



April 2021

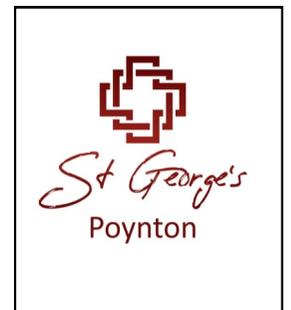
*We can't bring you GRAPEVINE but we
can bring you an Offshoot*

Welcome



'Image: Maxim Hopman/Unsplash'

Poynton Parish Church



We were out walking in Buxton when the announcement of Prince Philip's death was made on Friday. As soon as we got into the car and the radio automatically came on we instantly knew something had happened – rather than the closing moments of 'Composer of the Week' on Radio 3, which had been looking at the life and music of Stravinsky there were serious and hushed tones, and no music.

Our airwaves, televisions and newspapers were filled with tributes, memories, insights to a man who had essentially come to Britain as a refugee, leaving Greece aged 1, and had served his adopted country with energy and commitment.

Our thoughts particularly at this time must go to our Queen, who described her husband as her 'strength and stay'. Any loss, is significant. This was a theme picked up by the Archbishop of Canterbury in his sermon this past Sunday:

"For the Royal family, as for every other, no words can reach into the depth of sorrow that goes with bereavement. It is not simply a factor of age, or familiarity. It is not obliterated by the reality of a very long life remarkably led. Nor is the predictability of death's arrival a softening of the blow.

Loss is loss. For each person it is felt individually and reaches into the heart variously. We cannot ever know how others feel, nor do two people feel the same. It is simply loss. Some bear it apparently easily, for others it is crushing. We cannot judge anything from that, either about the depth of affection that existed or the reality of grief that is experienced."

May we be those who in our own times of grief and loss, and in our support of others, seek the goodness and comfort of God. For whilst we 'mourn with those who mourn' (Romans 12:15) we do not 'grieve like the rest of mankind' (1 Thessalonians 4:13). We can know hope for the future as we trust in Christ and rejoice in the good news of his death and resurrection.

Yours in Christ,

Matthew



"Image: Press Association"

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

The family and friends of those who have recently died:

Junette Jarman	aged 88	31 st March
Geoffrey Bowles	aged 91	7 th April
John Wragg	aged 76	13 th April



Message from Simeon and Julie Briggs.

We will be moving to Tarporley, Chester, nearer family in a few weeks time. My mum, Norma Rhodes, will be coming with us to live in a lovely annexe next door. It might not be possible to say our goodbyes personally whilst restrictions are still enforced, so we would like to wish you all well and say thank you for allowing us to work and worship alongside you over the past 24 years. From the first time I entered the doors for an evening service all those years ago you have made us welcome (It was Graham Booth who made time to say hello), and we have loved and appreciated our time here. Our children became Christians here and have benefited greatly from your support and encouragement. We'll be paying visits from time to time, but for now it's goodbye and God bless .

Ball of Wool

Today
Asking God for understanding of what's happening in my life
I see a multi-coloured ball of wool,
Partly unwound
twisted
knotted
knobby.

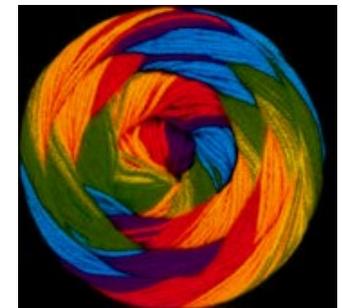
God's hands are carefully untangling it
sometimes
pulling the wool back through itself
sometimes
the knots are very solid
needing pinching
pulling
plucking
Ouch!
sometimes
a short length is straight.

All the time God was slowly,
persistently
carefully
lovingly
Unravelling the tangle.

Underneath
the ball was
smooth
spherical
perfect.

What should I do?"

"Relax,
Let life happen,
Choose to respond
as Jesus would.
I'll do the rest!"



