

Bollington Church News

The magazine of Bollington Parish Church, St Oswald's



February 2026

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

Lent starts this month, with an Ash Wednesday service on 18th February at 10.30am. This Ash Wednesday service has real depth and meaning. It is usually very well attended and significant for the people who come.



Ash Wednesday encourages us to self-reflection and to examine our behaviours, priorities and values. Sin, confession and repentance are not fashionable words we hear much in the culture of the world today. But they are part of the deep inheritance of wisdom in our Christian faith that are part of what it means to be human.

We live connected with each other by woven threads of relationships, and we fail each other all the time, like an old, knitted blanket with stains and holes from moths, dropped stitches and broken threads.

On Ash Wednesday we pause and take responsibility for our actions. We acknowledge that where we have made poor choices we have to live with the consequences.

On Ash Wednesday we begin a process of renewal by turning away from sin and turning to Christ. We don't ignore sin, pretend it's not there; we don't find excuses for sin or find someone to blame. We acknowledge that we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We turn to Christ who bears the weight of human guilt, shame and regret on our behalf.

With absolution through the risen Christ, the weight is lifted from us, and we are set free and given newness of life.

Lent: time to
pause and take
responsibility for
our actions.

On Ash Wednesday we take communal responsibility for the brokenness of human life. We 'mind the gap' between how things are now and how they could be with God's healing and wholeness. We recognise our mortality and human frailty and limitation.

"Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.
Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ."

We receive God's absolution and turn anew to Christ from whom flows mercy, grace and freedom. In Christ all things are made new.

With love, Nancy

**

Ash Wednesday: a good time to admit you are sorry

Have you done something which haunts you? Which makes you feel restless and defensive, every time you think of it? Why not deal with it this month, and put it behind you? Whatever your wrong has been, consider what the Bible has to say to you: 'I have not come to call the virtuous but sinners to repentance' (said Jesus). (Luke 5.32)

'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55.7)

'Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.' (Joel 2:12-13)

God is inviting you to come to Him this Ash Wednesday. What a wonderful offer! Make the most of it and remember how the prodigal son was welcomed back by his compassionate father.

Look out for...

New for Lent – Parish Prayer Meeting!

On Tuesdays at 11.15am – all welcome

Bollington is a great place to live, and so this Lent, we want to simply pray for the people of this parish. Come and join us after Little Owls on a Tuesday morning, and we will pray specifically for our fellow Bollingtonians, the forthcoming Bollington Festival, the Town Council, Middlewood Surgery, schools, police, fire station, nursing homes, library, leisure centre, Bridgend Centre, Canal-side Radio, businesses, shop keepers, pubs, carers, dog walkers, boat people on the canal, and anyone else we can think of!

Service for Guides, Brownies, Rainbows, & Rangers

Sunday 22nd February

We will be joined by the Guides, Brownies, Rainbows, Rangers, and their families at the morning Communion service on Sunday 22nd February at 10.30am. This will be part of their celebration of the 100th Anniversary of World Thinking Day. If possible, could you be here as part of the Sunday congregation to help provide a friendly and supportive welcome to the youngsters and their families. Do invite anyone you know who was in the Guides to come along to support them too.

Church Cleaning at St Oswalds

Lynda Iverson writes...

We are a small group which usually meets on the first Monday of each month, either morning or afternoon to clean our lovely church. If you are at all interested in joining us at St. Oswald's, you would be most welcome. We always include coffee and a chat which is a nice way to get to know each other. We would be so grateful for any help, if it's only half an hour or so. We are meeting next on Monday the 2nd February at 1.30pm. Please just turn up or phone 07775625775 for further information.





CURATE'S CORNER

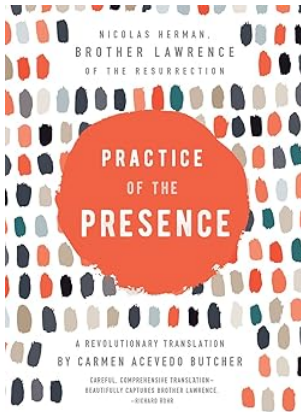
with Jenny Eades

Practice of the Presence

I wonder what picture comes to mind when you think about 'God'? Is God, for you, an old man in the sky with a beard? Or does the word God suggest something more ethereal, more spiritual? Is God fundamentally a parent figure, God our Father, or perhaps, in more inclusive language, also our Mother? Or perhaps you go first to the image of Jesus, sometimes described as the 'Body language of God'?

And what is God LIKE? Some people grow up with images of God as demanding, judgemental, fundamentally disapproving of frivolous humans. Or as distant and removed from the mess of being human – the God who sets creation ticking but then sits back and watches, unmoved.

