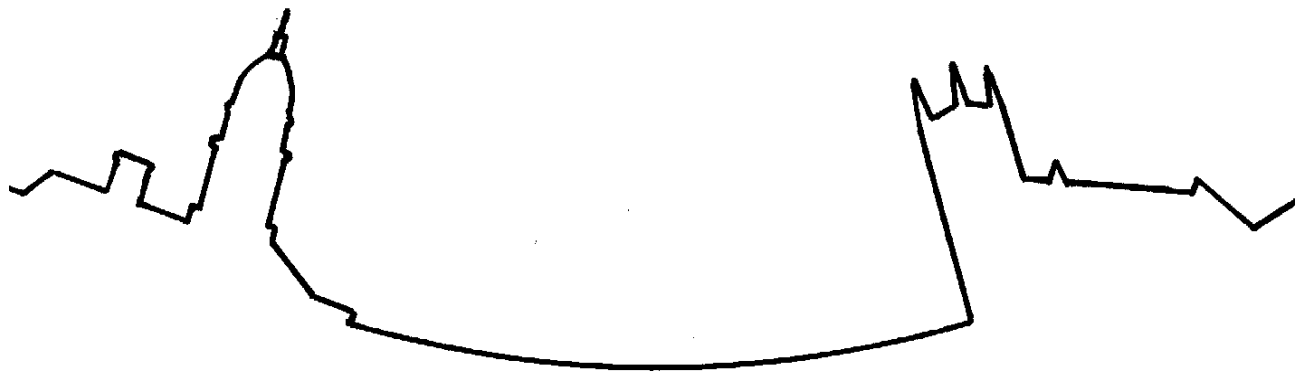
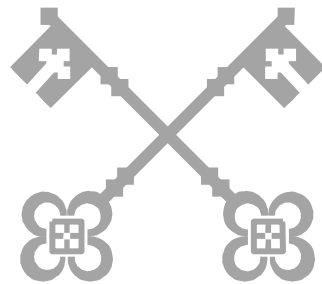


Christians Together in Bolton Town Centre

BOLTON PARISH CHURCH

St Peter, Bolton-le-Moors

Parish News
January 2010



Bolton Parish Church in Bolton Town Centre

50 pence

Dear Friends,

*'A cold coming we had of it,
just the worst time of the year
for a journey, and such a long journey:
the ways deep and the weather sharp,
the very dead of winter.'*

Rereading Eliot's *Journey of a Magi* shortly after Christmas, perhaps I could be forgiven for wondering if the Magi had passed through Bolton on their haphazard journey towards Bethlehem. Most of the time I am content to accept the scientific evidence that we are suffering global warming but after the last fortnight a new Ice Age feels rather more likely.

Due to the cold coming that we have had of it over Christmas, I am all too aware of several members of our congregation who have been snowed in over Christmas. Most of you have been in touch to let me know that you are all right which has been good to hear. We missed you from our celebrations but we're glad that all is well with you and look forward to seeing you very soon.

If you, or someone you know of, have missed out on church over Christmas due to illness or any other kind of problem then do let me know. Judie and I would be very happy to visit you at home and/or bring you communion. Both of us attach the highest priority to the pastoral care of the congregation so please don't hesitate to be in touch. Our phone numbers and emails are given on the last page of the magazine.

In addition we are joined in this work by members of the Pastoral Care Team who have been specially commissioned to share in the pastoral ministry and the ministry of healing in our church. Amongst many other things they ensure that our intercessions list is kept up to date.

If you have someone you would like us to pray for (and the person concerned would like this too) or you yourself would like to be prayed for then do let Judie or I know directly. Alternatively you can let Trevor Whillas, Lesley Easterman or one of our church wardens know. Messages for any or all of us can also be left with Jean in church or with Lynn via the Parish Office phone number/ email address also given in the magazine. Please be in touch! Especially at this time of year when it is difficult to get out and about, it is all too easy to feel isolated very quickly. We would not wish anyone to feel like that.

