

# St Matthew's News

The Parish of Edgeley and Cheadle Heath



April 2015  
Issue 35



## Sunday Service Times

### Sundays 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> April

10:30<sup>am</sup> Whole Parish Worship

### All Other Sundays

9:30<sup>am</sup> Formal Service

11:15<sup>am</sup> Less Formal Service  
(with children's groups)

### Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April

11:15<sup>am</sup> All Age Signed Service

Image courtesy of holoholand at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

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## Eastertide

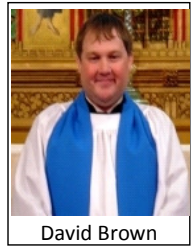
Soon we will have passed through the endurance race that is Lent and will be celebrating the joy of Easter Sunday. I admit, I struggle through the tradition of giving things up for Lent. Not because of a lack of willpower; it's just that as a diabetic, I don't really eat chocolate so I wouldn't achieve much by giving it up. Likewise with alcohol, I rarely drink these days because of the various tablets I'm on, so again it wouldn't be a real hardship to abstain. I'm sure I'm not alone in this situation.

I wonder if this is all that Lent has now boiled down to: searching for something to give up for a few weeks and then back to the excesses of life. I guess it boils down to how we as Christians view Lent.

For me, like most of you, I expect Lent represents a period of contemplation, a time to consider what being a Christian is all about. A time to endure some hardship, foregoing the usual pleasures to remind us of the brutality of Good Friday. A time to experience the isolation of Christ, abandoned by His disciples and by this world. A time to think about the sacrifice of giving up life and being separated from the Godhead, so that all could be saved.

So each Lent, instead of giving something up, I've taken to adding something: I've taken to adding more Christ into my life. Each day I set some

time aside to think about Christ and my relationship to Him. To think about where I need to be to meet Him in prayer and in my daily activities. I do more structured reading and more talking; talking to non-Christians or those who are unsure at work.



David Brown

I've taken to living the risen life that we celebrate on Easter Sunday. It takes courage, but I'm not doing it alone: Christ walks with me, Christ walks with you - it just takes a little faith from us. Being a Christian should be a joy; *is* a joy! We're saved, it's just that some of us don't appear to realise it from our attitudes to life.

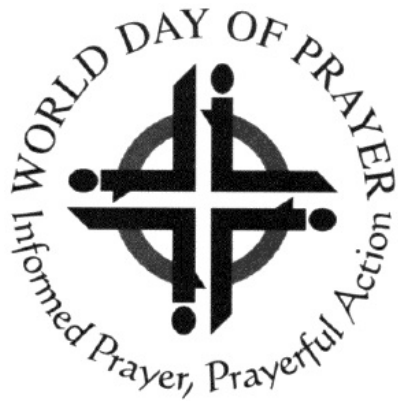
No matter what disasters and sorrows life throws at us, God has already chosen us and saved us! It's amazing isn't it? Happy Easter.

## Vision Event Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

If St. Matthew's is your church, then we need you to come along to worship and share your thoughts. We are all on this journey together. We want to be the church God is calling us to be. Your voice is important; you are important.

All you need to do is bring some food to share for lunch, and stay around to chat! Together, we can discover a new vision for our future.





St Matthew's hosted this year's **Women's World Day of Prayer** on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March.

An ecumenical service is held at a different church each year on the first Friday in March. I am the representative from St Matthew's so I was privileged to lead the service. A country to pray for is chosen each year by the worldwide committee: this year it was the Bahamas.

The service highlights the situations and problems of the chosen nation through words and hymns. We displayed the lovely colours of the Bahamas, including turquoise, lemon, various blues and pink; and the altar was decorated with flowers and fruit.

Approximately 95 people, mostly women, attended the service. If you missed it and would like to attend next year, it will be at a different church, to be announced at a later date.

Do try to join us – it is very special.

