



# CHRIST CHURCH, WALSHAW

## ADVENT MAGAZINE, December 2019

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# He is the God of surprises

I wonder if we had been given a blank piece of paper and asked by God to plan the coming of his Promised One ... His Son, to come into the world to "save His people from their sins" what plans we would have made.

Those plans for His coming might have included fanfares, palaces, a crown, lots of pomp and ceremony, and more.

I hazard a guess that none of us would have been thinking about the King of Kings being born in a stable to a young, unimportant girl; but this was God's plan - planned from the beginning - because His ways aren't our ways. He is the God of surprises. He surprised His people two thousand years ago and He continues to surprise us today.

I dare say there will be lots of children waking up on Christmas Day expecting surprises and I imagine, for all the right reasons, lots of children will be very happy with their surprises. Because He is always the God of surprises and because He is at work in the world and in our lives, even when we don't realise it, let's all anticipate the God of surprises surprising us this Advent and Christmas. Let's watch out for God at work in our lives and the lives of others, sometimes in the ordinary but at the same time surprising ways.

What about that coming of God's Son, Jesus, with "fanfares, palaces, a crown, lots of pomp and ceremony, and more"? Well, it wasn't God's choice for His first coming but it is something to look forward to, and rest assured that it will come, because God has told us in His word: "... one day, at the appointed time, Jesus will return. And while no one knows the time or day, on that day He will come down from heaven with power and great glory and the sound of trumpets will be heard. He will be in the clouds and come with a host of angels and every eye will see Him ..."

This is probably more in keeping with what we might have planned for his First Coming but even though God has told us this will come to pass, I am sure we will all still be surprised. Let's hope it's a pleasant surprise for us and that each of us is pleased to see Him return.

In the meantime, we look forward to seeing you at the various Advent and Christmas events and services taking place in our community over the coming weeks. These include our 'Carols, Holy Communion & then a Pint' at the Victoria Walshaw; 'Walshaw Community Choir Christmas Concert', our 'Community Carol Service', our ever popular 'Christingle' service on Christmas Eve and of course our services on Christmas Day.

Wishing you and yours a Christmas full of joy and peace

Every blessing

*Steve Openshaw*



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There is more information on the activities Steve writes about on pages 3-6 of this online magazine and on our website: [www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk](http://www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk)

**Wednesday 4th December**

Before things get 'just too busy' ...

**Carols, Holy Communion  
& then a Pint**

**7pm at the Victoria Walshaw**

led by Jean Burgess,  
the Archdeacon of Bolton

Join us as we remember 'what it's all about'  
in an informal & friendly way.  
All are welcome.



[www.victoriawalshaw.com](http://www.victoriawalshaw.com)

[www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk](http://www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk)



**Christ Church Walshaw  
Community Carol Service**

**6pm Sunday 15th December**  
with Christ Church Music Group  
singing from 5.45pm

After the service everyone is invited  
to join us for mulled wine  
and mince pies.  
All welcome

[www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk](http://www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk)

  @WalshawChurch



5.30pm CHRISTMAS EVE  
Tuesday 24th December 2019



## Christ Church Walshaw CHRISTINGLE SERVICE



Come along bringing your Christingle orange as the children place baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and kings in the stable as we think about the meaning of Christmas. We will sing some lovely Christmas carols, have fun and enjoy each others company. Our voluntary collection at this service will be going to Bury Hospice (You can find out how to make a Christingle orange via the link on our website)

[www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk](http://www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk)



@WalshawChurch

## Christ Church Walshaw Christmas Day Services

You are warmly invited to come & celebrate with us  
the birth of Jesus on this special day

**@8.30am CHRISTMAS DAY HOLY COMMUNION**

A quiet 'said' Holy Communion service lasting about  
half an hour

**@10.30am CHRISTMAS DAY FAMILY CELEBRATION**

Fun & Christmas carols at this informal & relaxed  
service.

Don't forget to bring a present to show us & put on  
your Christmas jumper too!

**ALL WELCOME!**



[www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk](http://www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk)



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[www.facebook.com/Christ-Church-Walshaw-633956013346413/](https://www.facebook.com/Christ-Church-Walshaw-633956013346413/)

# Remembrance Sunday, 10 November 2019

On a crisp, sunny day, over 200 people congregated at the War Memorial. The Revd Steve Openshaw presided over the Service of Remembrance which took a traditional form, incorporating the reading of the names of The Fallen and the Two-Minute Silence at 11 o'clock. Wreaths were laid by civilian and uniformed organisations and it was good to see the younger generation paying their respects. The service concluded with the National Anthem, after which many of those attending repaired to Christ Church, open for worship for the first time since the re-ordering works which commenced in June.



# Re-ordering nearing completion

Work to re-model the interior of the church was scheduled to be completed on 2 December. There has been a delay in the delivery of tiles for the new WCs but there is optimism that the building will be fully functioning in time for the Advent and Christmas events advertised on the preceding pages.