Patricia Dye

Thank You St George's

On behalf of everyone we wanted to say 'Thank you' to all at St George's who made our Easter services so memorable. It's not possible to name everyone but you all contributed so much and worked so hard. It meant a lot to be actually in church or join in live-streaming and remember the wonder of Jesus' resurrection. Especially after this third lockdown and a long hard winter, it's lifted our spirits to join in the Easter celebrations.

So a special thank you to all the clergy, church wardens, and to Jeanette and the flower arranging team who made the church look so beautiful.

Finally we want to thank you, Aled, for all you've done for us. Especially after Rob left and before Matthew came, you held us together, particularly as the pandemic and lockdowns set in. You got us praying online, drinking coffee online, watching services online and hearing your daily dose of joy. May you and Jo be blessed and strengthened in your new ministry together in Dunham Massey. Thank you.

Jenny and Francis Cooke



Making a difference this Christian Aid Week

I spent ten years working for Christian Aid as their youth writer and editor, based at their Waterloo offices. Over the years, I learnt a lot about how Christian Aid works as it equips people to bring about change in their own lives and communities.

One person who sticks in my mind is Mariya. I met this 89 year old during a trip to visit Christian Aid partners in Tajikistan – an ex-soviet country nestled between China and Afghanistan.

With the collapse of communism in the eastern bloc, soviet states that had previously been supported by the USSR were abandoned almost overnight. Older people who had worked hard and paid into state pensions their whole life were literally left with nothing: no state support, no savings. In a country that was already poor, many were left unable to afford food, or heating during the freezing winter months. Rather than despairing, Mariya, supported by a Christian Aid partner, set up a luncheon club for older people in the community. For many that came along, this was their only hot meal of the week.

Knowing that local people are best placed to understand and respond to their community's needs, Christian Aid works through locally-based partners across 29 countries. Christian Aid provides the funding, the support and the infrastructure to enable its partners to empower local people to lift themselves out of poverty, through initiatives such as Mariya's luncheon club.

This Christian Aid week, Christian Aid is focusing on climate change and the devastating impact that its effects are having on the world's poorest communities – those who have done the least to cause the problems.

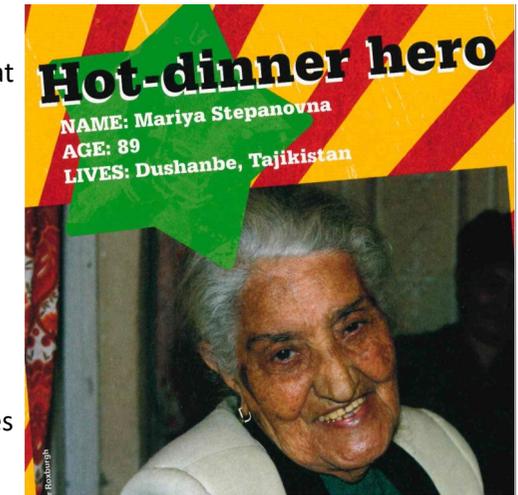
At over 60, Rose already has her work cut out caring for the grandchildren who live with her. In addition, Rose must walk for miles every day to collect water, in heavy containers, for her family. 'Because I am old, I can't walk very fast. When I get home... I have no energy to do anything else,' she explains.



Photos: Alasdair Roxburgh, Adam Finch/Christian Aid



10-16 May 2021



From severe droughts to flooding, the effects of extreme weather make it hard to grow crops or store water, meaning that Rose and her family often go hungry. But, with a reliable source of water from an earth dam, Rose and others in her community would be able to grow food as well as have water to drink and wash with, without having to make the long and dangerous journey to collect water each day. This would also free up valuable time for Rose to earn an income or tend to crops. 'I believe God gives me strength and helps me persevere. I pray that God will help people to help me,' she says.

What was amazing about working at Christian Aid was that I could make a difference for people like Rose. What continues to be amazing, is that you and I still can, through our giving and our prayers.