**Audrey Mannion**

## ***Where have I been?***

I've been in the betting shops, met the tattoo artist, visited all but one of the pubs, sampled the cake shop cream cakes, poked my nose into the barbers' and hairdressers' shops, been tempted by the smell of chips and chocolate, admired the craft skills of the florist and card makers and finished with a much appreciated cup of tea in the Olive Cafe.



By now I think you will have guessed I've been delivering St. Matthew's leaflets to the shops and residents of Castle Street! When I asked if I could leave a leaflet, with only one exception, I was greeted warmly with a bright smile and a friendly, 'Yes, of course you can'. I was surprised how many folk wanted to tell me that St. Matthew's was 'their church'. Some come to the Fun Day, others to the Christingle service, others either went to St Matthew's School or have children or grandchildren there - but they feel they belong!

Have you delivered any leaflets yet? It is surprising how many people stop and tell you about their connection with St Matthew's...everyone seems to know David!  
**Lois Haslam**

**P.S.** I got the advanced information that another activity day in the precinct is being planned for this summer.

## ***As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.***

### **Isaiah 66:13**

Isn't that feeling just amazing? The promise... not just will the Almighty Lord comfort us but the comparison here is 'as a mother comforts'. Of course, there are not enough words in our vocabulary that could describe emotions of love and care better than one word which says it all – 'Mum'.

Personally speaking, I could go on for ages, talking to my mum about anything under the sky; many a time matters that she might not even have an understanding about or a solution for and even those that are entirely out of her control! But that feeling of comfort that I experience from miles away is, I believe, the gift that the Lord has specially handed over to mums to pass on His behalf.

Why do we go to mums even when we know that they may not have a solution for us? That's surely dedicated to the trust and faith we have in our mother. It is quite definitely embedded in our minds that mums would love to hear our chatter and even if there are matters out of

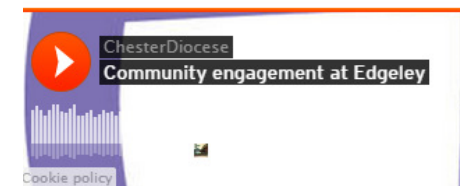


their jurisdiction, they will definitely not turn us away! Oh no... all of you will surely know that I could never turn away my little Sarah's non-stop chatting... could I?

What about you? Is it time to think if there is a gap in our daily conversations with our Lord through prayer? Surely we need to develop that strong bonding, that trust and faith to go up to Him, without doubt, at all times. Definitely, our Lord Almighty is waiting... waiting for us to turn up to Him, speak to Him, share with Him and, as He himself has promised, the comfort the Risen Lord gives is everlasting!

With blessings and prayers of the Easter season. May we all grow stronger in the love of Christ xxx

**Mrs Jecce Ann**



## ***Talk Talk***

Pam and David made a podcast with Ian Bishop! Listen to it (scroll down to halfway) at: <http://www.chester.anglican.org/> There is also a link on the St Matthew's Homepage.

## ***Rethinking Our Future***

If you've been around St. Matthew's for any length of time I'm sure that you'll know of our lack of suitable space for anything other than services. Whilst our social area is well used, we have in the past struggled for appropriate rooms for small groups, children's work, and office and general meeting space. When the school was adjacent to church this was no great issue as we had use of their facilities, but for many years now we've been thinking about building a church hall to fulfil those needs.



Over the last four years since we brought the congregations together we've been considering grand plans for a building to the north of church. Though this would be ideal, there are several hurdles - including financial -

## ***Healing Prayers Needed***

After Easter we will be arranging training for people interested in becoming part of the Healing Prayer Team.

If you think that you would like to be a part of this amazing Ministry please

that make this dream unrealistic. In the interim period we have been using St. Matthew's Vicarage as parish office and rooms and this is both sufficient to our present needs and, using the whole site, offers many possibilities for the future.

We have asked the diocese if it would be possible for us to purchase it and the exciting news is that they have agreed. Though this is still a big financial commitment, following much prayer and discussion the PCC believe that this is the best way forward.