In these cold winter days when the news seems relentlessly gloomy, one of the comforts of MY day is to spend a little time with a man called Brother Lawrence, a simple monk who lived in Paris in the 17th Century. His writings were collected when he died and published as 'The Practice of the Presence of God'.



The book I am reading is a new translation of that spiritual classic, by Carmen Acevedo Butcher. And it is a profoundly kind translation, of the writings of a profoundly kind man who believed and trusted in a profoundly kind God.

For Brother Lawrence God was, and is, fundamentally our Kind Friend. And prayer is simply remembering that. Taking a moment to think about Love, about our Kind Friend, as often

as we can in the middle of the busy-ness of daily life. Talking with God, thinking of God and doing our work 'gently and in love with God'. Taking a few seconds, from time to time, to ask for help, to say thank you for lovely things, to just remember that you are NOT alone in the universe.

It's the simplest prayer in the world. It might just change your life.

Do try it and see.

God bless. Jenny x

**

My Musical Memories

Cherry Smith looks back on a lifetime of loving music



'In my heart there rings a melody ... of love'. This is my very earliest musical memory! I can vividly recall singing this chorus in church when I was very young, and before I started school. It's not a hymn I've heard anywhere else. Both words and music were written by Elton Roth, an American, in 1924.

Other very early musical memories include *'Jesus wants me for a sunbeam to shine for him each day. In every way try to please Him, at home at school at play.'* And *'Joy! Joy! Joy! with joy my heart is ringing: Joy! Joy! Joy! His love to me is known; My sins are all forgiven, I'm on my way to heaven, My heart is bubbling over with His Joy! Joy! Joy!'*

Also, *'Build on the Rock, the Rock that ever stands. Oh, build on the Rock, and not upon the sands; You need not fear the storms or the earthquake shock. You're safe for ever more if you build on the Rock.'* We used to make the building shake when we stamped and shouted the word **'shock'**!

After I joined the church choir, I vividly remember the excitement I felt about singing the Ripieno part in Bach's 'St Matthew Passion' (in English of course) with the grown-ups and an orchestra! We sang from the gallery, so we were sort of out of sight when we weren't singing!

'O Lamb of God, most holy, who on the cross didst languish... our every grief Thou sharest...have mercy on us.'

At Senior School, our performance of Mozart's 'Requiem' with professional soloists and orchestra was the musical highlight of my time there. I will never forget the boys' vigorous singing of 'Rex tremenda majestatis'!

Meanwhile, I continued to sing in the church choir and every Good Friday, as part of a three-hour Service, we would sing 'The Crucifixion' by John Stainer, with both tenor and bass soloists and organ accompaniment. The congregation was included in the 'performance' because they would join in the hymns.

Since then, my musical journey has been an extensive one, and very varied. It has included operettas, serious opera, choral music, quartets, duets and solos. But I shall never forget how it all began – with choruses sung with gusto in a little church in Pietermaritzburg.

What about you? Do you have happy musical memories? If you don't sing or play an instrument, do you enjoy listening to live music? What about church music e.g. hymns, anthems, organ solos etc?

Supporting music at St. Oswald's (and elsewhere, of course) is good both for performers and audience alike, and who knows what musical memories it might create or revive for you!

Look out for coming details of a special musical service at St Oswald's, to be given on Good Friday, 3rd April.

How to Handle Temptation

'I can resist everything but temptation' (Oscar Wilde). During Lent we remember Jesus' experience in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11), when *'He was led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil.'* (1). Temptation is a test of whether we do things our way or God's way. After 40 days of fasting Jesus was tired, hungry and vulnerable. Like Him, the Devil will attack us at our most venerable moments, especially when we are stressed.

The first temptation was to turn stones into bread: Jesus' ministry was not about putting His own needs first, but being nourished by God's word. *'We do not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'* (Deuteronomy 8:3). Like Jesus, we need to make God our priority and trust Him completely.

The second temptation was to put God to the test: Jumping off the Temple pinnacle would have been a dramatic way for Jesus to gain popularity, but this was not God's way! *'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'* (Deuteronomy 6:16). We too need to learn this lesson!

The third temptation was to worship Satan: The devil took Jesus up a mountain to offer Him worldly power. In contrast, His calling as Messiah was to be marked by suffering and honouring God. *'Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only'* (Deuteronomy 6:13). This is to be our experience of living for God.

