

**Christ Church Walmersley  
and  
St John with St Mark Bury**

**in the United Benefice of Walmersley Road**



**Pentecost**

**June 2020**

**50P**

The poet Maya Angelou once wrote: *'Love recognises no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope.'*

Many of you will probably be reading this June magazine on or before May 31<sup>st</sup>, which is when we celebrate the Day of Pentecost. That's when the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles and other followers. On people just like you and me. People a little afraid and a little confused with their world turned upside-down. Jesus had gone but the Spirit would be with them wherever they were, whatever circumstances they found themselves in.

Back in the day our churches would have marked Pentecost with a Whit Walk and a band, then a meat & potato pie lunch after, followed by games on the field.

The Gospel reading for the day is from John 20:19-23. That's when Jesus gets himself into a locked room, where the disciples were self-isolating after the crucifixion. The first thing he did was to wish them peace. Jesus would have said *'Shalom'*.

שָׁלוֹם

Shalom means more than 'peace' for an individual. In Hebrew tradition it implied a society that was justly ordered and at peace with itself. It meant looking after the vulnerable and challenging injustice. Seeing God in all humanity.

Of course, they were no better at really living that way then than we are today. But you do see signs of hope, don't you? In amongst the fear and exclusion, the Covid-19 lockdown does seem to have made us more caring. We're more appreciative of those who put themselves at risk for us. Every day on the news we see stories of people who, perhaps unwittingly, have taken Maya Angelou to heart.

And we have to hope that, as we come out of this, we take the Shalom of God with us. That actually we don't go back to 'normal'. Because it needs to be better than normal.

Winston Churchill supposedly said: *'Never let a good crisis go to waste'*. Please God, in the months and years to come, may we work more for the benefit of others. May we see the Christ in those around us - and respond accordingly.

Take care, stay safe and God bless,  
Ian

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## ***Annual Parochial Church Meetings***

Our APCMs have been postponed until further notice.

The deadline of 31 May has been extended to 31 October and officers continue in post until meetings can be rearranged.



We would also like to remind people who are responsible for a group or organisation that we are still awaiting some annual reports for 2019.

Although the meeting was put on hold due to the current restrictions, we would like to have the APCMs as soon as current guidelines will allow us. Therefore if you have not yet submitted your reports please could you do so to Ian and June Banks at St John with St Mark and Ian Riddick at Christ Church, as soon as possible.

Thank You

***Information from the Manchester Diocese***

**DEANERY REORGANISATION GIVEN GO AHEAD**

Following an extensive consultation period across the Diocese between November 2019 and February 2020, the Bishop of Manchester has approved the proposal to amalgamate the twenty Deaneries of the Diocese of Manchester into seven.

There now begins the process of appointing a full time Area Dean to each new Deanery.

The Bishop writes that “the new Deanery structures and full time Area Deans will have a major part to play in helping us to achieve the necessary changes so that we can ever more fully inhabit our calling to be God’s Church for a Different World”.

He used the current coronavirus pandemic as “an example of how the missional drivers behind the proposals are if anything strengthened by the issues that will need to be addressed as we emerge from the crisis”.

Bishop David expressed his gratitude to all who have participated in this huge consultation exercise. He hoped that “any who still disagree with his conclusions will nevertheless recognise that they are the result of both rational thought and reasonable decision making”. His reasons can be read on the diocesan website.

Further consultation about the timings of the changes etc will occur during the Summer, but implementation is expected to begin in 2021.

For us, this will mean a Deanery comprising the three existing Deaneries of Bury, Radcliffe and Prestwich, and Rossendale.

Please pray for God’s guidance on our Diocese at this time and for all involved in these new arrangements.

## ***Our MAP (Mission Action Plan)***

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In previous editions of the magazine we ran a series of articles focusing on our Mission Action Plan. You may have heard much about this topic, and over the last few months our PCCs have been devising a Mission Action Plan for where we see ourselves in 5 years time, helping us to form a growing, vibrant church, relevant to the communities of which we are a part. Some of these actions are specific to the individual Parishes, whereas others are being worked on as a joint Benefice.