In the coming weeks we will be asking you to think about how you can contribute to the purchase, both through gifts and fund raising. In the meantime please pray about how you can contribute to creating the facilities we need to continue to minister to the people of our parish.

**Rev. David Brewster**

see Di Bebb or one of the Prayer Ministry Team for a chat. Thanks.

**Di Bebb**

## ***Flower Fund***

Money was donated to the flower fund in March in memory of **David Jonathan Clare**.

## ***On Being a Reader***

Arthur Sinnott has a lot to answer for! He is a Reader in our previous parish and he suggested that I should consider Reader ministry myself. Ten years later - long story - I was licensed. It's been a huge privilege. The training was not always easy, but I made some good friends through it, and discovered that during the toughest times God's faithfulness is enough. I'm so grateful to Arthur for giving me a kick.

The most obvious thing about Reader ministry is that we share in the preaching and leading of services. I have to say that I love preaching. I know I still have a lot to learn, and actually that's one of the things that I love about it. Every time is a learning experience. I'm not the most



Lucy Brewster

disciplined person, so left to my own devices I probably wouldn't study much in my free time. When I'm preaching I *have* to study; I *have* to read. I get so much out of that and hopefully manage to bring something helpful to Sunday morning.

The rather scarier thing is the responsibility which goes with the job. St. Paul has some serious things to say about those who presume to preach or teach. But God, and the family at St. Matthew's, are very gracious. No ministry is about the person delivering it, whether it's being visible at the front or filling in forms when nobody else is around. We all do what we do because we want to serve the God who has given us everything.

That cracked vessels can be given a purpose is the greatest privilege of all.

**Lucy Brewster**

## ***House of Bishops' Pastoral Letter on the 2015 General Election***

*The pastoral letter draws on the experience of the Church of England as a Christian presence in every community to warn of the disengagement between politicians and the people. They note that "with few exceptions, politicians are not driven merely by cynicism or self-interest" but nevertheless, "the different parties have failed to offer*

*attractive visions of the kind of society and culture they wish to see.... There is no idealism in this prospectus".*

*The letter encourages political parties across the spectrum to seek bold new visions of hope and idealism rather than "sterile arguments about who might manage the existing system best."*

Please think and pray on this before casting your vote in May.

**Press Release. Used with permission**

## Witnessing History

On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March, the Rt Revd Libby Lane was installed as the eighth Bishop of Stockport in a service of choral evensong at Chester Cathedral.

According to the event programme, Libby 'was welcomed by members of the civic and faith communities from across the Diocese,' including some St Matthew's parishioners. Our own Lucy Brewster, in her capacity as Lay Chair of Stockport Deanery, read the Second Lesson.

It was a historical day in both church and British history, as well as for Stockport. The Mayor of Stockport, Councillor Kevin Hogg, proudly declared that 'Stockport is at the forefront, as usual.'

We thought you would enjoy reading the reactions of some of those who were there, and so we have produced this special insert.

The spirit of the day might be summed up by a line from one of the hymns: *Knowing you, Jesus, knowing you, there is no greater thing* (Graham Kendrick). All doctrinal differences aside, we were there because we love the Lord; there is no greater thing.

**From the Editor** - We hope you enjoy this bumper issue of *St Matthew's News*. However we feel about it, Bishop Libby's installation is of historical importance and we felt a need to mark the occasion. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the insert.

## A Brief History

**1920** Lambeth Conference. First debate on ordaining women priests. Vote is lost.

**1930** Women's ordination again on Lambeth Conference agenda. Vote lost.

**1944** First female Anglican priest, Florence Li Tim-oi, ordained in Hong Kong by Bishop Ronald Hall.

**1971** Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Ramsey, advises Bishops that, with the approval of their Province, they can ordain women to the priesthood.

**1975** C of E votes that there is 'no fundamental objection to the ordination of women to the priesthood'.

**1978** General Synod debates motion to remove barriers to ordination of women to the priesthood and their consecration as Bishops. The vote to proceed is lost.

