

Wilbraham St Ninian's United Reformed Church

*Egerton Rd South, Chorlton-cum-Hardy,
Manchester, M21 0XJ*

May 2018



²⁵Jesus said to her 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'

²⁷ Martha said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

John 11:25 - 27

Interim Minister
Rev Alan Poolton

Secretary
Kath Lacy
0161 860 4717



But who did the washing-up? Martha of Bethany

“Be a Mary, not a Martha,” the saying goes. Sitting around discussing doctrine is better than doing the dishes. This story has always troubled me - why should the theologian be “better” than the one who serves the food? If everyone sat around talking all day, where would dinner come from? And who would do the washing-up?

Martha of Bethany is the exemplar of hospitality: the home she shares with her siblings, Mary and Lazarus, is a centre for conversation and fellowship with Jesus. And as people whose natural inclination is to “muck in” and offer hospitality, we can all relate to Martha’s frustration in her sister Mary: sitting at the feet of Jesus, while Martha is left alone to sort out the dinner and the washing-up afterwards. When there is so much to do we can easily default into Martha’s activity, but Jesus reminds us that *doing for* people is not enough; it’s about Mary’s approach - our understanding of ministry is deepened into *being with*, rather than *doing for*. But there is so much more to Martha than the “angry housewife” portrayed in the tradition of Luke (10:38-42).

When Martha’s brother Lazarus dies, she expresses her anger at Jesus for not being there when she needed him. How many of us have felt the same? How many of us have dared or would dare to express our feelings so directly?

And then, during her exchange with Jesus after the death of Lazarus, when Jesus asks her if she believes in him, she explains that she has “come to believe” that he is God’s son (John 11:27). Martha knew Jesus, and yet, her faith in him was **not** achieved in an instant. I’d say she was a lot like me in that respect!

Rather, it was a process, a journey, a series of interactions, conversations, common experiences, meals, during which she “came to believe” in him. Martha reminds us that our faith journey is just that, a journey, requiring attention to Jesus, the guest, the companion, the conversationalist, the teacher, the friend.

And yet...I still wonder - at that dinner in Bethany, who *did* do the washing-up? I'd love to think that Jesus volunteered to help!

A Plaque for Chorlton

A nurse-turned-spy who helped the Allies plot against the Nazis in wartime France will be honoured with a civic plaque in Chorlton on May 12th, thanks to **Chris Hall's** research and campaigning.

Marguerite “Madge” Addy was a qualified nurse who became a hairdresser but in her mid-thirties in 1937 she volunteered to serve as a nurse in the Spanish Civil War and ran the ‘Manchester Ward’ at a hospital in Castile. She later became a prisoner of war. After settling in southern France, she began to help Spanish republican refugees and through that link became known by the secret services. She worked for the ‘Special Operations Executive’ (SOE) in France, pretending to be a wealthy Norwegian citizen, and smuggled secret messages sewn into her coat past the Nazis for the Allies. She was awarded an OBE for her services and died in 1970.

The Lord Mayor of Manchester, Councillor Eddy Newman, and local MP Jeff Smith, are set to attend the ceremony on May 12 at 1.30pm, at 34 Manchester Rd, Chorlton - Madge's last-known Manchester residence - alongside representatives of the Royal British Legion and the International Brigade Memorial Trust. There will be a small celebration afterwards at Chorlton Library function room, where The MadDonnas will entertain with songs from the Spanish Civil War and WW2 era.

News Round up

Family News

On 21 April **George Morton** and **Andre Groarke** were married by Rev Sue Armitage at church. On a beautiful sunny day, a crowd of family and friends helped George and Andre celebrate, and it was wonderful to see so many old friends. Andre and George are having a short holiday in the Algarve. We thank George and Andre for their generous provision of food and drink. Also, we say a BIG “thank you” to the many people who worked behind the scenes to make the day as special as possible by choosing and arranging the flowers, playing the piano, taking photographs, setting up the hall on Friday, and setting out, serving and clearing up the food and drink afterwards.

