jesus Christ,
our Saviour and Redeemer.
Amen.*



PARISH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW WESTHOUGHTON

St Bartholomew

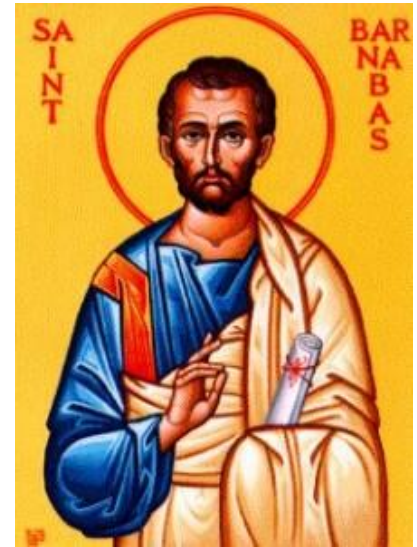
St Thomas

St George

Friday 11th June St Barnabas the Apostle

Everything we know about Barnabas is to be found in the New Testament. So here's his top 10 best bits:

1. "Barnabas" wasn't his real name (Joseph was), it was his nickname meaning "Son of Encouragement" ([Acts 4:36](#)). This rather obscure Bible character was so encouraging that it became his name.
2. [Acts 4:36](#) records that Barnabas was a Levite [a descendant of the Jewish tribe of Levi] and a native of the island of Cyprus
3. Barnabas put the kingdom first with possessions. His first recorded action is that he "sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet" ([Acts 4:37](#)).
4. He also was acknowledged by Paul for supporting himself financially for his ministry instead of depending on churches ([1 Corinthians 9:6](#)).
5. After Paul's dramatic conversion, Barnabas courageously vouched for him when the Jerusalem church was suspicious that a former persecutor would want to join their ranks ([Acts 9:26-31](#)).
6. Barnabas was a Christian leader and preacher ([Acts 15:35](#)). On one occasion, he was sent by the Jerusalem church to Antioch. [Acts 11:23-24](#) describes his arrival, "When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord." After his arrival, Barnabas sought out Saul to help him with the work ([Acts 11:25](#)).
7. While praying, fasting, and worshiping God, Barnabas and Saul received the call from the Holy Spirit to go on their first missionary journey ([Acts 13:1-3](#)).
8. Barnabas, along with Paul, served to straighten out Jew/Gentile tensions that arose in the early church by sharing from the Scriptures and his experience how the Gentiles were being saved and could fellowship with Jews ([Acts 15:1-21](#); [Galatians 2:1-10](#)). Although this issue was not without its challenges for Barnabas. In [Galatians 2:13](#), Paul called Barnabas out for being led astray by Jewish circumcision party hypocrisy for a time (presumably before the Jerusalem Council in [Acts 15](#)).
9. Barnabas had a sharp disagreement with Paul that ended their ministry together. [Acts 15:36-41](#) explains that Barnabas wanted to take Mark along on their missionary journey while Paul did not because Mark had abandoned them on a previous trip. Paul would eventually describe Mark as "useful to me" at the end of his life ([2 Timothy 4:11](#)). It makes sense that Barnabas would stick up for Mark—they were cousins ([Colossians 4:10](#)).
10. Barnabas left a tremendous legacy as a strong man of faith.





PARISH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW WESTHOUGHTON

St Bartholomew

St Thomas

St George

Acts 11. 19 – end

Galatians 2. 1 – 10

The Good News Comes to Antioch

¹⁹ The believers were scattered by the persecution that began when Stephen was killed. Some of them went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. They told the Good News in these places, but only to Jews. ²⁰ Some of these believers were men from Cyprus and Cyrene. When these men came to Antioch, they began speaking to people who were not Jews. They told them the Good News about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The Lord was helping these men, and a large number of people believed and decided to follow the Lord.

²² When the church in Jerusalem heard about this, they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³⁻²⁴ Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith. When he went to Antioch and saw how God had blessed the believers there, he was very happy. He encouraged them all, saying, "Always be faithful to the Lord. Serve him with all your heart." Many more people became followers of the Lord.

²⁵ Then Barnabas went to the city of Tarsus to look for Saul. ²⁶ When he found him, he brought him to Antioch. They stayed there a whole year. Every time the church came together, Barnabas and Saul met with them and taught many people. It was in Antioch that the followers of the Lord Jesus were called "Christ-followers" for the first time.