Jesus stands with us in our temptations. As we claim the promises of Scripture, like Him, we will find strength in the Spirit's power and the victory of the Cross. *'Since Jesus Himself has endured being tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted.'* (Hebrews 2:18)

'If you look at the world, you'll be distressed. If you look within, you'll be depressed. But if you look at Christ, you'll be at rest!' (Corrie Ten Boom).

Memories of Sunday school

By Alan Wilson

If the topic 'Sunday school' were to crop up in casual conversation, depending on who it was you were talking to, people will probably react in a variety of ways.

An older person may remember going to Sunday school as a child, whereas a young to middle aged adult may not be familiar with the term, or if they are to assume it to be something from the dim and distant past. That latter sentiment is a fair one to make, as Bollington no longer has any purpose-built Sunday schools.

The so-called '*Big Sunday School*' was sited where the Civic Hall now stands. It was erected in 1861 at a cost of £2,000, and was also used as a cookery centre and technical school and for public entertainment – apparently it could hold 900 people. The *Methodist Sunday School* was converted to use as the Arts Centre in 1984.



My memories of Sunday school are good ones. My family emigrated to Canada in the mid-1950's, where we lived for about six years before returning to the UK. We lived on the outskirts of Montreal and there was no 'R.E.' at the school I attended, but the church my parents started going to had a Sunday school, so I was enrolled there.

I enjoyed going and eagerly looked forward to the magazine given out each week. It was a kind of comic based on religious themes. Being one of nature's

hoarders I still have them! Back in England when I was a bit older I started going to a local Covenanter group held on Sunday afternoons.

There were other similar groups, for example the Crusaders. They were run by volunteers from local churches or the community and although I did not fully appreciate it at the time, looking back I feel a great sense of gratitude for those people, giving up a big chunk of their weekend in an effort to instil sound biblical teaching into a sometimes resistant young mind!

These groups also held sporting events, had football teams and summer camps. The Covenanters had several camps - Criccieth in Wales and Polzeath in Cornwall being just a couple.



With the passing of Sunday School as an institution, and with changes in society such that a secular lifestyle is in some ways the default position, it becomes more important that our young people continue to have a chance to hear about, and learn something of the basis of Christianity.

It is still often said that we in Britain are a Christian country, and of course historically that is not in dispute, but it is becoming more and more difficult to maintain that tradition. Here in Bollington, we are very lucky to have two primary schools run by the Church of England.

Our vicar, Nancy, and our curate, Jenny, play a crucial role here, and this is something we must be extremely thankful for.

If anyone reading this has any memories of Sunday school, whether in Bollington or elsewhere, it would be most interesting to hear about them.

Remembering Peter Offord Davies

This is an extract from the eulogy at his recent funeral.

Peter was born and grew up in Coventry. After school he joined the territorials as a boy soldier, although when war broke out, he was too young to go to France.

But in 1943 he grabbed an opportunity to join a new battalion of Glider Pilots. After qualifying, his squadron was among others who were seconded to the 9th troop carrier command United States Airforce liaison.

In 1944 Peter was part of operation Varsity flying to Germany towed by a Hercules aircraft. He was co-pilot that day, when they were hit and crash landed on the wrong side of the Rhine. Yet, having been thrown out of the cockpit they managed to escape. And after the war ended, Peter re-enlisted back into the Royal Artillery at Woolwich as a career soldier.

He married Gina on 21st July 1945, after meeting her on a station platform in Coventry. She had been going on leave, and he was going back to camp. They went on to have two daughters.

In 1958 Peter came out of the army and into civy street. The family moved to Hazel Grove, and Peter became a typewriter salesman for Remington Rand in Manchester. His biggest sale was to sell *all* the typewriters to Granada TV - when they set up their studio in Manchester!

Peter then decided to leave sales, in order to start up a wastepaper business of his own in Adlington, and then in Bollington.

It was then that Peter stood for election to the Bollington Town Council. He went on to become Mayor of Bollington and later Mayor of Macclesfield. He was proud to have held these two offices, and took a very active part in attending activities and helping people.

By 2014 Gina's health was failing, and they purchased a summer house so they could sit and enjoy their beautiful garden. Dad dedicated himself to taking care of Gina, and she passed away peacefully in August 2016.

He was now completely lost, until one of his daughters suggested he ask Dean Valley School about reading with the younger children. Peter went for an interview, and was given two afternoons a week. Off he would go on his scooter. He managed to do this for nine years, building a good rapport with both the pupils and staff.

He won a over 90's National Writing competition and was awarded a tree which is planted in the school grounds. He also contributed to the play area.

In 2022 he was listed in the New Years Honours at the grand age of 100. At first he thought it was a scam, but then realised it wasn't. Yet another highlight in his life. He insisted on it being awarded to him at the school.

