

# LIFE

March 2023

Christ Church  
Eccleston  
magazine

Church  
St Helens  
renewing hope



As we move further into the Fit for Mission process, towards the formation of a single larger parish that will be called Church St Helens, I am really enjoying meeting weekly with my clergy colleagues from the parishes that will form Church St Helens. We are on track for the legal changes going through early in 2024 whilst we get ready for that we are starting to think and plan as if we are already one larger parish.

As we are the first cohort to go through this process we are discovering that many of the questions that we had at the start remain for us to resolve, together. There is no big expert telling us how to be or what to do. As we explore the answers and discover new questions please continue to pray for everyone involved, especially those lay people that have committed to be part of various teams and portfolios.

In order that we might better pray for the Fit for Mission process, and to use our gifts in a way that benefits the rest of Church St Helens, our editor Rachel and I have agreed to share our magazine with the larger single parish. From next issue the 1,2,7 & 8th pages will remain as they are.

The inner 4 pages (3,4,5 & 6) will focus on Church St Helens. That inner section will be distributed to all the Churches that will form Church St Helens so it can either be a stand alone newsheet or form an insert in their existing publications. I am really pleased, verging on proud, that we are in a position to offer something substantial to the process, not least because this magazine looks good and has great content - occasionally let down by my poor spelling. I hope this new focus is interesting for us all.

We have been discussing 'hope' and what it might look like if Church St Helens starts its life by focusing on bringing hope to our town. I wonder what hope for St Helens makes you think of? Are there any ideas you want to put forward for things our larger single parish of many churches across our town could do together to renew hope?

As Spring slowly starts to show itself, hope feels almost tangible as new life emerges the earth itself even where it looked like there was nothing. The amaryllis pictured below was given to us Christmas 2021, we planted it and saw leaves but nothing else in 2022.

This year it has sprung into beautiful bloom - a wonderful symbol of hope! **cont overleaf...**



**CHRIST CHURCH ECCLESTON**

*holding you with God for life*

Vicar: Rev Sonya Doragh 0782244537 [sonya@ccemail.org.uk](mailto:sonya@ccemail.org.uk)  
Verger: Pauline Parr 01744 28612





## Church St Helens- Renewing Hope cont...

Over the February half term break we had the privilege of a holiday in Fuerteventura. The landscape is strikingly barren, deforestation of the mountains, low rainfall and over grazing have left much of the island as desert - a micro-example of climate change. The island relies on desalination of sea water to supply drinking water to the population and the many tourists. Going with discussions of hope echoing in my ears, seeing plant life emerging in the dry sandy expanses was a powerful reminder that hope, like faith and love, may seem elusive but it's effects can bring enormous transformation to people, places and political structures.







Gonzalo, the local representative that greeted us spoke about hope as well. For an economy so reliant on tourism, the travel restrictions relating to Covid had a devastating impact, now they are finding their hopes starting to be fulfilled as holiday makers return. The population of the 10 urban areas on Fuerteventura was just 119, 732 in 2020 considerably less than the 180, 200 counted in St Helens in 2021. We may not have the striking visual reminder that plants in the desert supply of our need for hope but I wonder what aspects of life in St Helens are in need of the prayer, faith and action that come from faith holding onto hope even when experiencing life like a desert? I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

[sonya@ccemail.org.uk](mailto:sonya@ccemail.org.uk) or 07852244537





## A Hearty Response....

Thank you so much to everyone that got their needles or hooks flying to produce so many hearts for Valentines day. They were delivered, along with the card pictured below to various friends, family, neighbours and housebound Church members as a simple reminder of God's love. The hearts were so lovely and well received, it has inspired another idea. You may remember that we send out Memorial boxes with a holding cross and a tea light candle to bereaved families each year alongside their invitation to the Memorial Service on Remembrance Day afternoon. Well, we are thinking that a similar box with gifts to celebrate the first wedding anniversary of everyone that gets married in our church would be a good addition to how we treasure those that come to us for special events. So keep on making those hearts.



