



Holy Trinity



St.
Gabriel

The Parish of The Good Shepherd, Ashton-under-Lyne



St. James



St. Peter



St. Michael and All Angels

SEPTEMBER 2020

Price 50p

Editorial

September is usually the time when we get back to our normal routines after the summer break. With the current coronavirus pandemic, it's very different this year! However, it is still a good time to consider how God can use us to make a real difference in our workplace, school, family, friends and community. He equips us with everything we need to make His love known. When God gave Moses the job of bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, He asked the question, 'What is in your hand?' (Exodus 4:2). Moses was holding his staff, which represented his livelihood (what he was good at); his resources (his flock represented his wealth) and his security (which God was asking him to lay down). God asks the same question of us: *What has God given you?* Our gifts, temperament, experience, relationships, mind, education can be used in the work God has given us to do. How will we use them to make a difference in the places where He calls us to serve Him?

John Ortberg, in his book *It All Goes Back in the Box*, speaks of Johnny, a 19-year-old with Downs syndrome. He worked at a supermarket checkout putting people's items into bags. To encourage his customers, he decided to put a *thought for the day* into the bags. Every night his dad would help him to prepare the slips of paper and he would put the thoughts into the bags saying, 'I hope it helps you have a good day. Thanks for coming here.' A month later the store manager noticed that Johnny's line at the checkout was three times longer than anyone else's! People wanted Johnny's thought for the day. He wasn't just filling bags with groceries, he was filling lives with hope!

What has God given you that will help and encourage others?

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The views expressed in articles in this magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Parish of The Good Shepherd. The editor reserves the right to amend articles as appropriate, for editorial purposes. Please consider writing something for the magazine yourself! And, if you have any comments to make on the Magazine you can contact the editor, Roger Farnworth on 0161 330 2771 or talk to a member of your DCC or PCC who will pass on any comments that are made.

Contents

	Page
Holy Cross Day – Revd Ben Brady	3-4
Church Services	5
Message from Barry Bowden / Twiddle Rolls and Baby Dolls	6
Gorse – cheerful and perfumed but prickly!	7
The Oberammergau Passion Play	8
Book Reviews	9
Parish Notices	10
Contact Details	11



The Parish Prayer

Father God, whose Son came to bring love and peace to the world, help us to grow in faith and share our hope and joy with all whom we meet, so that we can work together to build your kingdom in Ashton, welcome new people into our churches, and be relevant to those around us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Holy Cross Day

*Almighty God,
who in the passion of your blessed Son
made an instrument of painful death
to be for us the means of life and peace:
grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ
that we may gladly suffer for his sake;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

The 14th September is Holy Cross Day, also known as “The Exaltation of the Holy Cross”. The date marks Saint Helena finding the true cross whilst on a pilgrimage in Jerusalem.

Tradition says that when St Helena found the cross, she did not worship the wood, but the King who had hung upon it. The Conversion of St Helena is depicted in a stain glass window in our very own St Michael’s Church. Her faith plays a massive role in Christianity.



Saint Helena was the mother of Constantine, the emperor who legalised Christianity in the Roman Empire. To be clear, Constantine allowed freedom of all religions but professed himself to be Christian. This may not sound like that big of a deal, until we look at all he renounced by declaring his faith. Roman emperors believed they were divinely chosen and even when they died, were worshipped like gods. Constantine, choosing Christianity, refuted this notion and stripped away his religious authority, pointing instead towards Christ as King. He identified as a catechumen, someone who was learning about their faith in Christ and preparing for baptism. He was finally baptised on his deathbed, almost like an act of Last Rites, absolving him of his sins so to die in peace.

All this stemmed from St Helena. In the south aisle of St Michael's church there is a medieval stained-glass window dedicated to St Helena. She is shown in full royal dress- crown and ermine robes- signs of true splendour to the 15th century parishioners who would have seen it. It was originally positioned in the most prestigious place within the church- above the altar. Medieval stained glass is special - not only because it is ancient and relatively rare but also because it was made in a time when glass was understood to be more than just decoration or a way of keeping out the weather. The medieval glazers who made this window for St Michael's would have understood that the light that passed through it helped transform the church into a sacred space. The glass was part of the worship experience- a way to feel God's transforming presence.