Once he got to be 100, and had appeared on the BBC following the announcement of being awarded a BEM for his work with children, the publicity that created was amazing. The BBC had such a huge response to the interview it appeared on every news slot that day, they then came back to film him and all at the school. We had many letters from around the world.

Then came the requests for Peter to be interviewed regarding his military history, which again the BBC filmed. His history is now in several publications. Manchester airport also held a special service there for his 100th Birthday with a reception after in the Concorde suite.

Last year, after many times trying, Peter finally got a military helicopter to fly onto the school field on a cold half-term day . Another highlight!

Peter was continually thinking of new things he could do. He filled his life with care and consideration for others, and what a life he had. But as he would say: "I'm just plain old Pete Davies!"

Happy New Year

This is the first part of a local true story which this month is anonymous... all will be revealed next month!

Well, 2025 wasn't a particularly good year, but it wasn't too bad either. I reached my early teens, though my birthday wasn't celebrated in any way. Life continued fairly much as usual, with days being spent in the company of my many companions, and varying little in length. I didn't really notice a huge variation in temperature either, though sometimes I did feel a bit hot under the collar; quite a lot of us to one room can have that effect!

We were only one day into 2026 when something most unusual happened. Several of us were prepared for travel, no packing necessary, which was a good thing as we weren't given any notice, but bundled up in groups of five and taken outside into the dark. As we got into the car, all I heard was talk of a fresh start, which I didn't know I needed, but I did say 2025 wasn't a particularly good year, so maybe the plan was for 2026 to be good, or at least better!

However, the signs weren't looking promising as it was cold and dark, the only comfort being that I wasn't on my own. The journey was quite long and none of us knew where we were going. Eventually, we stopped and I thought we had arrived at our destination, but I was wrong. Soon we were taken to yet another car, for yet another journey - though this time it wasn't too long before we stopped again.

This time, though, it seemed we had arrived at our final destination. All five of us were taken to our new accommodation: a much smaller room than the one we had left, with minimal light and no heat and it was the 2nd January!! If this was the fresh start, then I preferred the old one, thank you very much. But at least there was food and water, and the place was clean. Food and water were replenished, but the door wasn't opened, though there were sounds of other friends outside, which were reassuring even though we couldn't see them.

I wonder what the rest of 2026 will bring.....to be continued!

'South Riding' by Winifred Holtby

By Chris Ward

I came across this rather coffee-stained book in our house just recently with my father's signature inside the front cover. I think my mother (probably the cause of coffee stains) must have given the book to Elaine at some time. As my father died in 1948, it must have been in the family all this time. I have only just read it now.

Published posthumously in 1936, the book is set in the fictional South Riding of Yorkshire, inspired by the life of the author's mother Alice Holtby who was the first alderwoman on the East Riding County Council. It has a cast list of about 150 characters rather like that for Shakespeare play, which is useful as so many characters are involved.

It describes the everyday problems of life in the area during the depression of the 1930s - poverty, sickness, schools, isolation, mental health, and how the council is trying to deal with them. The story is centred round the interaction between the 'first women alderman', the impoverished squire and the new ambitious headmistress of the local girl's secondary school.

The book was extremely popular (my copy was the 17th impression in November 1941) and adapted for cinema in 1938 starring Ralph Richardson as the squire. Two television series (1974 and 2011) and a radio version (1999) have since been made.

Winifred Holtby was born at Rudston, in the East Riding of Yorkshire in 1898 into a wealthy farming family. In 1919 she attended Somerville College Oxford after a short time with the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in France at the end of the First World war.

At Oxford she met Vera Brittain, a fellow student and later the author of the novel 'Testament of Youth', and after graduating they moved together to a house in London hoping to establish themselves as writers.

Holtby wrote several books of fiction, criticism (of Virginia Woolf), sociology and poetry. She died in 1935 aged 37 having been diagnosed with Bright's disease four years earlier. She spent these remaining years putting all her energy into South Riding which became her most famous book.

**

With Valentine's Day and romance in mind....

The Rules of Marriage

Here are the real-life answers from a group of children:

Question: How do you decide who to marry?

You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the chips and dip coming. - Alan, age 10

Question: How can a stranger tell if two people are married?

You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids. - Derrick, age 8

Question: What do you think your Mum and Dad have in common?

Both don't want any more kids. -Lori, age 8

Question: What do most people do on a date?

Dates are for getting to know each other. Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough. - Lynnette, age 8

Question: When is it okay to kiss someone?

The law says you have to be eighteen, so I wouldn't want to mess with that. - Curt, age 7

Question: Is it better to be single or married?