A new year is dawning upon us, full of promise and opportunity. Whether you make resolutions or not (I still do!), there is for all of us the possibility of new beginning, new life and new growth. My prayer for us at Bolton Parish Church is that we may experience a full taste of the new life that the Christ Child brings to us, not just over the next few days and weeks but each and every day through the year. As another poet, Anne Ridler put it:

*And each year
in seasonal growth is good- year
that lacking love is a stale story at best;
by God's birth
all common birth is holy; birth
is all at Christmas time and wholly blest.*

May this New Year be a year full of love for you and may you and it be wholly blest.

With my love and prayers

Matt Thompson

From the Organ Console

As someone pointed out to me after the Town Carol Service, I can now feel that I have really arrived as Director of Music – I've done my first Christmas! In connection with that season, I would like to thank most sincerely all the members of the choir for their reliability and expertise not only throughout the preparations for the Christmas services, but also ever since I first appeared in May! Before I was appointed I was quoted as saying that I thought this was a Rolls-Royce of a choir, and (with the absolute minimum of tinkering under the bonnet) I have come across no reason to change my view!

I was determined that the hand-over of power should be as seamless as possible, and I hope that this has been the case - apart from my shorter stature and the presence of a beard, most people, I trust, will not have been aware of any disruption to the normal tenor of the church's way! Thanks to the high standard maintained by my predecessor, Stephen Carleston, the hand-over was extremely easy, and, to a great extent, it was simply a question of keeping an already well-oiled machine running smoothly.

Most of the (minor) teething problems connected with the newly refurbished organ have now been ironed out, and various concerts will take place later in the year. There are two evening recitals already booked; on Wednesday 5th May at 7.30 p.m. Peter Morrison from Chorley will give a recital - Peter is an excellent player who has twice played concerts at Westminster Cathedral, and is often heard around the North-West.

On Wednesday 9th June (also at 7.30), I am delighted to welcome my friend David Brindle from Preston. David was one of the last pupils of the legendary Parisian organist Marcel Dupré, and specialises in 19th and 20th century French repertoire. Entry to the recitals will be by programme at the door, price £5 (concessions £3). It is well worth putting both these splendid concerts in your diary now!

In addition, the series of Tuesday lunchtime concerts will recommence after Easter - they will run from April 13th until the end of July. The full programme is still in preparation, but begins in excellent style with Ben Smith, the brilliant Bolton School pianist, playing Bach's "Goldberg" Variations.

And so the New Year begins for me with a distinctly optimistic feel - there is much to look forward to! This also seems to be a good moment to thank everyone at Bolton Parish Church for your warm welcome on my arrival, which helped me feel at home so quickly.

Michael Pain

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Sunday 20 December 2009

Sermon for Advent 4 - The Revd Prof Kenneth Newport

Luke 1.39-45(46-55)

Despite the centrality of the Christmas story, there is not actually all that much in the Bible about the birth of Jesus. Indeed, Mark and John, make no mention of it at all, and neither, rather surprisingly, does St Paul. It is only in Matthew and Luke that we have the story. Fortunately, however, these two evangelists tell it from a different perspective so we get a rather more rounded picture being able to view it, as it were, through two sets of eyes. No time for detail now, but basically Matthew tells it from the perspective of Joseph, whereas Luke tells it with an emphasis upon Mary. The story has grown in its telling and understandably so, but there is not all that much detail in the text itself.

So, for example, we get very little relating to the period of period of gestation, we presume the normal nine months. Though in our text this morning we do get a little information. Here we read of how after the announcement of from the angel to Mary, Mary went to see her relative Elizabeth, who was to become the mother of John the Baptist. At the greeting, the text says, the child 'leapt' in Elizabeth's womb. We then get that beautiful canticle the Magnificat, so well-known to Christians down the centuries, where Mary praises God for all that has recently taken place. And then the next we know, in Luke, is that Mary is about to give birth (it is Matthew that has the other detail about the travel to Bethlehem etc.)

But think for a moment about the months in between. The months when, like all of us, Jesus' home was his mother's womb.

Of course with modern technology we know much more about what that experience must have been like. As that which had been created by God grew, he must have become aware of the sounds around him. Strongest would have the beat of his mother's heart, but he would in time come to know his mother's voice and those of other members of the family that surrounded him. Other voices from a strange world not as yet experienced.