**1985** First women ordained as Deacons in the C of E.

**1992** General Synod votes to permit women to be ordained to the priesthood.

**1994** 1,500 women Deacons ordained as Priests.

**2005** General Synod approves motion to remove 'legal obstacles' to women becoming Bishops.

**2009** Draft legislation accepted by General Synod and sent to the Revision Committee.

**2012** Revised legislation rejected by General Synod.

**November 2014** New legislation presented to and accepted by General Synod.

**December 2014** First woman Bishop announced.

**February 2015** Consecration of the Bishop of Stockport, Rt Revd Libby Lane.

**March 2015** Bishop Libby's welcome to the Diocese of Chester.

*Thanks to Lois Haslam for this timeline.*

## What's on this Month

All events (except Home Groups) in church unless otherwise stated

### Weekly

#### Mondays

**6:30<sup>pm</sup>** Brigade (except 6<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>)

#### Tuesdays

**8:30<sup>am</sup>** Home Group (except 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>)

**1:30<sup>pm</sup>** Socially Yours

#### Wednesdays

**10<sup>am</sup>** Holy Communion

**7:45<sup>am</sup>** Home Group (except 8<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>)

#### Fridays

**9:30<sup>am</sup>** Toddle Time (except 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>)

**7:30<sup>pm</sup>** Choir Practice

#### Saturdays

**10<sup>am</sup>** Saturday Café

### Other Events

#### Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup>

**2<sup>pm</sup>** St Matthew's School Easter Service

#### Maundy Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup>

**7<sup>pm</sup>** Meal with Communion

**8:30<sup>pm</sup>** Watch of Prayer

#### Good Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup>

**10:30<sup>am</sup>** Easter Crafts

**2<sup>pm</sup>** An Hour at the Cross

#### Easter Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup>

**8:30<sup>am</sup>** Prayer Breakfast

**10<sup>am</sup>** Hard Labour

#### Easter Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup>

**6<sup>am</sup>** Christians Together Sunrise Service at the Reservoir

**10:30<sup>am</sup>** Whole Parish Signed Worship with Healing Prayer

Lead: David & Lucy ~ Preach: David

#### Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup>

**7:30<sup>pm</sup>** Mothers' Union Rev. M Burgess My Life, Faith, Fellowship & Fun

#### Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup>

**10<sup>am</sup>** Saturday Café with Stockport Magistrates

#### Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup>

**9:30<sup>am</sup>** Holy Communion

Lead: Julie ~ Preach: David Brown

**11:15<sup>am</sup>** Morning Worship

Lead: Heather ~ Preach: Mike

**4<sup>pm</sup>** Wedding of Paul and Vicky Lamb

#### Monday, 13<sup>th</sup>

**1<sup>pm</sup>** Stockport Sling Meet & Library

#### Friday, 17<sup>th</sup>

**7<sup>pm</sup>** Choir Practice

#### Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup>

**10:30<sup>am</sup>** Holy Communion

Lead: David ~ Preach: Heather followed by our APCM

**200 Club – Subs Due**

#### Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup>

**7<sup>pm</sup>** Confirmation @ St. George's

#### Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup>

**10<sup>am</sup>** Refugee & Asylum Seekers Drop-in

#### Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup>

**9:30<sup>am</sup>** Holy Communion

Lead: David ~ Preach: Peter

**11:15<sup>am</sup>** All Age Signed Service

Lead: Lucy ~ Preach: Julie

## Looking Ahead to May

#### Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup>

**8:30<sup>am</sup>** Prayer Breakfast

#### Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vision Sunday

**10:30<sup>am</sup>** Whole Parish Worship with Healing Prayer

Lead: Julie ~ Preach: David

followed by a bring and share lunch

All details correct at time of going to press Please speak to group/event leaders for more information; or check the website and Facebook page



**Steph Haynes** - The installation of the Rt. Revd Libby Lane as Bishop of Stockport was a very inspiring experience. Chester Cathedral had a great atmosphere and was packed. The organisation was impressive, with stewards on all the doors, clear direction once inside, and flat screen televisions on most pillars.