For me, this echoes the power of the cross. No matter how powerful or indifferent the world may seem to us, Jesus can still meet and transform peoples lives. The ludicrous love, mercy and peace that God offers to all can soften the hardest of hearts. Constantine himself banned the punishment of Crucifixion during his reign. Crucifixion was meticulously designed to cause the most humiliation and pain, for the longest period of time possible. It is upon this cross where we see Love endure and overpower all earthly powers and call all to himself. We see our God freely giving it all for us, so that death is defeated, death has lost its sting. Although we will die, we believe it is not the end.

On that day when the sky darkened and the curtain in the temple tore in two, a new beginning was born. As we look at a cross today, whether it be the pattern in your window, an ornament or in your mind's eye, we remember the power of the cross throughout the ages and look with hope for the future of tomorrow.



God Bless - Revd Ben

Coronavirus Pandemic



Public worship has now resumed in our churches.

Risk assessments have been carried out and we have put procedures in place to ensure that people follow all relevant public health advice, including social distancing guidelines and hand and respiratory hygiene measures – you may find that your churches look a bit different as a result.

Please note that those who are extremely clinically vulnerable/shielding, or who have symptoms of a continuous cough or a high temperature or loss of or change to sense of smell or taste, should not attend church.

September Church Services

Trinity 13	9.30am	St James	Morning Prayer
Sunday 6 th September	9.30am	St Gabriel	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St Peter	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St Michael	Morning Prayer
Trinity 14	9.30am	St James	Holy Communion
Baptism of Christ	9.30am	St. Gabriel	Morning Prayer
Sunday 13 th September	11.00am	St Michael	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St Peter	Morning Prayer
	4.00pm	St James	St James on Sunday Afternoon
Trinity 15	9.30am	St. James	Holy Communion
Sunday 20 th September	9.30am	St Gabriel	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St. Peter	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St. Michael	Morning Prayer
Trinity 16			
Sunday 27 th September	9.30am	St James	Holy Communion
	9.30am	St Gabriel	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St Peter	Holy Communion
	11.00am	St Michael	Holy Communion
	4.00pm	St James	St James on Sunday Afternoon

Please note: It may be necessary to change our services at short notice.

Weekday Services

Thursday: 4.00pm Holy Trinity Evening Prayer
(This will be a Eucharist Service on the 1st Thursday of the month)

Understanding

Don't lean on your own understanding but, mere mortals that we are, our own understanding is all we have. So basically everything in life is relative – our health, distance, success, failure, weight, intellect and so on. We all excel at something.

But lack of interest and purpose doesn't help. Our manual for life, the Bible, can be quite a difficult read for some people, which is why the message therein can be misunderstood. The original 12 Disciples, having spent 3 years or more with Jesus didn't fully understand, until the day of Pentecost when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Until this moment, they could not have fulfilled Jesus' command to go and share the good news unto all the world.

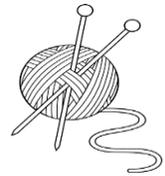
As spiritual (and physical) beings ourselves, we are called by Jesus to do likewise if we can. Without spiritual understanding we cannot connect, share or bear the fruits of the Spirit, one to another. Amen.

Wisdom isn't how much we know, it is what we know and what we do with it. Like the law of the Spirit – for the greater good. And the law of the flesh – for the greater worst.

God bless us all *Barry Bowden*

Twiddle Rolls and Baby Dolls Needed

Attention all you kind knitters and crochet people in our parish.



Would you kindly turn your talents to making a few 'Twiddle Rolls' for our Dementia sufferers? The A&E department at Tameside Hospital find them useful to give to patients as it distracts them while waiting for treatment. Patterns are available on the Internet and Age Concern.

Any difficulty getting hold of a pattern please contact me. I know there are a lot of pleas for help from these clever kind people, but as Covid-19 is slowing treatment down any diversion is helpful.

Also, if anyone has a baby doll that is no longer loved, the A&E department are looking for these too for the Dementia patients. They must be clean and in a perfect condition. Any baby doll clothing, also in a good condition, will be helpful as the ladies love dressing their 'babies'

My contact details are: Email: musicmum1@hotmail.co.uk

Carol Farnsworth

The Oberammergau Passion Play

Megan Carter writes:

“Oberammergau is a small village in Bavaria, Germany. When, in 1633 bubonic plague was sweeping through Europe, a man travelling back home to Oberammergau for Christmas brought the plague with him. It spread throughout the village.