But the day was bound to come, and it did, when the familiar had to be left. And with pain, both for the mother and for the child, the baby was born.

Helpless. Dependent. Naked. But soon no doubt at his mother's breast the child could hear again the comforting and familiar sound of the heartbeat he knew so well; now from the outside of her body not from within. Different perspective but welcome familiarity.

That's quite an image.

- God dwelling within human flesh and blood for those nine months; God within God's creation.
- God knowing and recognising the very and literal heartbeat of humanity
- God at the heart of God's creation. Within it. Dependent upon it. Loved by it.
- A vulnerable God, as he would be vulnerable again upon the cross.

God, as a helpless child, attentive to the beat of his mother's heart



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Donations urgently required for VISION AID, the Bolton based charity for blind and partially sighted babies and children. This is the charity we support. Contact Lesley Green 01204 64265.

Social Committee

The **Parish Quiz Night** has now been rearranged for **Saturday 30th January** beginning at **7.30pm** in the Parish Church Hall.

There will be a supper included in the price of £2.50 per person; children free.

Do come along. This is an opportunity to bring your friends. There are teams of four usually but sometimes 3 or 2 if you prefer.

On **Saturday 27th February** at **7:30pm** there will be a **Parish Games Night**.

The cost is £2.50 per person with children free and supper included.

Again, an opportunity to have some fun with friends—do bring some with you.

If anyone has any ideas for future events, e.g. coach trips, away day to the seaside, please let a member of the Committee know.

David Morlidge

Christmas Quiz 2009

Once again, many thanks are due to Mrs. Hilary Pickering for all her hard work in devising our Christmas Quiz. Thanks you very much Hilary.

A total of £66 was given to the organ fund, much of which came from Trevor Whillas' colleagues at work. Thank you Trevor.

Prizes were awarded to:

Cath Hale
Jeff Masters
and Vera Bailey

Well done and thank you to all who supported the quiz.

Jane Hampson



The View from My Wheelchair

January as we all know is the first month in a new year and for most us a month in which we look forward to a year ahead and wonder what it may bring. Will it bring us success, happiness, better health, more time to relax with our family and friends and what ever personal goals or dreams each of us may have?

Alternatively it may turn out to be the year we may well wish to forget when we look back on it next January.

As I write this I am wondering what God my Father may be thinking about each us for the year ahead and whether what he has planned fits in with our plans or whether we will try to go our own way and not follow his path for us. He may of course see each of us doing as we want and decide that leaving us to choose our own steps will teach us some valuable needed lessons, or he may try to bring us back onto the path he wants us to follow, his way.

This is the usual month when people often choose to make some probably unobtainable New Year resolutions to accomplish the things they wish for their lives. But how many of us are able to admit that they can totally trust God to lead them where they need to go on their life's journey and not question where he takes us or what he may ask of us in the year ahead.

No year in most people's lives is ever very easy; there may be small or large disappointments too bare. Sadness and pain to get over or learn to live with. Worries about others health or our own and the ripple effect that this has on our close friends and family and how we all deal with things. Careers or promotions that may mean a higher salary and a better position but at what cost to us as individuals, to our families and our friends as our time gets squeezed. Most of all is the effect of what happens to us as individuals and Christians.

All of the examples are varied depending on our lives but if each of us as Christians stays committed and believing in what ever ways

that we do and trusts where God is leading us, then I do not see where we can be going far wrong in this year ahead.

My prayer to end this piece of writing is that every one who reads this finds the path they want in the months to come and that our individual journeys provide more happiness and peace than we would have ever hoped for.

Lynn Marsden



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A Story for Epiphany

As we celebrate Epiphany, it is worth re-telling Tolstoy's adaptation of an old folk tale.

It was Christmas Eve and although it was still afternoon, lights had begun to appear in the shops and houses of the little Russian village, for the short winter day was nearly over. Excited children scurried indoors and now only muffled sounds of chatter and laughter escaped from closed shutters.

Old Papa Panov, the village shoemaker, stepped outside his shop to take one last look around. The sounds of happiness, the bright lights and the faint but delicious smells of Christmas cooking reminded him of past Christmas times when his wife had still been alive and his own children small. Now they had gone. His usually cheerful face, with the laughter wrinkles behind the round steel spectacles, looked sad. But he went back indoors with a firm step, put up the shutters and set a pot of coffee to heat on the charcoal stove. Then, with a sigh, he settled in his big armchair.