Lucy Carmen

Due to ongoing restrictions, it has been suggested that we at St. George's and St. Martin's could do a limited 'deliver only' envelope scheme this year. I haven't yet seen the material from Christian Aid, but assume the envelopes would give all opportunities to donate. There will be NO house to house COLLECTION.



If you have been a collector in the past, or would be willing to join us in this year's 'deliver only', I would very much appreciate you contacting me, if you have not already heard from me. Christian Aid is continuously grateful for the support of volunteers like you.

Linda Bell

07826 696916

www.christianaidweek.org

Thank you from Gulnar

Gulnar and her family are originally from Baghlain province in Afghanistan. But their life was devastated when their home and village were destroyed by flooding.

The damage was so severe that they were forced to leave what remained of the village and start a new life in Kabul. Yet in Kabul, the family could not find enough work. So Gulnar's husband took a job in a factory 250 miles away.

'His work made our life a little better', Gulnar recalls. Her husband earned enough for the family to rent a house and eat regularly.

But the last time her husband left for work in the factory, he disappeared.

With Gulnar battling a long-term health condition, her young sons found work in a local factory so that the family could buy food.

Then coronavirus locked down the local factory. The family were left with no income, no food and no protection - their home does not even have running water. 'On one side there was nothing to eat and on the other side there was coronavirus', Gulnar says.

Fortunately, a local Christian Aid partner contacted Gulnar. Support like yours, in the shape of food packages and hygiene kits, helped them and 600 other vulnerable, displaced families in Kabul to survive and keep safe. Life, for now, feels more hopeful for Gulnar, her children and many of her neighbours - thanks to you.

Thank you from Sabnam

Sabnam, from Nepal, is a daily wage earner. Like others in her community, she survives on the small income she receives from her work, day by day. She was happily expecting her first child when the arrival of the coronavirus changed everything.

Sudden lockdown ended the work that Sabnam, her husband and entire family relied on. There was no money, and little food. It left her fearful for her developing baby's wellbeing.

Thankfully, Sabnam gave birth to a healthy baby boy. But her joy soon turned to worry over continued lack of nutritious food: 'not for my sake, but for my baby.'

So Sabnam was over the moon to receive food parcels, provided with your help through a local Christian Aid partner. The parcels were put together specifically to help 1,300 pregnant and new mothers. They included pulses, beans and a nutritious wheat, barley and milk drink.

'The food that I got was just right for a new mother, for nutrition which would ultimately benefit my baby too. I would like to thank you all from the bottom of my heart'.

Altogether, our emergency food assistance in Nepal reached thousands of very poor and vulnerable mums, elderly people, and people with disabilities. You also helped support health and quarantine centres, hygiene measures and public awareness to reduce the spread of coronavirus amongst the most marginalised communities.

Spring Thoughts From Dickens Lane Vineyard

Yes you read it right, Vineyard, did you know Poynton has it's very own vineyard. Only 10 vines, Solaris, planted in two rows of 5, using a "professional style" trellis system.



The vines are 7 years old and capable of producing some excellent white wine, unless the blackbirds eat the grapes first, which is what happens in most years. Solaris being similar in style to Sauvignon Blanc is now often found in vineyards in the South of England. In mid April the vines are just beginning to bud and hopefully will not have been damaged by the recent overnight sub-zero temperatures.

Many of the famous French vineyards have already lost 90% of this year's harvest due to 3 nights of sub-zero temperatures; warm early spring weather causing the vines to bud early followed by mid to late April sub-zero temperatures has become a frequent problem in the last decade, no doubt due to climate change.

Grape Vines make an excellent structural addition to a garden; they are easy to grow over arches, pergolas, arbours or just along suspended wires. My 15 year old vine in the back garden has achieved a total length of 35 metres.



They are very hardy, easy to prune during the winter and in the autumn can have beautiful leaf colour. Not to mention the joy of eating your own grapes.