It is likely that our Mission Action Plans will now be adapted in light of the current events. However the theme we were due to cover may be increasingly relevant at this time when public worship has been suspended and focuses on improvement of our effectiveness with internal & external communications:

- a) Keep both websites up-to-date and relevant.
- b) Be mindful that we have on-line visits from people around the world as well as from our own churches. Encourage website use by congregation member as sources of information as well as the ministry team seeing and engaging with them as a 'shop-window' to the outside world.
- c) Established Facebook pages for both Parishes and a Benefice Twitter page require an 'owner' for each to be identified, to ensure they are kept up-to-date and relevant.
- d) Establish a media policy i.e. in all of the above review what messages we want to convey. Who is the audience? What are we wanting to say?
- e) Explore use of Instagram, Snapchat and others. Identify an 'owner' for each to ensure they are kept up-to-date and relevant.
- f) Ensure consistency of messaging with physical formats such as the magazine, posters and flyers.

### **HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?**

### **COMMUNITY NEWS:**

The Attic Project is a local charity dedicated to helping those in need.

It is based at the Spiritualist Church on Russell Street, in the parish of St.John with St.Mark.

The aim of the project is to improve the lives of everyone who needs help within the community. Staff members, volunteers and partner agencies are used to achieve this goal.

In recent months, the Attic Project has organised a series of events designed to help all members of the local community. During the current pandemic, it has provided food parcels for those in need and offered guidance and counselling.

Its Mission Statement is

*"To further or benefit the residents of Bury and the neighbourhood, without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions by associating together the said residents and local authorities, voluntary or other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time.*

If you would like the assistance of the Attic Project – or would like to offer help in any way - please contact them on 0161 258 6145 or visit their website [www.atticprojectbury.com](http://www.atticprojectbury.com)





## BIBLE READINGS FOR JUNE

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Jun 7 **Trinity Sunday**

Isaiah 40: 12-17,  
27-31

2 Corinthians 13:  
11-13

Matthew 28: 16-20

Jun 14 **1<sup>st</sup> after Trinity**

Exodus 19: 2-8a

Romans 5: 1-8

Matthew 9: 35 - 10:8

Jun 21 **2<sup>nd</sup> after Trinity**

Jeremiah 20: 7-13

Romans 6: 1b-11

Matthew 10: 24-39

Jun 28 **3<sup>rd</sup> after Trinity**

Jeremiah 28: 5-9

Romans 6: 12-23

Matthew 10: 40-42

Jul 5 **4<sup>th</sup> after Trinity**

Zechariah 9: 9-12

Romans 7: 15-25a

Matthew 11:16-19,25-30

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## FROM THE REGISTERS

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### FUNERAL SERVICES HELD AT THE CREMATORIUM

Mar 27	Nora Lomax
April 27	Wendy Entwistle
April 27	Brian Lambert
May 7	Marjorie Shea

*"I am the resurrection and the life....."*

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At the end of the day, all that really matters is that your loved ones are well, you've done your best and you are thankful for all that you have.

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## From the Vicarage

\* The current pandemic means that at present, all public worship and our social activities continue to be suspended until further notice and general access to the church building is still restricted.

However, the situation is very fluid and is liable to change in the next few weeks. Early July has been mentioned by the government as a possible date for the reinstatement of church services and the buildings may be open for private prayer before then. Please continue to monitor the church websites, social media and the weekly bulletins for updates. When we do return to church, it may be necessary to change the frequency and timings of Sunday services.

In the meantime, remember that a recent communication stated:

QUIET TIME WITH GOD:	Not cancelled
READING THE BIBLE:	Not cancelled
PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER:	Not cancelled
CHECKING ON A FRIEND:	Not cancelled
HELPING OTHERS:	Not cancelled
WORSHIPPING ONLINE:	Not cancelled

THE CHURCH IS NOT A BUILDING.  
IT IS A COMMUNITY OF CHRISTIANS  
WORSHIPPING, CARING, PRAYING, REFLECTING.

\* During the current situation I continue to say Morning Prayer at 9.30am and Evening Prayer at 5.00pm on a daily basis. By also saying prayers at this time we are uniting together. It is good to know that people are with me in spirit if not in person, saying prayers at the same time.

Pastoral Care continues but must by necessity be subject to the suggested health and hygiene restrictions. This obviously means more phone and email contact and for essential personal visiting strictly complying with the social distancing regulations. If you are aware of anyone in need, do not hesitate to contact me.

\* Whilst we are absent from worship it is still important to continue to contribute to church funds. Envelopes should be kept safe and given when able to do so. This situation has made paying via Standing Order even more appropriate. If you do not already do this, please consider getting in touch with your Church Treasurer.

\* During the last couple of weeks, we have had a break in at the Christ Church boiler room where three lawnmowers were stolen and also in the church hall next door. The police have been informed and it will be necessary to submit an insurance claim for the loss of the mowers. Please be vigilant at all times and if you see anything suspicious around the church area, please contact the police.