Papa Panov did not often read, but tonight he pulled down the big old family Bible and, slowly tracing the lines with one forefinger, he read again the Christmas story. He read how Mary and Joseph, tired by their journey to Bethlehem, found no room for them at the inn, so that Mary's little baby was born in the cowshed. "Oh, dear, oh, dear!" exclaimed Papa Panov. "If only they had come here! I would have given them my bed and I could have covered the baby with my patchwork quilt to keep him warm." He read on about the wise men who had come to see the baby Jesus, bringing him splendid gifts. Papa Panov's face fell. "I have no gift that I could give him," he thought sadly.

Then his face brightened. He put down the Bible, got up and stretched his long arms to the shelf high up in his little room. He took down a small, dusty box and opened it. Inside was a perfect pair of tiny leather shoes. Papa Panov smiled with satisfaction. Yes, they were as good as he had remembered – the best shoes he had ever made. "I should give him those," he decided, as he gently put them away and sat down again. He was feeling tired now, and the further he

read the sleepier he became. The print began to dance before his eyes and he closed them, just for a minute. In no time at all Papa Panov was fast asleep. And as he slept he dreamed. He dreamed that someone was in his room and he knew at once (as one does in dreams) who the person was. It was Jesus. "You have been wishing you could see me, Papa Panov." he said kindly. "Then look for me tomorrow. It will be Christmas Day and I will visit you."

When at last Papa Panov awoke, the bells were ringing out and a thin light was filtering through the shutters. "Bless my soul!" said Papa Panov. "It's Christmas Day!" He stood up and stretched himself, as he was feeling rather stiff. Then his face filled with happiness as he remembered his dream. This would be a very special Christmas after all, for Jesus was coming to visit him. How would he look? Would he be a little baby, as at that first Christmas? Would he be a grown man, a carpenter- or the great King that he is – God's Son?

Papa Panov put on a special pot of coffee for his Christmas breakfast, took down the shutters and looked out of the window. The street was deserted – no-one was stirring yet. No-one except the road sweeper. He looked as miserable and dirty as ever, and who could blame him! Whoever wanted to work on Christmas Day – and in the raw, cold and bitter freezing mist of such a morning?

Papa Panov opened the shop door, letting in a thin stream of cold air. "Come in!" he shouted across the street cheerily. "Come in and have some hot coffee to keep out the cold!" The sweeper looked up, scarcely able to believe his ears. He was only too glad to put down his broom and come into the warm room. His old clothes steamed gently in the heat of the stove and he clasped both red hands round the comforting warm mug as he drank. Papa Panov watched him with satisfaction, but every now



and then his eyes strayed to the window. It would never do to miss his special visitor. "Expecting someone?" the sweeper asked at last. So Papa Panov told him about his dream. "Well, I hope he comes," the sweeper said. "You've given me a bit of Christmas cheer I never expected to have. I'd say you deserve to have your dream come true." And he actually smiled.

When he had gone, Papa Panov put on cabbage soup for his dinner, and went to the door again, scanning the street. He saw no-one. But he was mistaken. Someone *was* coming. The girl walked so slowly and quietly, hugging the walls of shops and houses, that it was a while before he noticed her. She looked very tired and she was carrying something. As she drew nearer he could see that it was a baby, wrapped in a thin shawl. There was such sadness in her face and in the pinched little face of the baby that Papa Panov's heart went out to them. "Won't you come in," he called, stepping outside to meet them. "You both need a warm by the fire and a rest."

The young mother let him shepherd her indoors to the comfort of the armchair. She gave a big sigh of relief. "I'll warm some milk for the baby," Papa Panov said. He took the milk from the stove and carefully fed the baby from a spoon, warming her tiny feet by the stove at the same time. "She needs shoes," the cobbler said. But the girl replied, "I can't afford shoes, I've got no husband to bring home money. I'm on my way to the next village to get work."

