

Bollington Church News

The magazine of Bollington Parish Church, St Oswald's



May 2025

Price 50p



Who's Who at St Oswald's

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The Parochial Church Council April 2025-2026

Val Genders, Ann Mather, Christine Osbaldiston, Jackie Pengelly, Richard Raymond, Lynda Iverson, Chris Ward, Angela Williams

Ex officio: Anne Coomes, Anthea Wilkinson.

Deanery Synod: Anthea Wilkinson, Anne Coomes

Diocesan Synod: Richard Raymond

Letter from Nancy

Dear All

We've just celebrated the great events of Easter, following Jesus from Palm Sunday, through Holy Week to the Cross. Easter Sunday's joy and life-giving flows from the resurrection.



On Easter Monday morning we heard the sad news of the death of Pope Francis. I thought I'd share with you a part of his Easter blessing, the last public words of this extraordinary man of faith:

"Christ is risen, alleluia!

From the empty tomb in Jerusalem, we hear unexpected good news: Jesus, who was crucified, 'is not here, He has risen'. Jesus is not in the tomb, He is alive!

Love has triumphed over hatred, light over darkness and truth over falsehood. Forgiveness has triumphed over revenge. Evil has not disappeared from history; it will remain until the end, but it no longer has the upper hand; it no longer has power over those who accept the grace of this day.

Dear brothers and sisters, in the Lord's Paschal Mystery, death and life contended in a stupendous struggle, but the Lord now lives forever. He fills us with the certainty that we too are called to share in the life that knows no end, when the clash of arms and the rumble of death will be heard no more.

Let us entrust ourselves to Him, for He alone can make all things new!"

Happy Easter to everyone!

Nancy

Thinking about the front cover...

Remembering VE Day – 80 years on

80 years ago, on 8th May 1945, VE Day took place – marking Victory in Europe at the end of World War 2. It was celebrated as a public holiday, and came exactly a week after German radio announced the death in action of Adolf Hitler.

In reality, Hitler had committed suicide on 30th April. His successor, Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz, quickly negotiated an end to the war with the Allies – at the same time trying with some success to prevent as many Germans as possible from falling into Soviet hands.

Field Marshal Montgomery accepted the unconditional surrender of German forces in the Netherlands, north-west Germany and Denmark at a ceremony near Hamburg on 4th May. All German forces then surrendered to Supreme Allied Commander General Eisenhower on 7th May at Reims, France. Soviet leader Josef Stalin had his own ceremony, in Berlin.

The announcement that the war had ended in Europe was broadcast to the British people by the BBC late on 7th May. It was decreed that there would be a national holiday the next day, and the stage was set for huge celebrations. Prime Minister Churchill had been assured that there was enough beer in the capital, and commemorative items, including VE Day mugs, were quickly produced.

Prime Minister Churchill had been assured that there was enough beer in the capital for the celebrations...

St Paul's Cathedral held ten consecutive services giving thanks for peace, each one attended by thousands of people, and churches throughout the country rang their bells. The Royal Family played a central role, appearing eight times on the balcony of Buckingham Palace while huge numbers of people flocked down The Mall.

In the United States, VE Day coincided with President Harry S Truman's 61st birthday: he dedicated the victory to the memory of his predecessor, Franklin D Roosevelt, who had died of a stroke less than a month earlier. But both Truman and Churchill pointed out that the war against Japan had not yet been won. That final victory was still more than three months away.



Of course, the end of a war could never be neat. In Europe the last known shots on the Eastern Front were actually fired on 11th May, and on 25th May the battle of Odžak ended in a Yugoslav Partisan victory. Tragically, in French Algeria, Muslims celebrating the end of the war (some also peacefully protesting for independence) were “inexcusably” massacred by colonial authorities and militias – leading eventually to the Algerian War nine years later.

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Christian Aid Week – 11th to 17th May

For more than 75 years, Christian Aid has been working with some of the world’s most vulnerable communities in 29 countries in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean.

This annual week invites Christians in the UK to help fundraise for the work by holding community events and taking on individual challenges. It has been called ‘seven days of fundraising fun – your way’.

This year you might like to consider taking on the ‘70k in May Challenge’. It is simple to do: just travel 70k during the month of May, in whatever way you want. Invite your friends and family to sponsor you.

You can find more info at: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>



CURATE'S CORNER

with Jenny Eades

When and how do you pray?

I have been reading a book recently called, 'In the Midst of Chaos: Caring for children as Spiritual Practice'.

And the author, a mother of three and a theologian, questions the idea that to pray you need silence, or quiet, or order, or privacy. All the things that, as a parent or grandparent or carer of young (or not so young) children, are in short supply.