\* Material for the parish magazine should be given in by the 14th day of the previous month. Articles may be sent via email to [wrub@live.co.uk](mailto:wrub@live.co.uk)

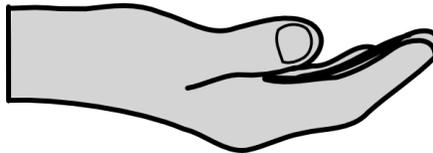


A free phone line of hymns,  
reflections and prayers

### **For the Christian community**

We are not people of fear:  
we are people of courage.  
We are not people who protect our own safety:  
we are people who protect our neighbours' safety.  
We are not people of greed:  
we are people of generosity.  
We are your people God,  
giving and loving,  
wherever we are,  
whatever it costs  
For as long as it takes  
wherever you call us.  
Amen.

*Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference*



### **From one who is ill or isolated**

O God,  
help me to trust you,  
help me to know that you are with me,  
help me to believe that nothing can separate me  
from your love  
revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

*from ChurchofEngland.org*

## **A Prayer When I Have No Words**

*You have known the distress of my soul. Psalm 31:7*

Lord,

I ---

You ---

There's ---

Please ---

I do not have words.

Your words says that you know the distress of my soul.

You know the distress of my soul

You know the distress.

You know.

You know.

You know.

You.

Thank you. Amen.

*Esther Simpson*

## **The Lord's Prayer**

*less familiar words from The Message Bible*

Our Father in heaven,

Reveal who you are.

Set the world right;

Do what's best—

as above, so below.

Keep us alive with three square meals.

Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.

Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.

You're in charge!

You can do anything you want!

You're ablaze in beauty!

Yes. Yes. Yes.



Is prayer your spare tyre or your steering wheel?

*Corrie ten Boom*

## ***And the people stayed home***

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And the people stayed home.

And read books and listened, and rested and exercised,  
and made art and played games,  
and learned new ways of being and were still.

And listened more deeply.

Some meditated, some prayed, some danced.

Some met their shadows.

And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed.

And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless  
and heartless ways the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again,  
they grieved their losses, and made new choices,  
and dreamed new images,  
and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully,  
just as they had been healed.

*by Kitty O'Meara*



## ***Brownies in lock down 2020***

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*Barbara Duncan, Laura Duncan, Anna Duncan, Corby Berry*

We held our last meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup> in the church hall, but with only half our girls, as parents were worried about what was to come. Undeterred, our leaders decided that as we did not know how long this Pandemic would last, it would be a shame not to keep in touch with the girls and keep them interested in Brownies, so investigated if Zoom would work and were parents prepared to allow it. Questions were raised and answered on our Brownie Whatsapp group and the following Monday, 14 girls duly logged in to a meeting for 40 minutes. This was all the time allowed at first, but the girls could all see each other and enjoyed a scavenger hunt around their home, and were challenged to dress their teddy for the following week, as well as sending in a photo of what made them happy.

We've expanded to hour long slots since and have done lots of different activities over the weeks from making paper hats to planning a party, making garden golf courses and family Gangnam Style dancing! We've met lots of pets, seen many musical instruments and cuddly toys and even had a guest appearance from Rose our Guide Leader! All the while making lots of progress towards Brownie Awards.

It has been lovely to be able to carry on 'Brownieing' over Zoom and the support from families to get their girls online has been incredible, although we know that for some it has not been possible to join in so far and we're really looking forward to seeing everyone together again when it's safe to do so. Brownies and Leaders alike have had to adapt to weekly challenges and only seeing each other virtually but the Brownies have been brilliant – and really risen to the challenge!

We've also got quite a few Brownies ready to venture off to Guides - and we are preparing them for their next step with a few putting the finishing touches to their Gold Award Challenges so they will be ready to be awarded before they fly up!

With Summer plans and activities on hold, hopefully we can be back together soon and carry on our adventures!

## ***Follow up to April 'thought for the month'***

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A lot has happened since I wrote that piece back in early March, lock down, social distancing, isolation – no church meetings etc. COVID 19 was just a threat somewhere else, it didn't even have a name then, it was just a coronavirus.

I challenged/ asked people what song was going through our heads. So I'd like to share with you the chorus of a song called 'Build your Kingdom here' by an Irish folk worship band called 'Rend Collective' it goes:-

Build your Kingdom here  
Let the darkness fear  
Show your mighty hand  
Heal our streets and land  
Set your church on fire  
Win this nation back  
Change the atmosphere  
Build your Kingdom here  
We Pray

CCLI 161467

This started to go through my head from the beginning of lockdown along with the 3 verses. It's a song of hope for humankind, a hope that is found in the coming of God's/ Jesus's Kingdom on earth, a hope that was unleashed at Pentecost on all followers of Jesus, of a world order changed – using Rend Collective's words- 'to see the captive hearts released, the hurt, the sick, the poor at peace' I find it particularly relevant at the time of writing when as a church we are being encouraged by the church to take part in the 'Thy Kingdom come' initiative.