A sudden thought flashed through Papa Panov's mind. He remembered the little shoes he had looked at last night. But he had been keeping those for Jesus. He looked again at the cold little feet and made up his mind. "Try these on her," he said, handing the shoes to the mother. The beautiful little shoes were a perfect fit. The girl smiled happily and the baby gurgled with pleasure. "You have been so kind to us," the girl said, when she got up to go. "May all your Christmas wishes come true!"

But Papa Panov was beginning to wonder if his very special Christmas wish would come true. Perhaps he had missed his visitor. He looked anxiously up and down the street. There were plenty of people about but they were all faces he recognised. He saw neighbours going to call

on their families. They nodded and smiled and wished him Happy Christmas! Beggars occasionally passed by, and Papa Panov hurried indoors to fetch them hot soup and a generous hunk of bread, hurrying out again in case he missed the Important Stranger. All too soon the winter dusk fell. When Papa Panov next went to the door and strained his eyes, he could no longer make out the passers-by. Most were home and indoors by now anyway. He walked slowly back into his room at last, put up the shutters, and sat down wearily in his armchair.

So it had been just a dream after all. Jesus had not come. Then all at once he knew that he was no longer alone in the room. This was not a dream for he was wide awake. At first he seemed to see before his eyes the long stream of people who had come to him that day. He saw again the old road sweeper, the young mother and her baby and the beggars he had fed. As they passed, each whispered, "Didn't you see *me*, Papa Panov?" "Who are you?" he called out, bewildered. Then another voice answered him. It was the voice from his dream – the voice of Jesus. "I was hungry and you fed me," he said. "I was naked and you clothed me. I was cold and you warmed me. I came to you today in every one of those you helped and welcomed."

Then all was quiet and still. Only the sound of the big clock ticking. A great peace and happiness seemed to fill the room, and flow into Papa Panov's heart until he wanted to burst out singing and laughing and dancing with joy. "So he did

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The Huron Carol

'Twas in the moon of wintertime when all the birds had fled
That mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead;
Before their light the stars grew dim and wondering hunters heard the hymn,
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.

Within a lodge of broken bark the tender babe was found;
A ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped his beauty round
But as the hunter braves drew nigh the angel song rang loud and high
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.

The earliest moon of wintertime is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory on the helpless infant there.
The chiefs from far before him knelt with gifts of fox and beaver pelt.
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.

O children of the forest free, O seed of Manitou
The holy Child of earth and heaven is born today for you.
Come kneel before the radiant boy who brings you beauty peace and joy.
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.

The "**Huron Carol**" is Canada's oldest Christmas song, written in 1643 by Father Jean de Brebeuf, a Jesuit missionary at Sainte-Marie in the province of Quebec.

Brébeuf wrote the original lyrics in the native language of the Huron or Wendat people amongst whom he worked. The song's original Huron title is "Jesous Ahatonhia" ("*Jesus, he is born*") and the melody is a traditional French folk song, "Une Jeune Pucelle" ("*A Young Maid*").

The well-known English lyrics were written in 1926 by Jesse Edgar Middleton. This version is different from Brebeuf's original song with its Huron religious concepts which he used to convey the Christian message. The English lyrics use imagery familiar in the early 20th century to make it accessible to Victorian Canadian Christians who were not familiar with Native-Canadian cultures.

With its haunting melody and beautiful words, the song remains a common Christmas hymn in Canadian churches of many Christian denominations and has been recorded by numerous artists including Bruce Cockburn and Burl Ives.

(N.B. Melody line below differs slightly from version familiar to generations of Canadians.)

Judie Horrocks

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins at measure 8 and includes a repeat sign and a *mp* dynamic marking. The second staff begins at measure 16 and includes a *rit. (final verse)* marking. The third staff begins at measure 23 and includes first and second endings, marked '1.' and '2.' respectively. The score concludes with a double bar line.

Epiphany Poems

Robert Southwell was ordained a Jesuit priest in 1584 in France. He returned to England where he spent six years ministering secretly to English Catholics before being arrested. Following three years of imprisonment and torture, he was hanged at Tyburn in 1595. Much of his poetry was written during his years in prison. Ben Jonson is quoted as saying, "I would willingly tear up many of my works to be author of 'The Burning Babe'."