According to local tradition, a vow was made that if God would spare them, the villagers would perform a play depicting the life and passion of Jesus Christ every ten years. The village was saved from all effects of the plague and the villagers kept their word and first performed the Passion Play in 1634. It has since been performed every ten years. (The 2020 Play has been rescheduled for May 2022, due to the pandemic)”

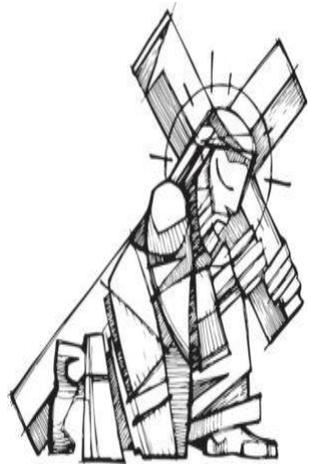
Death stalked the streets in the Bavarian village
As the plague brought havoc, death and despair,
Europe was ravaged as millions died,
Neither man or woman or child was spared.

They gathered together in desperation
A vow was given – if they could be saved
A play would be made of the Saviour’s life
This was the promise the villagers gave.

Miracle of miracles their village survived,
Not one more death their lives had been saved,
So every ten years this Play is performed
To honour the God who had come to their aid.

Prayers were made and the answer came
A heavenly lesson we too can own,
That He who dwells in ineffable light
Is also the One who brings blessings down.

By Megan Carter

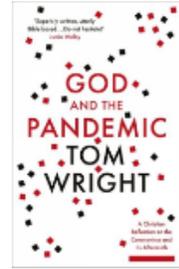


Book Reviews

God and the Pandemic – a Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and its Aftermath

By Tom Wright, SPCK, £7.99

What are we supposed to think about the coronavirus crisis? Some people think they know: “This is a sign of the End,” they say. “It’s all predicted in the book of Revelation.”



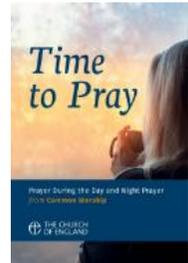
Others disagree but are equally clear: “This is a call to repent. God is judging the world and through this disease He’s telling us to change.” Some join in the chorus of blame and condemnation: “It’s the fault of the Chinese, the Government, the World Health Organization...”

Tom Wright examines these reactions to the virus and finds them wanting. Instead, he invites you to consider a different way of seeing and responding – a way that draws on the teachings and examples of scripture, and above all on the way of living, thinking and praying revealed to us by Jesus.

Time to Pray – Prayer During the Day and Night from Common Worship

CHP, 3.99

Time to Pray contains a simplified Daily Office: a pattern of prayer, praise and Bible reading, to help you take a break during the day, give thanks to God, and lift your needs to Him.



It is suitable for those seeking a simpler form of daily prayer or those just beginning a regular routine of time with God. Prayer During the Day can be said at any time when you have space to pause, while Night Prayer is an uplifting and beautiful way to end your day.

Straightforward and flexible to use, Time to Pray will draw you into a tradition that has been practised by Christians throughout the centuries and continues to be shared across the world today.

Parish Notices

From the August registers:

Wedding:

We rejoice with the families of:
Rachel Louise Cartledge and Peter John Lee

Funerals:

We pray for the family and friends of:
Ron Fletcher Gwyneth Ellis Irene Poulton

There were no baptisms in August

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Free national phoneline bringing worship and prayer

Government figures show that 2.5 million people aged 75 and above have never used the internet. And so, to help them, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, recently launched a free national phoneline to bring worship and prayer into the homes of those without access to the internet.

Daily Hope, which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England.



CONTACT DETAILS

CLERGY: (*usual day off)

Revd Roger Farnworth, Team Rector (*Tues.)
The Vicarage, Westbury Street, Ashton OL6 9NL 330 2771

Revd Ben Brady, Team Curate (*Fri) 400 1556

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The Parish of the Good Shepherd, Ashton-under-Lyne
is a Fair Trade Parish. Our churches have promised to serve only
Fairly Traded Tea and Coffee and to work for justice for the world's poor