Everything is going to be different after this crisis, including the church. so as we enter the period of Pentecost I pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all Christians in this land and abroad.

Barbara Silvester



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## *A letter from the Vicar*

This month we are celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the parish of St. John. It was on 8 June 1770 that the Bishop of Chester consecrated the first church building on what is now the Rock - as a Chapel of Ease to Bury Parish Church.

We had plans for a special celebration Eucharist on Sunday 7 June which would be led by the Bishop of Manchester. In the evening we were going to gather for a short service at the original site (Costa Coffee today) and then walk to our present building.

Sadly, the effects of the coronavirus pandemic have caused all this to be cancelled. But we are hopeful of being able to celebrate with a number of events later in the year. It is still important however that we mark the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary – known as a sestercentennial – in our parish magazine this month.

Since 1770, the parish of St. John has been home for hundreds of thousands of people. Innumerable men and women have shared the sacraments of the Anglican Communion.

Whether in its original location or on Sunny Avenue since 1964; with the addition of St.Mark's Church in 1983 or as part of the United Benefice of Walmersley Road since 2010, St.John's has exercised a faithful parish ministry to all who live, work or worship within its boundaries.

It has been there to support every parishioner from cradle to grave – for baptisms, weddings, and funerals. It serves the people for prayer and praise. It cares and shares in joy and sorrow, constant in a changing world.

The present is rooted in the past and past events give credence to what is happening today – especially so in the light of the current coronavirus crisis. If we are aware where we came from it must surely help us to decide where we are going and strengthen our resolve to maintain the influence of our parish by reflecting the love of God to all within this area.

Our Mission Action Plan includes the aim that we *"use our 250th anniversary celebrations to encourage growth numerically & spiritually."*

So as we celebrate our special anniversary this month – albeit in very different circumstances than we had originally planned – let us offer a prayer of gratitude to all those who, over the last 250 years have contributed in any way to the spread of Christianity in the parish. Their memories live on and will do so for ever.

We rejoice in our history, thank God for our roots and for those many forebears whose influence, dedication, energy, work, witness and love we inherit.

Let us more importantly, however, seek to follow in their footsteps and look forward in faith to the years ahead.

We pray that with the blessing and grace of God we may continue to be signs of His love and presence in the community we serve.

With best wishes.

Stay Safe & God Bless

Dave

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH 1770 - 2020

List of Vicars

1770	John Gamble
1781	Henry Unsworth
1821	Thomas Selkirk
1834	Henry Bontflower
1858	Edmund Smith
1884	Paddy Hudson
1927	David Pugh
1929	Harold Allmark
1954	Arthur Hulse
1978	Huw Thomas
1986	Bernal Kelly
1994	Robert Lawrance
2000	Ian Stamp
2013	Dave Thompson

# MEMORIES OF ST. JOHNS CHURCH



The 1969 Garden Party. The door on the right is the entrance to the old Mission hut, where the corridor and choir vestry is now.

1968 Whit Walks at Sunny Avenue with servers, choir and banner. The Crucifer is John Hulse.



Gathering at the Mission Hut around the 1960's. Reverend Arthur Hulse is at the immediate centre front.

## COURTESY OF ANDREW SALISBURY



Emma Holt, the oldest parishioner at the time breaking ground at the new site on Sunny Avenue, around 1962.

Another image of the 1968 Whit Walks with the 24th Bury Scout group



St John's Sunday School around August 1954. Only known person is Mary Yates, Superintendent, back left. Can you help with any others?

## *Still a Celebration*

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We have spent the last few months at PCC meetings and other various discussions planning our celebration to mark the 250th Anniversary of the Parish of St. John. The Bishop was invited, our joint service was booked, the Summer Fair scheduled and the council approached to check we could hold a celebration service outside Costa Coffee (where the old building stood on The Rock). Obviously, other events have meant that our plans are now disrupted and although disappointing, it is insignificant with the grief, loss and anxiety endured by others.