Call in at 130 if you want to see or know more.

During the COVID lockdown in 2020 many people took to their gardens and it was reported that the sale of seeds, flowers and vegetables, reached record levels. I've always been one to sow some in spring, choosing packets from local suppliers, mainly for flowers; Marigold, Pansy, Viola, Foxglove, Rudbeckia and Calendula for example. Last year for the first time we harvested our own seeds from both Viola and Pansy. Ann did the seed collection as the flowers set



and we stored them in paper bags (as recommended). In September I sowed some of the seeds, a few trays worth, we had so many seeds ! The results have been amazing. The advantage of buying your own seeds is that you can

choose varieties that you like, rather than be limited to what is available as small plants. Marigolds are a typical example of this and they are so easy to grow from seed, typically germinating in just 3-4 days. The wonders of God's creation.

Last Autumn we bought a bigger selection of Spring bulbs and planted them in the garden borders and also in pots and tubs.



The results have been stunning as many are in flower now and glow in the spring sunshine. We have Crocus, Tulips, Narcissi, Muscari, Alliums and Brodea.



We look forward to the display of roses in the coming weeks—during the winter we have

installed two arches and planted 4 new climbing roses. Dahlia tubers that have been overwintered in the greenhouse in boxes have now been planted in pots and those that were left in the ground have had their protective cover of compost removed. Let's pray for lots of sunny days in the coming weeks so that we can enjoy our gardens, which are a great place to meet and chat as we come out of COVID lockdown.



Now that some of the strictest of Covid rules have been relaxed and we are able to arrange to meet friends (only up to 6 of course!) out-of-doors for coffee or a picnic, have we forgotten how valuable real face to face meetings can be? Will it be hard to break out of our own personal space and remember how to have a conversation with someone, somewhere, beyond our own sitting room?

Some restrictions still remain; some of the hardest too - no hugs, not even a handshake and no indoor gatherings. However, vaccination has been amazingly effective and we hope and pray that by the summer, life will be refreshingly normal, or more normal, whatever it will be.



Meanwhile the kindness of friends, however limited it must be, is such a huge support and something we can cherish , appreciate and share.

Susan Warrington

That best portion of a good man's life
His little, nameless, unremembered acts of
Kindness and love

William Wordsworth

Life is mostly froth and bubble
Two things stand alone
Kindness in another's trouble
Courage in your own.

Adam Lindsay Gordon

Kind hearts are more than coronets
and simple faith than Norman blood.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

love

Is patient, love is kind
It does not envy
It does not boast
It is not proud
It does not dishonour others
It is not self-seeking
It is not easily angered
It keeps no record of wrongs
Love does not delight in evil
But rejoices with the truth
It always protects, always trusts
Always hopes, always perseveres
Love never fails

Have you had a kindness shown?
Pass it on!
Twas not given for thee alone
Pass it on!

Let it travel down the years
Let it wipe another's tears
Till in Heaven the deed appears
Pass it on!

Henry Burron



Annual Report

The Church of England requires every church to hold an Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) each year. This year, our APCM will be held on Monday 17th May at 7.30pm, and hopefully it will be possible for some people to attend in person, as well as via Zoom. At this meeting our church wardens will be elected and there are 5 places on the PCC to be filled. “An annual report on the proceedings of the parochial church council and the activities of the parish generally” is also required to be presented and discussed. In the past, the Annual Report has been a printed copy which was available at the meeting, however due to the current Covid restrictions it has been decided to publish the report on the church’s website prior to the meeting. Should anyone require a printed copy then they will need to contact the church office to request one.

Obviously, 2020 was very strange year. Who, in February last year, could have predicted how our lives would change and how our vocabulary would expand to include such terms as ‘zoom’, ‘webinars’, ‘R rates’, and ‘PCR and lateral flow tests’, let alone enable us to discuss the merits of different vaccines! The Annual Report this year will record just how innovative many of the various church groups have been in overcoming the difficulties of the various lockdowns. Keeping in touch has been absolutely crucial to our collective survival.