²⁷ About that same time some prophets went from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ One of them, named Agabus, stood up and spoke with the help of the Spirit. He said, "A very bad time is coming to the whole world. There will be no food for people to eat." (This time of famine happened when Claudius was emperor.) ²⁹ The Lord's followers decided that they would each send as much as they could to help their brothers and sisters who lived in Judea. ³⁰ They gathered the money and gave it to Barnabas and Saul, who took it to the elders in Judea.

The Other Apostles Accepted Paul

After 14 years I went back to Jerusalem with Barnabas and took Titus with me. ² I went there because God showed me that I should go. I explained to them the message that I tell the non-Jewish people. I also met alone with those who were considered to be the leaders. I wanted to be sure we were in agreement so that my past work and the work I do now would not be wasted.

³ Titus, who was with me, is a Greek. But these leaders still did not force him to be circumcised. ⁴ We needed to talk about these problems, because some who pretended to be our brothers had come into our group secretly. They came in like spies to find out about the freedom we have in Christ Jesus. They wanted to make us slaves, ⁵ but we did not agree with anything those false brothers wanted. We wanted the truth of the Good News to continue for you.

⁶ Those men who were considered to be important did not change the Good News message I tell people. (It doesn't matter to me if they were "important" or not. To God everyone is the same.) ⁷ But these leaders saw that God had given me a special work, the same as Peter. God gave Peter the work of telling the Good News to the Jews. But God gave me the work of telling the Good News to the non-Jewish people. ⁸ God gave Peter the power to work as an apostle for the Jewish people. God gave me the power to work as an apostle too, but for those who are not Jews. ⁹ James, Peter, and John seemed to be the leaders. And they saw that God had given me this special gift of ministry, so they accepted Barnabas and me. They said to us, "We agree that you should go to those who are not Jews, and we will go to the Jews." ¹⁰ They asked us to do only one thing—to remember to help those who are poor. And this was something that I really wanted to do.



PARISH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW WESTHOUGHTON

St Bartholomew

St Thomas

St George

John 15. 12 – 17

¹² This is what I command you: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ The greatest love people can show is to die for their friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I tell you to do. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because servants don't know what their master is doing. But now I call you friends, because I have told you everything that my Father told me.

¹⁶ "You did not choose me. I chose you. And I gave you this work: to go and produce fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you anything you ask for in my name. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

Collect:

*Bountiful God, giver of all gifts,
who poured your Spirit upon your servant Barnabas
and gave him grace to encourage others:
help us, by his example,
to be generous in our judgements
and unselfish in our service;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.*

*O Lord, grant us that love which can never die,
which will kindle our lamps
but not extinguish them,
so that they may shine in us
and bring light to others.
Most dear Saviour,
kindle our lamps that they may shine
forever in your temple.
May we receive unquenchable light from you
so that our darkness will be illuminated
and the darkness of the world
will be made less. Amen.*

St. Columba

Saturday 12th June

2 Corinthians 5. 14 - end

¹⁴ The love of Christ controls us, because we know that one person died for everyone. So all have died. ¹⁵ He died for all so that those who live would not continue to live for themselves. He died for them and was raised from death so that they would live for him.

¹⁶ From this time on we don't think of anyone as the world thinks of people. It is true that in the past we thought of Christ as the world thinks. But we don't think that way now. ¹⁷ When anyone is in Christ, it is a whole new world. The old things are gone; suddenly, everything is new! ¹⁸ All this is from God. Through Christ, God made peace between himself and us. And God gave us the work of bringing people into peace with him. ¹⁹ I mean that God was in Christ, making peace between the world and himself. In Christ, God did not hold people guilty for their sins. And he gave us this message of peace to tell people. ²⁰ So we have been sent to speak for Christ. It is like God is calling to people through us. We speak for Christ when we beg you to be at peace with God. ²¹ Christ had no sin, but God made him become sin so that in Christ we could be right with God.



PARISH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW WESTHOUGHTON

St Bartholomew

St Thomas

St George

Paul here is appealing to the church at Corinth to reject the message of the false teachers that had come among them and to return to the way of Christ.

Paul again hints at his experience on the road to Damascus where his whole life changed. When a person trusts Christ, he is completely different. The old life is gone; the new life has begun. It is as if God begins to build their new house (verse 1)! God has removed everything on his side that separated him from people and forgiven their sins. Now Paul's task was to tell people how they can become friends with God again. He asks them again and again to let God change them.

When the world tells us that we are what we do with our activity, our acumen or achievement may we turn around and learn:

We are what we do with our silence.