One of the events which would have formed part of our 250th celebration was the display of memorabilia collected over the last few months. An idea suggested by myself and Margaret Duckworth, who had a couple of outings to the museum to see what could be found. I have received many items including photographs, magazines, memories and keep-sakes. Some of these date back over 100 years. For those of you who have provided Margaret and I with contributions please rest assured, they

are all safely tucked away in my wardrobe with a plan of action. Although we cannot celebrate in June, we have every intention to still go ahead with the display inside Church, at the appropriate and safe time; even if it is later in



our 250th year when you get to see it. I would like to thank everyone who has gone through their attics and cupboards to provide what is vast becoming a huge collection of history. I have seen black and white photographs, snaps from classic pantomimes, maps of boundary walks, personal memories, old magazines and even an original order of service to mark the Consecration of the current building in 1964. I think there are a few snaps with me on.

As soon as we can, we will let you see it. There is no deadline at present, so we will continue to accept anything. We have included some of the photographs here in this commemorative issue of the June 2020 magazine (see the centre pages). Thank you to Andrew Salisbury, whose parents Harry and Muriel were married at the old St. John's Church. Many people may still remember them. Andrew got in touch with us through the website and provided us with many memories and many previously unseen photographs.

I have also been asked to say a big thank you to Reverend Dave for his Easter Day bags, the literature cascaded through doors over the last few weeks and the phone calls of concern. People without the access to online worship and information have really appreciated the Church contact at this time. It did also allow me my permitted exercise time on a Saturday when I went round with them!



Thank you also to Ian for regularly keeping us updated with useful and reflective material on the website. It was rare for a day to pass without me getting a new posting or sermon.

I am also writing this at the time I would have expected to have been in Formby on the annual retreat to St. Joseph's Prayer centre, which is an occasion I have come to value over these last few years. I always find it a time of personal comfort and you can find yourself doing things you would never have thought of doing previously.

I am sure that we will have many things to look forward to together in the near future.

Every Blessing, David Robinson

## ***St John's Church Memories of Church Productions***

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Pantomimes and reviews go way back and have always been at the heart of St John's Church and apart from a few years, for different reasons, a Church production has always taken place whether it was held at the old St. John's school site in Hornby Street or the current Church hall. They have brought such joy to those who have had the pleasure of producing them, taken part in them and to all the audiences that have taken the time to come and see them. It means the world to all those involved in them.



Mavis Bithell has definitely been the beating heart of St. John's Church Productions co-producing from 1971-1977 and taking charge from 1981-1998. In 1970 Mavis moved to Bury and after seeing a review performed at the old St. John's school in Hornby Street this led to her co-producing the 1971 review called "That's Entertainment" with a cast of 64! Unfortunately in 1972 a production could not take place due to the current St. John's site being deemed unfit for safety reasons, however just up the road the existing Church hall was beginning to take shape and in 1973 productions re-started with a review called "Another Opening – Another Show".

A two year break would follow...but in 1980 Pat Thomas the wife of our then Vicar Huw Thomas produced "Joseph", a very popular production having been done many times since...

In 1981 Mavis began once more writing and producing our beloved Pantomimes including "Babes in the Wood", "Aladdin", "Jack and the Beanstalk" and "Mother Goose" with the number of people taking part rising to over 90!

In 1998 the producing baton was passed on to Tracey Evans who produced "Sleeping Beauty" and like many of us understood the expectations of the role she was to undertake after performing in so many of Mavis's productions. Humpty Dumpty in 1998 was also the year of my final Pantomime and I was around 18 at the time. I was drafted in by

Tracey as someone gave up their part 4 weeks before opening night and so I learnt all the lines and songs in that time.



Between 2000 and 2005 we entered into a new chapter under Mark Fishwick, which saw many productions being produced and starred in during this time by quite a few young people who had learnt their craft under Mavis's watchful eye and whose children take part today.

2006 to present day, Debbie Cooper (14 years and counting)  
From day one I knew how important a part of Church life the production was, because just like me and those who are part of the current production team we were once one of those young children who received such a positive experience taking part in many productions Mavis produced over the years and now our children are taking part in. I am having the best time writing and producing productions, and so I now know why Mavis continued as long as she did.

Unfortunately the current situation we find ourselves in means we have no idea as to when we can come together to rehearse and put together our next Church production but until that time, think of the good times, share the memories and remember we will make more... and the time lost will just be a part of our Church production memories.

Debbie Cooper

As you can imagine producing these shows has been a delight, and a privilege to have been able to pass on to the younger generations, and the amount of pleasure I had myself when I was younger. "Where have all those years gone?" Having seen (in some cases) 3 generations I have taught, I apologise to anyone I upset during my time and hope that the good times will be remembered. I would not have wanted my life to have been any other way. Lots of love, God Bless, Mavis Bithell

Please see photographs on back page for some panto memories.