It's better for girls to be single but not for boys. Boys need someone to clean up after them. - Anita, age 9

All in the month of February

It was:

175 years ago, on 1st Feb 1851 that novelist Mary Shelley died, aged 53. Best known for her Gothic novel *Frankenstein*.

125 years ago, on 2nd Feb 1901 that the funeral of Queen Victoria took place.

80 years ago, on 11th Feb 1946, that the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament was published. It was the first major English-language update of the Bible since the King James version was published in 1611.

70 years ago, on 11th Feb 1956 that two members of the Cambridge spy ring, British diplomats Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean, announced that they had defected to the Soviet Union.

50 years ago, on 11th Feb 1976 that John Curry won Britain's first-ever Olympic gold medal in figure skating.

Also 50 years ago, on 23rd Feb 1976 that artist the L S Lowry died. Known for his bleak industrial landscapes of north-west England, with matchstick men.

30 years ago, on 15th Feb 1996 that the oil tanker Sea Empress ran aground, causing a major oil spill along the coastlines of Wales and Ireland.

25 years ago, on 12th Feb 2001 that the Human Genome Project announced the publication of the first complete working draft of the human genome.

Also 25 years ago, on 19th Feb 2001 that the first case of foot-and-mouth disease in the 2001 UK outbreak was detected at an abattoir in Essex.

20 years ago, on 18th Feb 2006 that the Rolling Stones played the world's largest free rock concert on Copacabana beach, Rio de Janeiro. An estimated 2 million people attended.

Book of Remembrance for February

- 4th Feb - **Gilbert John Capper**
- 5th Feb - **Phyllis Jackson**
- 6th Feb - **John Arthur Ashton**
- 7th Feb - **Ian Mather**
- 7th Feb - **Hilary Mary Morgan**
- 7th Feb - **Barbara Audrey White**
- 7th Feb - **Gary Mark Kendrick**
- 8th Feb - **John Neville Bamford**
- 8th Feb - **Bessie Hughes**
- 9th Feb - **Arthur Houghton**
- 10th Feb - **Revd. John Bryce Warburton**
- 11th Feb - **Amy Osbaldiston**
- 14th Feb - **Hubert Wallworth**
- 15th Feb - **John H Downes**
- 15th Feb - **Alan Heathcote**
- 16th Feb - **Colin Bailey**
- 16th Feb - **Dorah Stanesby**
- 17th Feb - **Frederick Rodney Genders**
- 17th Feb - **Emmeline Worthington**
- 17th Feb - **Walter Chadwick**
- 18th Feb - **Mark Needham**
- 19th Feb - **William Lea**
- 20th Feb - **Joseph Bowden**
- 21st Feb - **Catherine Elizabeth Mallon**
- 25th Feb - **Joseph Bowden**
- 25th Feb - **Elizabeth Bowden**
- 27th Feb - **Kate Amelia Mills**
- 28th Feb - **Charles Clifford Arnold**
- 28th Feb - **Amy Elizabeth Molineux**



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

From the Registers

Funeral - 27th November, Peter Davies

Wedding Blessing - 22nd December, Anders Skytte and Fiona Bogues

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Bollington Church News – how to contact us

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Publishing & Printing: Published by the PCC, printed by IAM Print.

Distribution: Sue Whitehurst and Christine Osbaldiston

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 March issue to reach Anne by 20th February.

After Eden

Adam was out walking with his sons Cain and Abel. As they passed by the ruins of the Garden of Eden, one of the boys asked, "Father, what's that place?"

Adam replied, "Boys, that's where your mother ate us out of house and home."

Worship in February

Sunday 1 st Feb	10.30am - Celtic Communion
Sunday 8 th Feb	10.30am - Parish Communion
Sunday 15 th Feb	10.30am - Parish Communion
Wednesday 18 th Feb	10.30am Ash Wednesday Communion Service with the imposition of ashes (please note there is no Thursday Communion Service this week)
Sunday 22 nd Feb	10.30am - Parish Communion

Holy Communion - every Thursday morning at 10.30am

Candlemas & Cake - 6th February

All welcome at St Oswald's at 3.15pm to 4pm

New for Lent – Parish Prayer Meeting!

Each Tuesday at 11.15am beginning 24th February.

Church chat in the pub – 25th Feb

Come for an evening of good conversation at The Cotton Tree, from 8pm.

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

Sacred Space - Wednesdays, 3.30pm to 4.30pm

Our hooded ladies!

We thought you might like this photo of Nancy our vicar and Jenny our curate – two 'Faithfuls' to the end!