If we need time alone (and energy) to pray, then prayer seems an impossibility for those who care for families, work long hours caring for the young, or the disabled, or the elderly, come to that.

This author suggest that the things we do to care for others – the conversations, the cooking, the shopping, the working, the playing, the dropping off at the school gate, the hellos and goodbyes, even the arguing and the making up – are places where we can experience grace, places and times we can grow spiritually and emotionally, places where God just IS.

To experience God we don't need to retreat to a monastery, spend hours meditating or even be alone. Those are all good things but not essential. All that is essential, it seems to me, is that we *want* to care for those we love and the wider community, we *want* to do and be love in the world, we *want* to experience the Holy One, the Love behind the universe, God.

The ordinary things we do all day can be prayer – if we choose. And that doesn't mean we don't fail, get it wrong, get exhausted or discouraged. It just means we are open to the possibility that Love is at work within us, walks alongside us, and is quietly cheering us on. God bless. Jenny

A visit to St Peter's Prestbury

Sandra Edwards reports from CHUB

It was a lovely sunny spring day for our first visit of the 2025 season.

Not far to go either, as our visit was to the neighbouring parish of Prestbury and St Peter's Church. Nevertheless, several members of the group had never been in St Peter's, and we were all eager to be shown around such a magnificent building.

The Vicar, the Revd Patrick Augier, was waiting to show us round. The church was begun in 1220 when the Norman Chapel, still in the large churchyard, was deemed insufficient.

During the next three centuries the church was enlarged and the tower erected. In 1580 Thomas Legh of Adlington acquired the manor and became lay Rector of Prestbury. The family's continuing presences is clear in the church. In the 18th century a large gallery was built and the church filled with pews. The 19th century saw G. G. Scott make more alterations, so that the interior is now a mixture of styles. A huge candelabra catches the eye, and the Vicar pointed out the electronic organ which had replaced the piped organ.

We were also impressed by the modern extension where the vicar provided us with coffee, tea and cake.

We then went back to Bollington to have our lunch at the Poachers Pub. Plenty of comfortable space for us to sit and relax while our lunch was prepared. Perhaps the lengthy menu was a little ambitious for equal deliveries of the meals.

All in all, it was a most enjoyable start to our 2025 programme. Our next visit is to Tideswell in July.

Memories of being Lay Chaplain to a Hospice

Brian Reader looks back on an expected ministry



My first reflection is, that I had no wish to become a Lay Chaplain to a Hospice, but obviously God had other ideas.

First a bit of background.

I suppose it all started when I retired and thought that I would like to know a bit more about the Christian faith I had held since my childhood.

I had become a management consultant but as I still had some free time I decided, or was it God deciding, that I should attend a course run by the St Asaph Diocese,

leading to The Bishop's Certificate in Theology.

During the second year it was suggested that I continue training and become a Lay Reader and I was duly licenced by the Bishop.

Five years later, in late 2000, my wife Diana, was diagnosed with Motor Neuron Disease and I started taking her to Nightingale House Hospice as a day patient which gave her much comfort and relief.

But the disease was unrelenting, and she died about 13 months later.

I had previously attended a six-week course by Acorn on Christian Listening, which aimed at producing listeners to work in hospitals. I knew that the full

time Hospice Chaplain that my wife had known, had been replaced by our curate covering just eight hours a week.

So probably wishing to give something back, I asked if there was any chance of my being used as a Christian Listener.

She said, I was just what she had been praying for and thrust into my hand an application form to be a Lay Chaplain at the Nightingale Hospice.

Being a squeamish person, I balked at this but she said she would give me gradual training and was sure that I was right for the job.

But I still had my reservations. Initially, I worked under very close supervision not going on the ward unless she was with me.

I had to learn that we were there for all faiths and none, not just Christians. There was certainly no Bible thumping, and you did not speak about spiritual matters unless the patient raised it first. Mainly it was about being a friend with chat, being a good listener and, when necessary playing games, and joining in their activities.

Because of the lack of time she had available, the Chaplain had not been able to make contact with the independent support group for those who no longer needed day care. Some had been receiving treatment and care for many years and felt bereft when they felt they were being kicked out, so they called themselves The Cuckoos.

Yes, I know that it's the cuckoo who throws the others out of the nest, but the name stuck. They had been through a lot, but all had a very positive view of life which they all lived to the full as their limitations allowed, and many supported the hospice as volunteers.

Sometimes I would be with them for two or three hours without anything of a spiritual nature being mentioned, and then someone would mention a memory of a loved one, and the flood gates would open. One lady was always

questioning. Then I found something on the web site with pictures which I took in to show them on my laptop. It was remarkable. As she started asking questions, the next slide would answer it. They were all amazed and asked how I had managed it, but of course it was just another example of God working through coincidences.