## ***Marking Significant Occasions at St. John's***

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As the parish of St. John's celebrates 250 years since its creation in 1770, we were planning to hold three very special services for everyone who has had a significant occasion at St. John's Church. We now hope that we can hold these, later in the year.

These services are as follows:

### **RENEWING:**

Weddings / Service of Blessing or Thanksgiving



### **RE-COMMITTING:**

Baptisms / Confirmations



### **REMEMBERING:**

Funerals / Interment of Ashes



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## **EVERYONE WILL BE MOST WELCOME**

Please watch our social media pages and websites for further details.

## *The past is the key to the future*



This carving was made by the Essex Woodcarvers and is displayed at the National Memorial Arboretum.

It symbolises the link between the Apostles represented on the pillars and the teaching of Christ today.

The children who are modelled were friends of the carvers, and the figure of Christ was modelled on their local Vicar.

*Thanks to Tricia Stokes for this photo and information.*

During the current pandemic Mothers' Union members continue to pray faithfully each day. If you wish you can find midday prayers on Facebook and also on the new Daily Hope free phoneline (choose option 4 then 8), whilst there are plenty of resources at [mothersunion.org](http://mothersunion.org)

As you would expect, members around the world have stepped up to the line to provide the support required locally during the pandemic. This varies significantly from area to area, hospital to hospital, care home to care home, prison to prison, but they are crafting thousands of new essential items every week for the national effort, finding ways to protect key workers and reassuring the most vulnerable groups within society.

Putting faith into action includes making hundreds of sets of scrubs and many more scrubs bags (these reduce risk of infection when scrubs are taken home to launder); thousands of mask straps; whatever is the local need. One Diocese sourced a number of unused sewing machines for the local prison to enable inmates to sew scrubs. From other countries we read of efforts making face masks, teaching the importance of hand-washing and much more.

Care in the community such as this is an essential component of our movement.

A very popular activity in many areas (including ours) has been the making of hearts – sewn, crocheted and knitted. As one president said, "Visiting restrictions during COVID-19 mean that many patients and their families are separated at the worst possible time, but hospital staff are trying to ease the pain by giving each family a special keepsake. Matching pairs of hearts are given to the patient and their family, so that people can feel more connected with their relatives."

The production of these hearts is giving hope and spreading love in hospitals, care homes and hospices, helping residents, patients and their families get through these difficult times.

By making sure that we continue to address current needs, our various groups are able to champion the most vulnerable in the communities they are a part of. However, like most charities, Mothers' Union has been hit financially. Lack of revenue from our very popular conferencing facilities in Westminster together with the cancellation of most fundraising activities this year, means that we have an urgent appeal to anyone who values the work of Mothers' Union in over 80 countries. If you are able to give at this difficult time, please consider supporting us. Visit <https://support.mothersunion.org/> or speak to Bob Taylor, Branch Leader here at Christ Church.

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### ***Churches are essential . . .***

#### **we already knew that.**

When the faithful are scattered in every age  
due to persecution, disaster, or plague,  
we persist in worship and service,  
in sacrament and sacrifice –  
feeding the hungry,  
clothing the naked,  
welcoming the stranger,  
being good news for the poor,  
working to free the captives and the oppressed.

#### **Our highest and holy calling**

**is to be the church,  
not just to go to church**

*Seen on Facebook*

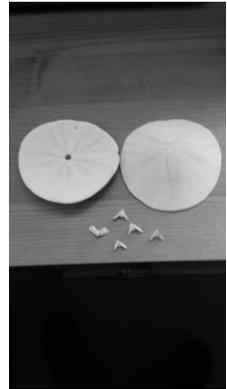
## **SAND DOLLAR**

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A few years ago I spent some time with friends on holiday in America with my American friend Tom. We stayed in his wooden frame house, painted ship's grey and green colour. Tom was once in the Navy. The house was so different from our own, nestled in the sand dunes overlooking the North West Pacific. It was very spacious rather like an aircraft carrier. Whenever a crab boat or ocean going ship sailed into view we grabbed binoculars and watched its progress through the water.

During our stay we travelled many miles down The Long Beach Peninsula through green forests and flat coastal areas across the Astoria Bridge and Columbia River through to Oregon's beautiful north coast. Whilst exercising our 'shopping gene' we came across curious shells being sold as souvenirs called 'Sand Dollars'.