The Burning Babe – Robert Southwell (c. 1561-1595)

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat which made my heart to glow;
And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,
A pretty babe all burning bright did in the air appear;
Who, scorched with excessive heat, such floods of tears did shed
As though his floods should quench his flames which with his tears were fed.
'Alas,' quoth he, 'but newly born in fiery heats I fry,
Yet none approach to warm their hearts or feel my fire but I!
My faultless breast the furnace is, the fuel wounding thorns,
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke, the ashes shame and scorns;
The fuel justice layeth on, and mercy blows the coals,
The metal in this furnace wrought are men's defiled souls,
For which, as now on fire I am, to work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath to wash them in my blood!
With this he vanished out of sight, and swiftly shrunk away,
And straight I called unto mind that it was Christmas day.



Nathaniel Wanley was a Church of England clergyman, poet and antiquarian who graduated from Cambridge. After being ordained, he eventually became Vicar of Trinity Church, Coventry. Perhaps his finest work is 'The Wonders of the Little World, Or a General History of Man', in which Robert Brown- ing was to find the story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

Royal Presents – Nathaniel Wanley (1634-1680)

The off'rings of the Eastern Kings of old
Unto our Lord were incense, myrrh and gold;
Incense because a God; gold as a king;
And myrrh as to a dying man they bring.
Instead of incense (Blessed Lord) if we
Can send a sigh or fervent prayer to Thee,
Instead of myrrh if we can but provide
Tears that from penitential eyes do slide,
And though we have no gold; if for our part
We can present Thee with a broken heart
Thou wilt accept; and say those Eastern kings
Did not present Thee with more precious things.

Judy Pain

PARISH POST BAG

A number of things happened in December which are worthy of being recorded. The best thing I can do is to itemise them but not necessarily in order of appearance.

ONE

The Sunday School Nativity

I suppose there is nothing better, especially for adults, than to watch a nativity play performed by young people. We watched and heard such a one from the Sunday School on Sunday the 13th. If the lads who narrated the nativity extremely well will forgive me I will address the rest of this article to the little ones. They performed brilliantly. I was impressed by the "inn keeper", who was the props manager, and who managed to propel the "baby" at a rate of knots to make it nose dive into the crib! (I had to smother my mouth with a handkerchief!). The shepherds were exemplary, the stars shone brilliantly, the angels were angelic and the whole performance was lovely to watch. We must congratulate the adults who trained the cast so well. We must have a repeat next Christmas tide. Watch the Vicar, he carries a wand around!

TWO

Advent Carol Service

Nothing stirs so much as this service to welcome in Advent. Again we were blessed with having the choir of Christ Church, Heaton and our choir at the Parish Church. They sang with their usual competence and harmony. One piece in particular was one written by Henry Purcell which was quite outstanding. I came away from it very satisfied indeed. We must thank Michael our Director of Music and the visiting organist Gary Hulme who brought the whole ensemble together.

THREE

The Church Party

I never knew we had so many children and young people attached to the church! They turned up in force with their parents and grandparents to enjoy a rollicking good evening. It was so good that at "closing time" of 7 o'clock it was still going strong half an hour later. Our thanks have to go to David Morlidge and all the other adults who laid on the games and the food. Of course a Christmas party would not be the same without a Father Christmas and sure enough he turned up with presents for all. I personally enjoyed the party and have put my name down for next Christmas!

FOUR

The Carol Service

One can never run out of words to write about this event. Possibly it's my tenth occasion. It was so enjoyable especially under candle light. We were extremely pleased to welcome Stephen Carleston to play the organ with Michael conducting. One piece I particularly enjoyed was "I saw three ships" arranged in fact by Stephen Carleston. I spoke with Stephen afterwards who, remarking on the fact that due to bad weather attendance was lower than usual, said he thought that due to this the whole service was much more intimate and that the congregation sang better than usual to compensate. Of course needless to say our choir was magnificent.