## Annual Parochial Church Meeting Sunday 23rd April 10am

Confession time! One of my personal favourite benefits of becoming Church ST Helens is that in becoming one single larger parish, we will no longer have to present annual reports and accounts for each individual parish church. I'm sure we will all contribute in some way to the shared Annual Report, so our service and ministry will continue to be celebrated. However the work of compiling the report, ensuring the accounts are properly presented and working out timings, numbers on and off the PCC and so on and so forth will no longer be something on my to do list.

So this APCM will be the last for Christ Church Eccleston on its own, as of next year we will part of something bigger.

## Rev Gregor's Licencing 7pm 28th March 2023

The Licensing by the Rt Revd Jill Duff, Bishop of Lancaster, of The Reverend Gregor Stewart as Team Rector of the Fellside Benefice will take place at St Mary the Virgin, Church Lane, Goosnargh, PR3 2BE on Tuesday, 28 th March 2023 at 7.00 pm. Refreshments after in Goosnargh Village Hall.

It would help to have numbers for refreshments so please email [walter.hide@btinternet.com](mailto:walter.hide@btinternet.com) by 13 th March 2023 to let them know if you are intending to come.

Whether you can come or not please do keep Rev Gregor, Susan, Alistair and Emma in your prayers.



## Remembering Eileen Knowles

As many of you will be aware, at Christ Church we have been deeply saddened by the recent loss of our lovely friend Eileen Knowles, who passed away following a short battle with illness. At her funeral, which took place on Friday 3rd March, the Church was completely full, a demonstration if any were needed of the fondness we all shared for such a lovely lady.

Eileen had a lifelong connection with Christ Church, having been Christened and married her, and she helped with Junior Section Boys' Brigade for many years.

Along with her husband Chris, Eileen was an ever present helper at Christ Church events, happily volunteering and spreading her trademark warmth and cheer with with everyone she met. We are sure everyone would wish to share with us in sending our heartfelt sympathy, love and prayers to Chris and their sons, Peter and Simon, in their sad loss.



## Sprucing up for Spring

Our wonderful gardening volunteers who maintain the Churchyard have been very busy in the run up to Spring. As the picture below shows, the team has been gathering up all the dead wood and debris from around the grounds ready for burning - and quite a pile it made to. We can only imagine the hard work they put in week in week out to keep the Churchyard so neat and well maintained. On behalf of all of us whose loved ones are laid to rest in the Churchyard, a huge thank you for all you continue to do! As always the group welcome new volunteers with open arms, so if you would like to join them, either weekly or just occasionally, do come forward. (Thanks to Mike Horton for the photographs).

Since the volunteer pictured below is Jeff Rimmer, it would be remiss of us not to mention his dear wife, Gill, another dedicated volunteer at Christ Church, who recently suffered a broken hip after a fall. I am sure we all wish to send Gill our love and best wishes for a speedy recovery. We are thinking of you, Gill.



## A Bunny poem

As we enter Spring and signs of new life surround us, Jennie Platt's granddaughter, Amelia, aged 8, has managed to capture the excitement of the season in a beautiful poem. Entitled 'What was in the bed?', Amelia writes about her delight when the pet rabbits she shares with younger sister Charlotte gave birth to three adorable baby bunnies. Thank you, Amelia, for sharing your poem with us. You're very talented!

### What was in the bed?

**By Amelia Platt, Aged 8**

We have small lambs and calves  
But the thing I like the most is,  
Baby bunnies!

On a cold, dark morning we found  
Three tiny, slimy wriggling balls  
Baby bunnies!

WOW a new life for us.



Pictured above are the Mummy and Daddy bunnies, Chloe and Coco, and their three baby rabbits, Brownie, Jumpy and Daisy.

Pictured left is young poet, Amelia, cuddling Brownie



## Special Moments **with Jennie Platt**

Despite the cold weather spring has arrived to lighten our mood after a long winter. In the Lake District I saw lambs and new calves in February. Chris Hoyle took a great photograph of a bee basking in the sunshine on her door. New arrivals were an unexpected surprise for my granddaughters! (Read the poem below). Sunrises and sunsets have been spectacular. One particularly colourful sunset had Mike Horton running across the field to get this beautiful photograph. Bright splashes of colour from crocuses and daffodils have added joy to the day.