Imagine our surprise when walking along the beach at Ocean Park, we found our first shell and immediately 2 hunter gatherers were born. At first our treasure trickled in, but following Tom's advice we found them easily at low tide. We soon organized a processing system; The Sand Dollars, once washed and scrubbed were put into a bucket of bleach, then lifted, dried and placed on the veranda rail. We turned them regularly in the sun and wind, shook out as much sand as we could and packed these fragile curios, eventually carrying them to Seattle-Tacoma Airport and on through the customs. Little did the customs know that England would soon be flooded with a kind of Holy currency!



So what makes these little shells so special? Well they are attractive, being white and flattish. Also there's the legend of the Sand Dollar, or as it's sometimes known, the Holy Ghost shell, one of the most unusual specimens of marine life, a sea urchin. The markings on the shell symbolise the Birth, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ. On the topside of the flattish bell an Easter lily can be seen. At the centre is a

five pointed star representing the Star of Bethlehem; the narrow openings are representative of the holes and spear wounds made in the body of Christ during the Crucifixion.

Reversing the shell you can see the outline of the Christmas Poinsettia. When the slight bell is broken you will find 5 little bones, doves of peace, or some say Angels that sang to the shepherds on that first Christmas morning.

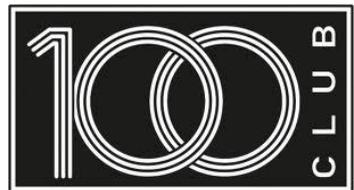
Just a legend I know but a most unusual and unexpected witness to the life, death and resurrection of a loving God. We have just celebrated Pentecost on 31st May. Even in these strange times seasons move on and we remember that the Holy Spirit comes to us sometimes like a gentle breeze or calm swell that turns and rolls sea shells along a sandy shore, smoothing, shaping, whitening and moulding us. At other times He comes like a mighty, rushing wind as at Pentecost, crashing like Pacific breakers sweeping everything before Him. But whichever way He comes, He will disturb. That is His work. If we are willing to cooperate He will renew and animate us with His Spirit to prepare us for changes and challenges in our lives together. Amen.

Pam Cowie

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## **ST. JOHN WITH ST. MARK 100 CLUB**

We have been unable to complete the monthly draw whilst the Church building remains closed and public worship is suspended. However it is planned to do a multi draw as soon as soon as it is possible.



Thank  
you!

A massive thank you to the volunteer who, following the incident when our lawnmowers were stolen, volunteered (within diocesan guidelines) to cut the grass in the churchyard at Christ Church.



Congratulations from us all to one fantastic gentleman. As we acknowledged 75 years after VE Day, ARTHUR SMITH also celebrated.

happy  
birthday

In his case it was to mark his 105<sup>th</sup> birthday.

*This photo from the day is by Tricia Stokes.*

It was wonderful to see the ways in which our communities came together to “socially distance” street party on VE Day. Lots of flags, bunting, competitions, afternoon teas, and an great opportunity to chat (2 metres apart of course) to neighbours who often simply wave from their cars.



Would it have happened without lockdown? Will we do it again?

I expect all of you have, like us, in the days of lockdown been watching a lot of TV and those of us old enough to remember the original VE Day celebrations will have had our own memories and those passed on by our parents.

My father was a good source and when I grew up and followed him into pharmacy for my career we often “talked shop”.

He was the manager of the chemist’s shop at Chesham which, at the time, was in the premises now occupied by the Tanning Salon. We lived on the first floor and if you look at the frontage now, the window over the central door with the wrought iron balcony was my bedroom, the sitting room was the corner room with windows looking up Walmersley Road and across to Chesham Road. When the war began there was a huge round Emergency Water Supply metal tank where the Co-op is now and spare land to the red brick chapel on the corner of Chesham Road which was, I think, Baptist, whilst another chapel further down Chesham Road was Unitarian. Both chapels had very competitive football teams.



Before the war Bury Infirmary (where the flats are today opposite McColl’s at Seedfield) did not have its own pharmacist – it was part of my father’s job. He would go up twice a week to check and restock all their medicine cabinets and it was some months before the Infirmary was “put on a war footing” (my father’s phrase) and had its own full-time pharmacist. Most of you will know that it gradually became Bury General Hospital, then acquired a larger pharmacy with several pharmacists and technicians, in addition to a larger A & E department, Coronary Care unit, Chest unit, large Pathology lab, X-ray and Physio departments, and went from strength to strength. Due to reorganisation, it eventually moved to Fairfield which is the hospital we know today and where many staff members came from this benefice.