Another had a faith from long ago but hated the formal structure of the church. Through talking to him, he became one of my staunch supporters and always attended the services.

The Cuckoos used to organise trips out like a canal boat trip to Llangollen, so I decided to introduce them to Pennant Melangell. Pennant Melangell is a shrine set at the end of a valley on an old drovers trail deep in the Welsh hills.

It was derelict, but rebuilt with an old farm house being used as a place of counselling for people with life threatening diseases.

The Cuckoos loved it and have been going there every year ever since; in fact Jean and I went there with the Cuckoos just before we were married.

I grasped his hand
and spoke some
words of hope and
comfort in a prayer.

When I first went to the hospice, services were at a set time with ministers from the various denominations coming in to take them, but they were poorly attended. I realised that they were not what was wanted, so I organized a more flexible system of worship, working in with the various treatments they were having and the response was very positive.

Sometimes we had reserved communion, but usually it was a simple service of readings, with a short message of Christian hope, a psalm and prayers which they chose themselves. Sometimes people were too ill to come to a service so I would take it to them.

On one occasion I arrived to find a Rural Dean I knew well was in the room, so

I asked if he would like to take the service. He said no, "We will have the sick communion service you have prepared. Even ministers have to be fed you know."

The patient later said she had a confession to make and asked if I would give her absolution. I said I was not able to do that, but that God was always willing to forgive.

She simply told me what had been bothering her for decades. I said a simple prayer, and she knew that God had forgiven her, and her face changed with relief and gratitude. I asked her why she had not told her priest, to which she replied, "He was too much of a family friend".

There was a lovely lady who had been in the hospice for some time and I had got to know her well. Now all Christians are hoping for an afterlife in heaven, although none can be sure what it will be like. However, this lady had her own faith and knew that there was a lovely cottage awaiting her in heaven with a garden full of flowers. "When you die" she said, "please come and visit me in heaven: tea will be waiting and the scones will be hot".

Another time I was playing dominoes in day care when one of the nurses said that I was wanted on the ward. I said fine I will come as soon as I had finished the hand.

The nurse said, "No, now". As we walked to the ward she said that a patient had just died and the family had asked for the chaplain. The patient had only recently arrived and I did not know the patient or the family; my worst fears were realised!

I walked into the room, asked his name, grasped his hand and spoke some words of hope and comfort in a prayer. I cannot recall what I said, we had a few minutes of quiet and I asked if could help further.

They said "No, thank you we are all at peace now."

I was also called upon to conduct funerals and the three-monthly Remembrance Service in the hospice. After that service the families came into the day room for a cup of tea and cakes and to talk to staff.

One man said that he had not been into the hospice since his wife died and would like to visit the room where his wife had died but was afraid.

I took his hand and said "Shall we go together?" When he came out he said that that was what he had needed, as it had given him closure and he could now move on.

I left hospice after some eight happy, meaningful years there; I thought that as I was then 80, it was time for them to get someone younger!

We are all called to do God's bidding in many and various ways, so listen for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and to go where He directs.

Remember, God has plans for us at, all ages and stages in our life, and He knows best.

**

Smile Lines

Genesis and politicians

A surgeon, an architect and a politician were arguing as to whose profession was the oldest. Said the surgeon: "Eve was made from Adam's rib, and that surely was a surgical operation." "Maybe," said the architect, "but prior to that, order was created out of chaos, and that was an architectural job." "But you forget," interrupted the politician, "somebody had created the chaos first!"

Open your mouth...

My dentist is also our choir leader at church. He likes the hymn: "Crown Him With Many Crowns."



Bass Notes

David Ward looks back on a concert by the Bollington Festival Choir

Concert reviews are usually written by a learned critic somewhere in the audience. But this one is being written by one of the performers, an ageing and anxious bass lurking at the back of the Bollington Festival Choir during its concert at St Oswald's on 6th April.

"Alleluia!" he sang fortissimo; not just once but 67 times. Handel liked his alleluias (as you may recall from a fairly well-known chorus in *Messiah*) and packed them into two of the four Coronation Anthems sung that night, anthems which have serenaded every new monarch crowned in Westminster Abbey since George II heard them for the first time in 1727.

Handel is pretty sneaky. You just get into your Alleluia stride and he starts throwing in random Amens when you are not expecting them. The anxious bass did his best, hoping he would get most things right, something that was not certain even after three months of weekly practices and countless hours of study at home. And he fudged the high Es, which these days are a challenge too far, by slipping into falsetto when no one was listening.

