

The Parishes of Newchurch,  
Croft and Winwick



Three Parishes : One God

## 'Rector's Ramblings'

March 2024

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Dear friends in Christ

### *Hands*

Over the next few weeks Heather and I will be shaking hands with many people as we are welcomed to the Culcheth Group of parishes and begin our ministry amongst you following my Collation on Wednesday 28 February. Hands will feature in the service itself as I will be anointed by Bishop John. We look forward to our joint Holy Communion service at St Oswald's on Sunday 3 March at 11.00am during which I will break bread for the first time as your new Rector and Priest-in-Charge. This will be followed by a shared informal meal where we will eat and drink together. This will provide Heather and me with an opportunity to meet many of you.

As we look ahead, please be patient with us. There are many new faces and names for us to remember so we might need to ask you to remind us of your name at times!



I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have worked tirelessly over the last few years to maintain mission and ministry in our parishes. As the saying goes, many hands make light work although I am sure it has seemed quite heavy at certain moments despite the involvement of many.

### *What Next?*

Experience has taught us that the beginning of a new ministry is both a time for rejoicing and a time of nervousness. What are they like? Are his sermons too long? Or not long enough?! What will he change? The list goes on....

What is inevitable is that I will do things differently. What is also inevitable is that you will like some of what I do but not everything. What I will share with you as we come amongst you is that like all of us I am a person with both strengths and weaknesses who will at times make mistakes. Beyond this as a disciple of Jesus Christ I will strive to serve you to the very best of my ability as I seek to honour God's call upon my life to serve as your next Rector. I am aware that I do so at a point of significant change and opportunity in the Diocese of Liverpool as we seek to be a Bigger Church.

### *A 'S.T.E.P.'*

#### *Approach to Ministry*

My Collation will mark a new beginning for us all as I will be ministering across three parishes. As I have been preparing for our move I have become aware of four important principles that I pray will be the foundations for our ministry amongst you. These four principles can be described as a S.T.E.P. approach to ministry:

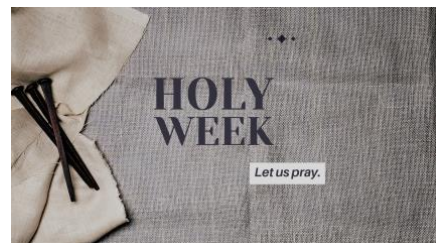
*Sustainability*

*Team work*

*Equity*

*Presence*

I am sure that you will hear me refer to these in the weeks and months ahead.



Heather and I begin our journey with you during Lent leading into Holy Week and Easter. We will remember, in the words of a contemporary hymn, the hands that flung stars into space were surrendered to cruel nails.

The services from Sunday 3 March to Easter Sunday 31 March are listed in this newsletter. This includes details of our Holy Week services across all three of our churches. You will see a slight change for Maundy Thursday.

On Maundy Thursday there is an opportunity for us to gather at Christ Church, Croft. We will do so beginning with refreshments in the Church Hall from 7.00pm. Our Communion of the Last Supper will begin at around 7.45pm in the Church Hall with the washing of hands. This reflects that in our culture we wash our hands before a meal and not our feet. There will be an opportunity for your hands to be dried after which we will make our way into church. Following the service there will be a vigil until 11.00pm.

The sacrament will be reserved in one kind and will be administered in silence at the first service on Good Friday at St Oswald's at 9.00am. This sequence reflects the changing mood amongst Jesus' disciples as the atmosphere moves from that of joy at the gathering for the Passover meal to one of utter devastation as Jesus, their Lord, their friend, their teacher, their guide, dies on the cross.

### ***Praying Hands***

Prayer is an essential aspect of our personal and common life together. Please continue to pray for us as we settle into our new home and begin to get to know you.

May God continue to bless the work of our hands in His service as together we seek to grow as disciples of Christ. As we say during the Eucharistic Prayer: Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free; you are the Saviour of the world.

Yours prayerfully

***Martin***

Revd Martin Cox

## **Services for March**

### **Sunday 3 March**

*St Oswald's @ 11.00am* : Joint Holy Communion Service for all three parishes followed by lunch in the Church Hall.

### **Tuesday 5 March**

*Newchurch Parish Hall @ 10.00am* : Morning Worship

### **Sunday 10 March – Mothering Sunday**

*Christ Church @ 10.30am* : Holy Communion

*New Church @ 10.30am* : Holy Communion

*St Oswald's @ 11.00am* : Holy Communion

### **Tuesday 12 March**

*Newchurch Parish Hall @ 10.00am* : Holy Communion

### **Sunday 17 March**

*Christ Church @ 10.30am* : Holy Communion

*Newchurch @ 10.30am* : Morning Worship

*St Oswald's @ 11.00am* : Holy Communion

### **Tuesday 19 March**

*Newchurch Parish Hall @ 10.00am* : Morning Worship

### **Palm Sunday 24 March**

*St Oswald's @ 11.00am* : Joint Holy Communion

Service for all three parishes.

### **Tuesday 26 March**

*Newchurch Parish Hall @ 10.00am* : Holy Communion

### **Maundy Thursday 28 March**

*Christ Church Croft*

*7.00pm* : Refreshments served in the Church Hall

*8.00pm* : Communion of the Last Supper in church

**followed by Vigil ending at 11.00pm.**

### **Good Friday 29 March**

*St Oswald's @ 9.00am* : Prayers at the Cross with administration of the reserved sacrament.

*Christ Church @ 10.30am* : Meditation.

*Newchurch Parish Hall @ midday* : Frugal Lunch

*Newchurch @ 2.00pm* : Liturgy of the Last Hour

### **Easter Eve Saturday 30 March**

*Newchurch 2 to 4pm* : Easter Eggstravaganza

*Newchurch 7.00pm* : New Fire of Easter

### **Easter Sunday 31 March**

*Christ Church @ 10.30am* : Holy Communion

*Newchurch @ 10.30am* : Holy Communion

*St Oswald's @ 11.00am* : Holy Communion