Whilst January and February may have been pretty normal, it all started in March. The interviews for our new Vicar were fortunately scheduled for early March, and so Matthew was appointed just before the first lockdown, and eventually ended up moving to Poynton whilst we were all in social isolation. Many people made mini videos to welcome Matthew and Kate albeit ‘virtually,’ and we are all looking forward to the day when we can meet them properly without a screen, mask or a 2-metre distance.

We are fortunate in Poynton to have so many people who are “tech savvy”, so our Sunday services continued despite the restrictions. At first the services were recorded, and then when it was possible, live-streamed via YouTube to those at home. This became a spiritual life-line for many of us. “Zoom” coffee after church also helped us all to keep in touch and lessened the feelings of isolation. Many home groups have continued via Zoom, as well the children’s and youth groups, and even the church choir has continued practising in this way. WhatsApp has also enabled many groups and individuals to stay connected, even if it was just to say “are you OK?”, “do you need anything?” or to share the odd joke/meme. The church magazine went online as “Offshoot”, although printed copies are distributed to those who can’t access the internet. The staff team and church office have worked hard to keep in touch with all those who don’t use computers or smart phones, and so have been even more isolated during the pandemic.

Once churches were allowed to open again, a new set of complications arose. The number of people allowed to attend was severely restricted, so places needed to be booked. Sanitising all surfaces between services and/or leaving the church empty was necessary to prevent any possible contamination. Everyone now has to sanitise their hands on entry, and wear a mask throughout the service, and the hardest bit for many of us – not sing! Although hearty humming is permitted.

Whilst the Annual Report this year will emphasise the difficulties that Covid brought last year and highlight the successes of dealing with lockdown, I hope and pray that next year’s report will be all about our return to “normal”.

Valerie Parry - PCC Secretary

In Cloud Cuckoo Land

This is the time of year when avid readers of the Times correspondence columns will be on the lookout for a letter from a country dweller, perhaps a (Col. Ret'd) who is sure he has heard the first cuckoo of the season. He may well have done as the cuckoo might arrive as early as April, from St Tiberius' Day on the 14th, and stay until St John's Day on June 24th.



Better still is seeing a cuckoo and I remember driving to visit my Mother on a Spring Day about fifty years ago; bumping across the common to her cottage we spotted an unmistakable cuckoo perching on the telephone wires. That was a thrill, never, so far, repeated though I thought I heard one only last week. Could have been a pigeon I suppose! Did anyone, like me, sing in a school choir; "The cuckoo sings in April, the cuckoo sings in May, the cuckoo sings in June. In July it flies away?" I can hear the tune in my head as I write this. And that's even more than fifty years ago!

There are various pieces of country lore about the significance of cuckoos and the weather. The wise farmer should turn the money in his pocket if he hears the call, to ensure money in his purse until the cuckoo returns, is just one piece of advice and there are others about crops and sowing. However, the best known, and still quoted by many today whether in town or country, is the question of when to shed a layer of clothing. Does May refer to the month or the flowering hedgerow? Take your pick; and maybe just take off a coat if you feel too hot!

Susan Warrington

Prayer Points

A prayer for Healing:

Heavenly Father we lift to you
all those who are sick in body, mind, and spirit,
may the love of our Lord Jesus,
peace and healing and the warmth of his presence
be with you and those you love. **Amen**



For our troubled world:

Lord God, we live in disturbing days:
all across our world we see natural disasters of great magnitude.
Nations warring with each other,
security ever more fragile and the threat that
great institutional finance systems are failing.
Heavenly Father please be with those
whose lives have been affected and changed for ever. **Amen**

Loving God, meet us in our fear and hear our prayer:
please be that strong tower amidst the shifting sands,
and a light in the darkness;
help us to receive your gift of peace and
fix our hearts where true joys are to be found,
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**