But the hapless singer relaxed when two trumpets and one set of drums joined in to add celebratory magnificence to the night. The timpanist conjured up mighty thwacks that sounded like gunshots and his final shattering drumroll may have made the citizens of Bollington fear that the day of judgement had come earlier than expected.

It wasn't all pomp and circumstance. The choir had preceded the celebration with a lamentation - Antonio Caldara's intense setting of the Stabat Mater, the

hymn that tells of the suffering of Christ's mother at the crucifixion. It was a fitting prelude to Holy Week.

As the final note of the concert faded away, the incompetent bass realised that soloists and chorus had given their all and had sung with the total joy that can come when a choir realises it is on a roll. And that night everyone did their best to show not one, but two, conductors what we could do.

The man on the podium was Christopher Cromar, who in January became only the third conductor in the choir's 60-year history. He directed his first concert with passion and energy and also played the organ with thrilling virtuosity. The other musician we were singing for was sitting modestly at the back of the church. Donald Judge had served the choir for almost 50 years, first as accompanist and then, from 2002 until last year, as tireless conductor, composer, editor and arranger, a man who had persuaded us to sing in Latin, French, German, Italian, Czech and (and this wasn't easy) Quechua, the language of the Incas.

Now, with silence descending and all anxious tremors stilled, the incompetent bass could concede that it had been a good night. He went to bed and counted Alleluias until he fell into the deepest of harmonious sleeps.



Don't look back

The Sunday School teacher was telling the story of how when Lot's wife looked back at Sodom and Gomorrah, she turned into a pillar of salt. One youngster nodded in a knowing fashion. "My mummy looked back once while she was driving," he confided, "and she turned into a lamp post."

RHS Chelsea Flower Show – world's greatest flower show

20th – 24th May brings us the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. The most prestigious gardening show in the world, it attracts about 168,000 visitors a year. Its cutting-edge garden designs have been called the 'haute couture' or 'World Cup' of gardening.

Here are 10 interesting facts about the Show:

The RHS Chelsea Flower Show is organised by the Royal Horticultural Society.

The Show began in 1913, with about 250 exhibitors in a large single tent. Today the Show covers more than 23 acres with more than 550 exhibitors.

The Great Pavillion covers 2.90 acres, enough room to park 500 London buses.

The Show has been held in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea in London every year since 1913, excepts for gaps during the two World Wars and Covid.

It takes just under three weeks to build a Show Garden, and five days to take it down.

In 1927 there was a campaign to get the RHS to ban foreign exhibits, to reduce competition. The RHS refused, saying 'horticulture knows nothing of nationality'.

The late Queen Elizabeth II attended RHS Chelsea more than 50 times.

It takes 14 judges and two moderators 25 hours to judge and assess all gardens at the show. It takes 50 judges and four moderators three hours to judge all the exhibits in the Great Pavilion.

2020 brought the first ever virtual RHS Chelsea, during the Covid pandemic.

One very wet year the show was nicknamed the 'The Chelsea Shower Flow.'

All in the month of May

It was:

1700 years ago, 20th May to August 325 that the First Council of Nicaea was held in what is now Iznik, Turkey. It was the first ecumenical council of the Christian Church.

1300 years ago, on 26th May 725 that the Venerable Bede died. This English Benedictine monk, historian, linguist, translator and teacher is known as 'the father of English history'. He helped to popularise the idea of dating years from the birth of Christ (*Anno Domini* – AD)

200 years ago, on 7th May 1825, that Antonio Salieri died. An Italian composer, he taught composers including Liszt, Schubert, Beethoven and Mozart. He was rumoured to have poisoned Mozart, but this was later proven to be false.

150 years ago, on 1st May 1875 that Alexandra Palace in London was officially opened. It became the home of BBC television in 1935.

125 years ago, on 17th May 1900 that during the Second Boer War, the 217-day Siege of Mafeking was relieved by 2000 British forces and South African volunteers. Colonel Robert Baden-Powell, who led the forces defending Mafeking during the siege, became a national hero, and later founded the Scouting movement.

90 years ago, on 19th May 1935 that T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) died in a motorcycle accident, aged 46. A British Army officer, military strategist, and archaeologist, best known for his work in the Middle East during WW1.

80 years ago, on 8th May 1945 that VE Day took place – marking Victory in Europe at the end of WW2. It was celebrated as a public holiday.

75 years ago, on 13th May 1950 that the first Formula One World Championship race was held, at Silverstone. (Also known as the 1950 British Grand Prix.)

50 years ago, on 12th May 1975 that Jonah Lomu, New Zealand rugby player was born. Widely regarded as one of the greatest players in the sport.