During the war years my father, as well as his full time day job, was Secretary of the ARP (Air Raid Precaution) group which met in Russell Street Methodist Church, now Bury Spiritualist Church.

One of my father's tales involved him in both capacities. One morning (in probably 1940) Father Carey came across from St Mark's Vicarage to the pharmacy to tell my father that he had received an urgent phone call from London to say there had been severe bombing in the East End overnight and many houses had been destroyed. I understand that a contingency plan had been set in motion. The homeless people had been transferred to a train which was already on the way up to Bury. It was expected that residents would take the East Enders in to their homes until the following day when Bury Council would have opened up more permanent accommodation for them.

Father Carey had been given the numbers to be housed in St Mark's parish and my Dad's version is that he said "How can we do it?". Dad replied, "We're going to put our hats and coats on and go and knock on doors until we have found enough accommodation," which they did. Dad "choked up" when he was telling me – he said, "It made my heart feel good – nobody refused – everybody said yes without question." Another example of Brits rising to help in an emergency as is happening today.

I would be pleased to hear if anyone reading this can fill in any gaps. I remember there was a family of Londoners who lived in one of the big terraced houses between the Co-op and Hamilton Street who had a daughter at Chesham School like me.

My husband reminded me of the time that bombs were dropped on Walmersley. One fell on the Water Board land near the Masons Arms, then one on the back of the car park at the Hark to Dandler on a field where the Spartans played football. This was in the night and was possibly the same night that a bomb fell on the Walker Sisters' field alongside Chesham Road. Some years ago I met a lady called Mary, a retired teacher, who lived in the houses opposite the field and told me that the bomb had not exploded so residents were told not to use their front rooms but to live in the back rooms of their houses until the

bomb could be disposed of. When we went to school that morning we were allowed to go just as far as the end of Delamere Street and could see ropes strung all the way up Chesham Road from the field railings to the house gateposts and zig-zagging up to somewhere near Danesmoor.

Brave - or foolish – little boys kept scrambling under the ropes to find shrapnel but I don't think they found any. Mary told me the bomb was never found until after the war ended, when the mills around the back of the houses were starting production. They were clearing the site, dredged a lodge and found the unexploded bomb. As she said, "If it had gone off we'd have been very close to it."

All children in Chesham during the war years were used to the sight of the three Miss Walkers being driven round in their black carriage with the coachman – and no petrol coupons needed! The coach used to pull up in front of the pharmacy and the coachman would bring the order in whilst the ladies stayed secluded in the coach. On the way home they would stop to collect the order – again all done by the coachman; the ladies never left the carriage. My only memory of them is the portrait in the Art Gallery.

Another horse-drawn vehicle which was a regular sight – Bob Fitton's milk float from which he bailed milk from churns into people's milk jugs. He was Robin Fitton's father from Irwell View Farm.

I remember going with my parents in response to a plea from the government to assist farms to get the harvest in – in this case, haymaking. I would then be about 8 or 9 and was set to going round the edge of the field to gather any hay that had been missed by the rakes or fallen off the horse-drawn cart. That was a hot and prickly job!

When the war was ended my father bought the pharmacy on Rochdale Road and we lived in St Paul's parish where I was a Sunday School teacher at St Paul's and was confirmed at the old St John's Church. We returned to Walmersley in 1952. In 1959 I married a Walmersley boy, going to live on Old Lane, then Limefield Road.

Alison Fewtrell, née Tasker



# Sunday



# @ Seven

**We next meet for our regular Sunday evening  
informal worship (song/reflection/prayer)**

**June 28th at 7pm  
at Home**

*“A Gospel to proclaim”*

**Do join us – from the comfort of your own  
sofa –make yourself a tea/coffee – perhaps  
even treat yourself to cake/biscuits!**



Contact details are removed for security details  
but please use our websites or social media to contact us,  
or the email [wrub@live.co.uk](mailto:wrub@live.co.uk)

To book baptisms, weddings or just to talk, call in to Parish Office  
every Wednesday 6.30-7.00pm at St. John's Church Hall  
(social distancing currently being observed)

Lots more info on our websites: [www.ccwalmersleybury.org.uk](http://www.ccwalmersleybury.org.uk)  
<https://stjohnstmarkchurchbury.com>

Please send your articles for the magazine by 14<sup>th</sup> of the previous month  
to [wrub@live.co.uk](mailto:wrub@live.co.uk)

# *Memories of St. John's Pantomimes*



**SLEEPING BEAUTY  
1987**

**HUMPTY DUMPTY  
1998**

**More memories  
on pages 22 & 23**



**ALADDIN  
1989**