The three Parachutes

A few years ago there were four people on a plane: David Beckham, George W Bush, a doctor and a school boy. Suddenly, the plane nosedived and they had to bail out but could only find three parachutes. Beckham says, "I'm one of the most famous footballers ever so I deserve a parachute". Beckham grabs one and jumps out. Bush says "I'm one of the most famous presidents ever so I deserve a parachute" Bush follows Beckham out. The doctor turns to the schoolboy and says "I've had a long and fulfilling life but you are still young. You take the last parachute. "Don't worry", replied the school boy "there are two parachutes left. George Bush took my schoolbag" ANON

(Editor's Comment: The above tale may or may not reflect the opinion of 'The Management'!)

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL. And still come to the Parish Church for spiritual joy and comfort

Orlando Gibbons (*b* Oxford in 1583; *d* Canterbury 5 June 1625)



Bolton Parish Church is certainly no stranger to the music of the talented composer Dr. Orlando Gibbons. The Choir's current repertoire includes his compositions 'Almighty and Everlasting God', and 'This is the Record of John', while our Passiontide services are often enhanced by the anthem 'Drop, Drop Slow Tears', sung to Gibbons's haunting tune 'The Silver Swan'. And should you come to Choral Evensong, you are as likely as not to hear the Gibbons Short Service. Gibbons is also firmly entrenched in our hymn singing, with his tunes providing the music for a number of our hymns.

In fact, this month, January 2010, is something of an Orlando Gibbons fest. The anthem for the second Sunday of the month is the verse anthem 'This is the Record of John'. Two weeks later, on the 24th, it is the turn of 'Almighty and Everlasting God', and later in the same service, the first Communion hymn is 'O thou who at thy Eucharist didst pray', set to Gibbons's Song 1. The recessional hymn on the last Sunday of the month is 'Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go' to the tune Song 34 (Angels' Song).

What do we know of this great composer of church music? Like many composers of his age, Orlando Gibbons came from a family of musicians. His father William was a wait (town musician) in both Oxford and Cambridge, his eldest brother Edward was Master of the Choristers at King's College, Cambridge, while another brother Ellis was a writer of madrigals. It was not surprising that Orlando, born in Oxford in 1583, should follow in their footsteps. From February 1596 until autumn 1598, he sang in the choir at King's College, Cambridge, and in May 1599 he entered the university as a student. Around 1603 James I appointed him a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, where he rose to the position of Organist of the Chapel, retaining the post until the end of his life. Gibbons returned to Cambridge to complete his studies, and graduated in 1606. About this time he married Elizabeth Patten, the daughter of a Chapel Royal official, and settled in the parish of St Margaret's, Westminster.

There is much documentary evidence that Gib-

bons was in favour at the court of King James I, and on one occasion he was granted a gift of £150 'for and in consideration of the good and faithful service done unto ourself by Orlando Gibbons our organist, and divers other good causes and considerations us thereunto moving'.

Gibbons was also appointed to the royal post of Musician for the Virginals. On 17 May 1622 he was created Doctor of Music by the University of Oxford, and one year later he had another appointment under his illustrious belt – that of Organist of Westminster Abbey. Some idea of the regard in which Orlando Gibbons was then held, and of the musical standards at the Abbey, can be seen from an account of a visit to the Abbey by the French Ambassador and his retinue in 1624:

At their entrance the organ was touched by the best finger of that age, Mr Orlando Gibbons. The Lord Keeper presented the ambassadors and the rest of the noblest quality of their nation with [the] liturgy as it spake to them in their own language. The Lords ambassadors and their great train took up all the stalls, where they continued half an hour while the choirmen, vested in their rich copes, with their choristers, sang three anthems, with most exquisite voices before them.

In May 1625 it was Gibbons's sad duty to play at the funeral of King James I, who had died on 27 March following an attack of dysentery.

After the funeral he was almost immediately involved in preparations to receive the new Queen, Henrietta Maria, whom Charles I had married by proxy in Paris. On 31 May the court set out for Canterbury, with the entire Chapel Royal in attendance. On Whitsunday, 5 June, while at Canterbury awaiting the Queen's arrival, Gibbons suddenly collapsed and died.