I travelled down with Audrey, Beryl and Mark, and we had seats in the SW aisle, with a good view via the television.

The service was choral evensong and full of beauty and confidence in the Lord, from the opening hymn *Christ is Made the Sure Foundation*, through Psalm 23 and Mary's Magnificat, to the final hymn *Faith Overcomes! The Light of Christ is Shining*.

This confidence was picked up by Libby in her inaugural sermon. Drawing on

**Heather Adams** - I was really pleased to be able to attend Bishop Libby's Installation as Bishop of Stockport. I knew Libby from when she started the Praise and Play group at St George's which I attended with my children.

My views on women in church leadership have changed over the years

the readings (Isaiah 6:1-8, and Philippians 3:4-14), she began by being thankful for the encouragement of others as she starts this landmark role. She went on to describe how trust bestowed brings with it a deep rooted security.

So how much more when we know that our confidence is founded on the eternally secure, with the realisation that, not only can we have confidence in God, but that He has confidence in us.

As Libby received her pastoral staff from the Bishop of Chester, the following words were spoken:

'Christ has called you to be a shepherd to his people... keep watch over the whole flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you shepherd. Encourage the faithful, restore the lost, and build up the Body of Christ.' Amen.

(in a positive way!), and seeing Libby's obvious vocation to ministry contributed to that.

I noticed that Bishop Libby talked about each of us having a calling in our own lives, in our families and workplaces as well as in church, and I think that is really important.

**Lucy Brewster** - It was a huge honour to be asked to read, and lovely for our Deanery to be recognised in that way. I felt as humbled to be representing our Deanery as I felt terrified to be surrounded by so many Bishops!

**Chris Chesham** - The installation of the new Bishop of Stockport was an historic occasion, a history that had been over 500 years in the making. It was sacred, special and overwhelming.

And yet there was no sense of triumphalism, simply joyousness. It just felt right.

The applause as Bishop Libby was presented and welcomed was deafening. It went on and on, a clear reflection that the entire congregation felt blessed by Bishop Libby's ministry.

Finally, the whole service ended in a resounding AMEN!

**Jonathan Adams** - I feel about 'women bishops' the same way I feel about 'male bishops'. I don't get why there was an issue, or why there needs to be a 'women' prefix.

The view of the screens: great. Of the organist, good. Of the live event, not much.

I felt the service was appropriate but not very audience responsive; it did what was needed. I would have preferred less choir-only items, but I understand that this is what was

wanted. The clapping was needed and appropriate. I thought Libby's sermon was better than the last one of hers that I heard, more than ten years ago.

**Julie Johnson** - I sat with the rest of the robed clergy in the choir and could see nothing at all of the main part of the service - though the sound system was good - nor did I have a view of the TV screen as my line of view was blocked by large male clergy and ancient wooden carvings.

The only exclusive bit for the clergy was that we got to see our newly enrobed and mitred Bishop physically placed in her "stall" - and then I suppose you could say we observed her coming out of the stall to begin her new race - she smiling sedately whilst we choked on the incense. Lots of opportunity for puns there.

Bishop Libby's sermon was great - round about 12 minutes - and I remembered its thrust 24 hours later; but I could well have done without most of the rest of the service. I find Choral Evensong the most tedious of services.

Bishop Peter's charge to Bishop Libby (job description) which included, 'and anything else I can think of,' was a nice light and humorous touch.

Seeing the men having to queue for the loo as we came into the Cathedral also made me laugh - we ladies are used to that, but only at Silverstone have I seen a similar occurrence!

**Audrey Mannion** - I think we are very fortunate to have a woman bishop, though I have not always felt that way.

We had a good view with the monitors and the service was wonderful, including Libby's excellent sermon.