40 years ago, on 29th May 1985 that the Heysel Stadium Disaster took place in Brussels. 39 football fans were crushed to death during rioting at the European Cup Final between Liverpool and Juventus.

30 years ago, on 10th May 1995 that the British Minister for Northern Ireland, Michael Ancram, met representatives of Sinn Féin. It was their first formal meeting in 23 years, after a ban was lifted.

Also 30 years ago, on 13th May 1995 that British mountaineer Alison Hargreaves became the first woman to reach the summit of Mount Everest unaided (without bottled oxygen or Sherpas.) She died later that year, in August, in a storm, while attempting to climb K2.

25 years ago, on 7th May 2000 that Vladimir Putin became President of Russia.

15 years ago, on 2nd May 2010 that during the Greek debt crisis, the European Union, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund authorised a three-year 110 billion Euro bailout loan to Greece.

Also 15 years ago, on 6th May 2010 that the British General Election resulted in a hung parliament. A coalition government was formed on 11th May by the Conservative Party leader, David Cameron, and the Liberal Democrat party leader, Nick Clegg.

10 years ago, on 22nd May 2015, that the Republic of Ireland became the first country to hold a referendum on whether same-sex marriage should be legalised. It voted to approve, and same-sex marriage became legal in Ireland from that November.

Book of Remembrance for May



1st May	Elsie Johnson
3 rd May	Alfred Cantrell
4 th May	Robert George Medley
7 th May	Alice Edna Hooley
7 th May	Raymond Foster
7 th May	Dan Woolley
9 th May	Barbara Collings
11 th May	Revd Michael Whetter (<i>Vicar of this parish 1991-2000</i>)
12 th May	John Williams
13 th May	Paul Withington
18 th May	Kenneth George Wilcox
18 th May	Oliver Heathcote
19 th May	Maggie Chadwick
22 nd May	Dennis R Bennett
22 nd May	Lily Gaskell
22 nd May	Jessie Brocklehurst
24 th May	Jack Lloyd
25 th May	Richard Owen Ridley
28 th May	William Henry Stanesby
29 th May	Bertram Wardle
29 th May	Frank Spooner
30 th May	Francis Owen Wharton Wilkinson

Would you like to include the name of a departed loved one? An entry costs £10. Please contact Ann Stringer on 01625 574325

**

Good to think about

We should believe that nothing is too small to be named before God. What should we think of the patient who told his doctor he was ill, but never went into particulars? – *Anon*

Man's way leads to a hopeless end - God's way leads to an endless hope. - Anael Aranha

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Giving to St Oswald's:

Our bank account name is '**The Anglican Parish of Bollington PCC**'.

Our account number is **39536416** and the sort code is **01-05-41**.

Or talk to Richard Raymond, our treasurer, on 01625 612025.

Get the magazine: please ring Ann Stringer on 01625 574325.

Deadline: Material for the June issue to reach Anne by 20th May.

Good to think about

Middle age: That difficult period of life between juvenile delinquency and old age, when you have to take care of yourself. - *Anon*

Carpark: The place where you take your car to have little dents put into the sides. - *Anon*

Optimist: A cheerful person who is blissfully unaware of what is going on. - *Anon*

Tact: The ability to shut your mouth before someone else wants to. – *Anon*

Worship in May

Sunday 4th	10.30am - Parish Communion
Sunday 11th	10.30am - Parish Communion
Sunday 18th	10.30am - Parish Communion
Sunday 25th	10.30am - Parish Communion



Christian Aid Coffee Morning

We shall be holding a Coffee Morning on Thursday 15th May at 11.30am (after the 10.30am Communion Service). Donations of cakes and raffle prizes, please! All proceeds to Christian Aid.

Regular activities

Holy Communion - every Thursday morning at 10.30am

Church in the Pub - last Wednesday in month, Cotton Tree Pub at 8.00pm

Little Owls - Tuesdays during term time, 9.30am to 11.00am

Sacred Space - Wednesdays during term time, 3.30pm to 4.30pm

Prayer for Ascension Day (29th May)

Dear God, our loving, sending and almighty Father,

Thank you that because Jesus died, rose and ascended into heaven, You were able to send your Holy Spirit to empower Your disciples then and today. That, equipped by that same Spirit, we can confidently work for Your kingdom to come on earth, as in heaven.

Lord, in these strange, topsy- turvy days, where earthly rulers terrify, destroy and disappoint, we rejoice that You are the Sovereign Lord of all things, and all times, and all places. *You, our God and Father, truly reign.* We are Your people. We are secure within Your love and protection. Thank you that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow - and that we pray thankfully in His name, Amen.