When the world tells us that we are what we do with our spending power, selling power or our power of speech may we turn around and learn:

We are what we do with our silence.

When the world tells us to drown the silent suffering of others with indifference or noise or to forget the art of stillness in the storm may we turn around and learn:

We are what we do with our silence.

When the world tells us to rush in where angels fear to tread may we turn around and learn: that angels listen first, before they take a step, for the voice of God in the silence. Amen.

Circle, O God, all those who work to protect and heal others. We name before you those uppermost in our thoughts at this time:

**Keep health within, keep sickness out;
Keep strength within, keep weariness out.**

Circle, O God, all those who are feeling isolated and lonely. Help us to help them know that they are not forgotten:

**Keep peace within, keep turmoil out;
Keep light within, keep darkness out.**

Circle, O God, all those who suffer the effects of conflict, famine, disease and homelessness. We bring before you the people and places we carry on our hearts:

**Keep hope within, keep despair out;
Keep light within, keep darkness out.**

Circle, O God, all those who work for peace. Encircle them with your presence.

**Keep wisdom within, keep folly out;
Keep light within, keep darkness out.**

Circle, O God, those known to us, who are in need of your healing today, those who have died and those who mourn them. May they know your love and presence. Help them to see your light in the darkness.

Lord, make us a channel of your blessing that we, like St Columba, might play our part in bringing your light into the world and your healing to those in need. We ask this in the name of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen



PARISH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW WESTHOUGHTON

St Bartholomew

St Thomas

St George

NOTICES:

Church Attendance for School Places:

To register attendance, **please e-mail:**

bdhww.churchattendance@gmail.com

giving both your name / your child or children's names and the church you would usually attend. You will need to do this even if you attend a service and sign in. Only one e-mail per week will be counted [even if you would have attended more than once in any week]. Please do NOT use any other e-mail address to register church attendance as these will not be included. Thank You

Forthcoming meetings:

PCC Meetings have been planned for the following dates all at 7:30pm

- Monday 28th June
- Monday 20th September
- Monday 8th November

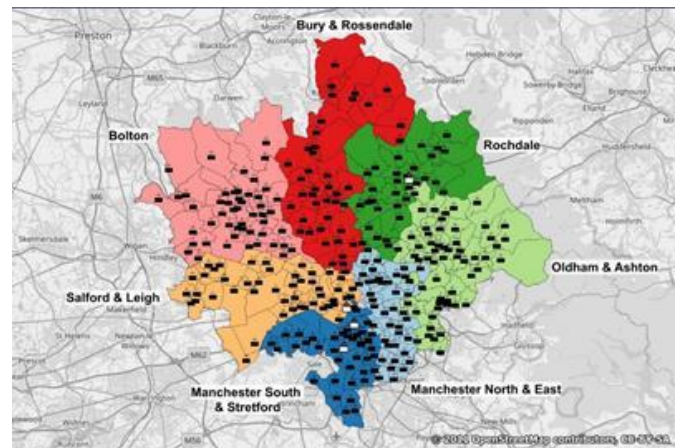
We hope that following the next easing of restrictions due on 27th June, these meetings can be held in person at St. Bartholomew's church. If we have to hold them by zoom, we'll send a link out nearer the time.

Individual Church Committee meetings – dates will be set once we know how, when and where we can meet following the next easing of restrictions.

Our new deaneries:

Our seven new deaneries came into effect on 1 June. Welcome to our new Area Deans and Lay Chairs!

The Area Deans will be licensed on Sunday 6 June at Manchester Cathedral during Evensong at 5.30pm. Lay Chairs will also be welcomed and blessed at the service. All are welcome.



Next Sunday: Second Sunday after Trinity

Readings: Ezekiel 17. 22 – end / 2 Corinthians 5. 6 – 10 & 14 – 17 / Mark 4. 26 - 34

9:15 am Service of the Word at St George's Church

Elaine Simkin

11:00am Holy Communion Service at St. Bartholomew's Church

Revd Carol Pharaoh

9:15am Service at St. Thomas

Do contact us if we can offer any help or support at this time.

Team Rector: Revd Carol Pharaoh 01942 859251 carol.pharaoh@gmail.com www.westhoughtonchurches.org.uk

Team Vicar: Revd Angela Wynne 01204 468150 – revawynne@gmail.com

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Material for the news sheet should be sent to Joan Warner by Wednesday morning 01942 818821 joan.warner35@outlook.com

To receive these pewsheets, newsletters or special events leaflets electronically, please e-mail westhoughtonchurches@outlook.com