I'll remember that day, not least because we almost got locked in Tesco's car park!

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**Beryl Hubble** - The installation of Bishop Libby was a fantastic event, long awaited, and I felt quite emotional as I watched.

I had a good view from the south-west aisle and enjoyed chatting to strangers about what was happening.

The service was inspiring and I liked every bit of it, though I had mixed feelings about Libby's sermon. What a memorable day!

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**Linda Cosgriff** - I think God has a sense of humour. From an evangelical background, I long believed that women should not preach in the church. Yet I found myself at St Augustine's and then St Matthew's, surrounded by women who showed me that I was an idiot, with their obvious love of God and passion to share His word.

The first person to hear of the Lord's coming was a woman, His mother. The first person to accept His coming death was a woman, who anointed Him for burial. The first person to witness His

resurrection and *to tell of it* was a woman, Mary. Jesus was surrounded by and supported by many women, and if it's good enough for Jesus, then it's good enough for me.

Therefore, I was thrilled to be at the installation, along with 1500 others; and even to get the occasional view of the side of Bishop Libby's head over the crowd when I tired of looking at the screens.

It was interesting to note that bishops are literally installed into a stall, a huge, ornate seat. That surprised me; I didn't think the Church of England was so literal. What didn't surprise me was that there was no cheering, only clapping: very Anglican. We might have a deep love of God but we are British, after all.

It was amusing to note that the Bishop of Chester spoke in the archetypal Bishop's Voice, sonorous and straight from every skit I've ever seen on TV. By contrast, our new Bishop's voice was pleasant but firm when she told us, 'It is a remarkable thing to be carried by your goodwill and shared delight.'

And that was the spirit in the cathedral – a shared sense of joy that this day had finally arrived.

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**Lucy & Emily Adams** - We sat in the south transept and had to look at screens. It was good listening to most parts of the service and I liked Libby's sermon and some of the songs. I enjoyed it.

**Robert Adams** - I sat in the south transept. The screens were slightly dodgy but fine. I enjoyed myself and chatted occasionally to strangers.

The service was good but the choir was awesome. I loved the choir.

There also appeared to be a verger carrying a spatula.

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**Roy Higham** - The installation service was really beautiful, with a star performance from the choir. Most impressive were the powerful *Amens* when Libby was introduced and robed, showing the immense support for her from the congregation.

I shall think of her collapsed on a Sunday evening with a large glass of wine.

Lucy read well and the local connection was a compensation for the service not being held in St George's, Heaviley.

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**Lois Haslam** - Wow! What a welcome! It was a great day. With folk from all areas of Chester Diocese packed into the Cathedral, it was one of those very memorable services of worship that I will never forget. There was obvious delight that Libby has been appointed as our Bishop of Stockport and we wanted to be there to pray for her and support her in her new ministry.

It was extra special for me as she is our Bishop of **Stockport**. Having lived with the legislation for the past ten years, as

it slowly progressed on its long tortuous journey through General Synod, I felt we had finally achieved completion.

I was also at York Minster on Monday, 26 January 2015, when Libby was consecrated - the first woman bishop in the Church of England. There were over 100 bishops (dressed in bright red) and a large crown of clergy, Readers and laity in the Minster, who responded to the Archbishop of York with an enormous shout of welcome when he asked if they wanted Libby as Bishop. It was a colourful, noisy and very, very moving service in which we promised to 'continually pray for her and uphold and encourage her in her ministry.'

Libby understands Stockport as she was Team Vicar in the former Stockport South West Team (St George, St Mark and St Gabriel).

Many of the present St Matthew's congregation who previously worshipped at St Mark's, know her well. But we can't claim her entirely as our own, as a Suffragan Bishop has much wider responsibilities in the Diocese. In Libby's case, that is in the nine Deaneries on the east side of Chester Diocese where she is the deputy to the Bishop of Chester, Bishop Peter.

We've now to support Libby and pray for her as she ministers to us as our Bishop. Will you pray for her?