There was an immediate suspicion that he had died of the plague, which had already killed 41,000 people during the year. Two physicians who had been present at his death were ordered to make a report and perform an autopsy, the account of which survives in the National Archives:

'We whose names are here underwritten: having been called to give our counsels to Mr Orlando Gibbons; in the time of his late and sudden sickness, which we found in the beginning lethargical, or a profound sleep; out of which, we could never recover him, neither by inward nor outward medicines & then instantly he fell in most strong, & sharp convulsions, & so died. In the brain we found the whole & sole cause of his sickness namely a great admirable blackness & syderation in the outside of the brain.'

The sudden death of Orlando Gibbons came as a shock to his contemporaries. There was particular criticism of the haste of his burial, and the decision to bury the musician in Canterbury, a place with which he had no connection, rather return the body to London. A 20-inch high white marble portrait bust, erected in the North Aisle of Canterbury Cathedral, is the work of the aptly named Nicholas Stone (1583 – 1647), a prolific and distinguished sculptor.

In his Notebook he states: "In 1626 I set up a monument at Canterbury for Orlando Gibbons, the King's organist, for which his wife paid £32".



Orlando Gibbons died intestate. Having waited 12 months for letters of administration to be granted, Elizabeth Gibbons died in the summer of 1626, leaving Orlando's eldest brother, Edward, to care for the children left orphans by this event. Of these children, only the eldest son, Christopher Gibbons, was musical, going on to become a composer and cathedral organist.

One of the most versatile English composers of his time, Gibbons wrote a quantity of keyboard works, around thirty fantasias for viols and a number of consort songs and madrigals, the best known being *The Silver Swan*, published in his *First Set of Madrigals and Mottets, apt for Viols and Voyces*. The words are assumed to be Gibbons's own composition:

*The silver swan, who living had no note,
When death approached,
unlocked her silent throat.
Leaning her breast upon the reedy shore,
Thus sang her first and last,
and sang no more:
Farewell, all joys; O death,
come close mine eyes;
More geese than swans now live,
more fools than wise."*

However, Gibbons is chiefly remembered as a composer of Anglican service music. Judging from the number of surviving copies of his music, he was one of the most popular composers of sacred music in the early 17th century. He wrote two settings of Evensong – the Short Service and the Second (Verse) Service. The former includes a beautifully expressive Nunc Dimittis, while the latter is an extended composition, combining verse and full sections. However, many of the anthem texts that attracted Gibbons offered far greater scope for expressive musical treatment than the canticles. His most memorable compositions, which include Hosanna to the Son of David, Lift up your Heads and the eight-part O Clap Your Hands, are at once dramatic, and yet – as his contemporary Morley put it – 'carrying majesty'.

These qualities also characterise his verse anthems, the best known of which is probably '**This is the Record of John**'. A manuscript at Christ Church contains the rubric: "This Anthem was made for Dr. Laud, President of Saint John's Oxford, for St. John Baptist's day". The anthem is scored for alto solo, with five viols

BOLTON PARISH CHURCH

PARISH STAFF		Telephone
Vicar:	Revd Matt Thompson	01204 522226
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Associate Priest:	Revd Prof. Kenneth Newport	
Reader Emeritus:	Mr David Bevis	
Church Wardens:	Mr David Morlidge Miss Evelyn F Weston	
Deputy Wardens:	Mr Graham C Burrows Dr Michael Collier Mr John Doyle Mr Alan Forrester Mr Ken G Jones Mr Andrew Mitchell Mr John Walsh Mr Trevor J Whillas	
PCC Secretary:	Mr Graham C Burrows	
Treasurer:	Mr Andrew J Mitchell	
Director of Music:	Mr Michael Pain	
Verger	Mrs Jean Tofalos	
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	Bishop Bridgeman Primary School Rupert Street BL3 6PY Head Teacher: Miss Jill Bingham	01204 333466
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CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 8.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
10.30 a.m.	Parish Communion
6.30 p.m.	Evening Prayer
Tuesday 12:30 p.m.	Holy Communion
Wednesday 12.30 p.m.	Healing & Wholeness
Thursday 12.00 p.m.	Holy Communion

Other Holy Days - Holy Communion as announced

For Baptisms and Weddings please contact the Parish Administrator on 01204 522226.

For funerals please contact the Vicar on 01204 522226.

Church is open from Tuesday to Saturday between 10.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. for private prayer and visitors