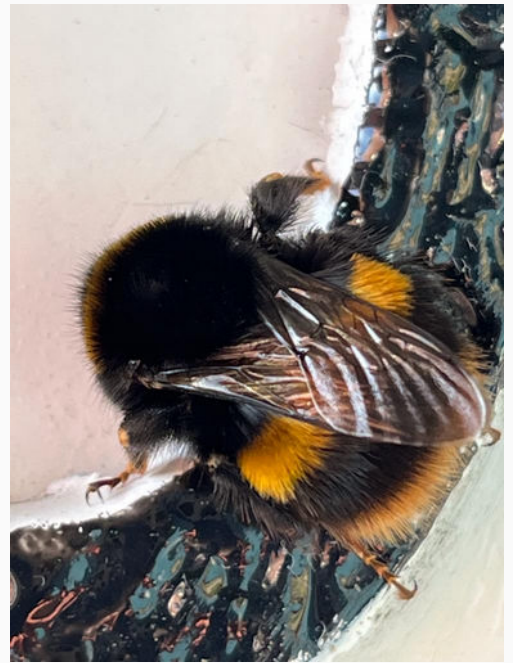
Sometimes it is favourite songs which brighten our mood and link to happy memories. I recently enjoyed Van Morrison singing, 'Have I told you lately that I love you' on television. The lyrics have been special to me for a long time. Van has a sensitive way of introducing a spiritual element to his singing and this song is considered to be about his relationship with God. Although not confirmed Van does acknowledge a spiritual element to his music. His singing was inspiring and I share with you some lyrics and how they made his faith so simple- 'you fill my heart with gladness, take away all my sadness", "fill my life with laughter ease my troubles, that's what you do." (Written by Scotty Wiseman for the 1944 musical Sing, Neighbour Sing).

At times we need the comfort of music. I hope these words give support to Chris Knowles and his family as we share the loss of Eileen. It was always a real pleasure to meet Eileen and Chris. She was so friendly, willing to help with a smile and we will miss her.

Best Wishes

Jennie Platt

Images from top down:  
Bee by Chris Hoyle  
Lambs by Jennie Platt  
The spectacular sunset  
by Mike Horton







## Bible Names

A	U	B	P	Y	W	E	H	T	T	A	M	E	A
A	C	B	C	N	A	L	O	M	E	P	U	S	E
A	A	J	Y	H	T	O	M	I	T	R	M	T	S
C	L	O	B	S	O	Y	P	A	U	L	S	H	E
A	E	N	O	A	H	M	H	T	U	R	A	E	A
L	B	B	B	M	M	T	A	N	M	A	M	R	B
M	A	R	Y	P	A	E	S	H	O	K	A	H	R
A	H	B	Y	S	D	C	A	O	Y	L	U	A	A
K	C	J	J	O	A	A	U	J	R	A	H	E	H
M	A	R	K	N	M	I	L	U	O	A	S	H	A
L	Y	T	I	L	C	N	O	M	O	L	O	S	M
A	U	M	B	E	N	A	T	O	M	A	J	A	A
L	A	K	E	B	L	A	L	E	D	L	L	A	N
L	T	M	E	A	M	H	O	E	V	E	U	N	S

- SOLOMON
- MARK
- ABEL
- JOSHUA
- NOAH
- PAUL
- EVE
- JOHN
- ABRAHAM
- ESTHER
- MATTHEW
- RUTH
- ADAM
- LUKE
- CAIN
- TIMOTHY
- SAUL
- SAMPSON
- MARY
- CALEB

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/2921/>

Signs of Spring are everywhere, so here's a colouring picture to celebrate. In our word search, try and find the hidden Bible names - there are 20 in all.



Mandy Grace '10

ministry-to-children.com