The project has been overseen by our church architect Ian Lucas of the Byrom, Clark Roberts practice in Manchester. The contractor is Paul Smith & Co of Rochdale whose site manager is "Jugger" Greenwood.

As reported on page 4, the fellowship was able to return to worship in the building on Remembrance Sunday. For the preceding three months or so, Mrs Sarah Howard, Head Teacher at Christ Church Primary School, kindly allowed the fellowship to meet for Sunday worship on school premises. This was as helpful as it was generous. For the first few weeks, services were held in the infants' facility and it was apparent that some of the adults were as interested as any youngsters in the colourful environment in which they found themselves!

Returning to the church building after the Remembrance Service at the village War Memorial, those attending were delighted to find the interior in an advanced state of preparedness. The contractors had done a wonderful job of clearing the interior to make it really presentable and that made the fellowship's own clean-up operation very straightforward indeed. Thanks are due to Jugger's team and our own in-house squad for doing such a wonderful job... and in good time for the wedding held the following Saturday!



# Re-ordering nearing completion



# The whole is greater than the sum of its parts!

The day before Remembrance Sunday I was one of the large group of people who turned up at church to help give it a thorough clean now that the contractors had more or less moved out of the main body of the nave.

I was asked to help clean the upper parts of the screen in front of the organ pipes. Low down, on the front of this screen, there is a beautiful relief carving. The skill of the artist who created it is obvious and any visitor to church would certainly admire it.

Above it though, because I was higher up, I noticed a couple of other rather less significant pieces of decorative work. Hardly noticeable at all from below and although much simpler and requiring much less skill to produce, no less important and admirable in their own way.

First there's a series of small wooden squares, perhaps you'd call it a frieze. Each has four holes, arranged on the diagonals and joined by a slightly larger central hole and surrounded by a shallow, circular groove. So simple, yet elegant and perfect and each one identical.

Just above these squares there is a line of balls, each about the size of a large conker. They appear to me like the flower buds of a peony about to open and they each have three petals partially folded back. Somebody has taken the care to arrange them so that they alternate two petals up, one down and then one petal up and two down.

I was struck by the care, thought and time given to making and placing them where they would rarely be noticed. I could imagine that they are the work of an apprentice or junior woodworker, only allowed to do the tedious repetitive work, whilst the artisan completes the glory piece. Why bother? To do without them would be simpler, cheaper, faster and who would notice? I think that it's because, despite being small and out of the way, without them the whole would be so much less.

Next time you're in church take a look and then afterwards perhaps, like me, you'll begin to notice these small embellishments all around, on the structure and on the furnishings - a simple groove carved into an a ledge, a circle cut into the brace under a stool, a flourish etched into a door plate. I think they'll make you smile!



**Michael Cant**



# Walshaw Community Choir

with special guests  
**Tottington Public Band**



also starring  
**'Sticks & Phones'**

present

# AN EVENING OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC

**Wednesday 11th  
December 2019**

Adults £4.00  
Children FREE  
(no tickets required,  
pay on the door)

**7pm  
Christ Church  
High Street, Walshaw,  
BL8 3PS**

COME  
AND  
JOIN US!

Walshaw Community Choir  
Christ Church, High Street,  
Walshaw, BL8 3PS  
Contact: Alan Tait 01257 351111



[www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk](http://www.christchurch-walshaw.co.uk)  
enquiries: [walshawcommunitychoir@gmail.com](mailto:walshawcommunitychoir@gmail.com)

**QUIZ:** *By way of run-up to the concert advertised above, how well do you know your traditional Christmas carols? Fill in the gaps if you can!*

- |                              |                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 O Little Town of ...       | 11 I Saw Three ... Come Sailing by |
| 2 Silent Night, ... Night    | 12 Hark, the Herald ...            |
| 3 While ... Watched          | 13 It Came Upon the ....           |
| 4 The Holly and the ...      | 14 Little ... on a ... Road        |
| 5 We Three ... of Orient are | 15 The Little ... Boy              |
| 6 O Come All Ye ...          | 16 Once in Royal ...               |
| 7 In the Bleak ...           | 17 Joy to the ...                  |
| 8 Good King ...              | 18 ... from the Realms of Glory    |
| 9 Away in a ...              | 19 See Him Lying on a Bed of ...   |
| 10 Ding Dong ...             | 20 The First ...                   |

## ANSWERS

1. Bethlehem 2. Holy 3. Shepherds, Night 4. Ivy 5. Kings 6. Faithful 7. Midwinter 8. Wenceslas 9. Manger 10. Merrily 11. Ships 12. Angels 13. Midnight 14. Donkey, Dusty 15. Drummer 16. David's 17. World 18. Angels 19. Straw 20. Nowell (Noel)