To any of our young people facing examinations at this time, we send our best wishes and hope they are able to study productively in order to obtain their desired results. We think especially of **Nadia Posada**, taking her final examinations in Events Marketing at Liverpool John Moores University, and **Alex Hall**, completing her first year in Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Nottingham.

Other news

Margaret Kendall of the afternoon congregation volunteers with FareShare, an organisation which takes left over food from supermarkets and redistributes it to those in need. The church is becoming a member of the scheme, which allows us to buy food and toiletries at 27p per kilo. The finer details are yet to be agreed but this will supplement the foodbank provision to our asylum-seekers with a bigger variety and quantity of food.

The church building is being used as a polling station for the local elections on **Thursday 3rd May**, which means the Good Neighbours’ coffee morning will be held in the **Old Hall** on that day.

Good Neighbours News

Good Neighbours are entering the “**Chorlton Open Gardens**” on Sunday June 24th 11am - 5pm. Cost of entry is £5 with proceeds going to Freedom from Torture.

Church News

On the afternoon of Sunday 22nd April, almost 80 people came together for a special service, where one person was baptised, 15 people came into membership and 6 of our Elders were rededicated to service. It was a lively and joyful occasion.

Rev Alan Poolton, our Interim Minister, will be on Sabbatical during June-July-August, when he hopes to cycle the Pilgrim Paths (including Whithorn, the home of St Ninian!), among other activities. Alan’s released ministry will last to the end of 2018, and after that he will not be available to us. North-West Synod is expecting to “launch” the new “Missional Partnerships” at Pentecost, May 20th, and have published some worship resources in conjunction with the launch.

Kath Lacy has invited a representative from the Synod Pastoral Committee to come to our Church Meeting on Sunday 17th June to discuss the plans for ministerial deployment, the manse funds and any other relevant topics.

Christian Aid Week 13 – 19 May

We will be holding a Christian Aid event similar to the Coffee Morning last year. Envelopes will be available at the event and in church for anyone who wishes to contribute, or to take envelopes home and give to friends and family to enable them to contribute also. This is a great time to get rid of your spare change!!! (and any £20/£10/£5 notes you don’t want littering up your wallets and purses!). See Mel or George for more information.



Dates & Rotas

April 29	Joint service with the Methodists at Manley Park
May 3	Open Church Quiet reflection and prayer 10:00am – 12:00pm
May 6	Rev Dr Walter Houston
May 10	Open Church Quiet reflection and prayer 10:00am – 12:00pm
May 13	Rev Alan Poolton
May 17	Open Church Quiet reflection and prayer 10:00am – 12:00pm
May 20	Dr Adrian Curtis Pentecost
May 21	Elders' Meeting 7.30pm
May 24	Open Church Quiet reflection and prayer 10:00am – 12:00pm
May 27	Worship Group Trinity Sunday
May 31	Open Church Quiet reflection and prayer 10:00am – 12:00pm
June 3	Worship Group

Readers & Readings

Taken from "Roots on the Web" 2018 Revised Common Lectionary Year B

April 29	At Manley Park	<i>Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8</i>
May 6	Sian Richards	<i>Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17</i>
May 13	Joyce Henry	<i>Acts 1:15-17,21-26; Psalm 1; 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19</i>
May 20	Alistair Lyall	<i>Acts 2:1-21; Psalm 104.24-34,35b; Romans 8:22-27; John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15</i>
May 27	Ella Burton	<i>Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17</i>
June 3	Brenda Beckett	<i>Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Psalm 81:1-10; 2 Corinthians 4:5-12; Mark 2:23 - 3.6</i>

**** Please check readings with the preacher in good time before the service ****

Thank you to Kath Lacy for producing the Readers' Rota.

Church Meeting

Sunday June 17th

At 1.45pm

There will be a faith lunch after the morning service and before the meeting – all are welcome to partake of the feast!

A representative from Synod Pastoral Committee has been invited to come and talk about progress on ministerial deployment and missional partnerships

Chorlton Arts Festival at Wilbraham St Ninian's

The Chorlton Arts Festival runs from 18th – 27th May across various venues in Chorlton. We are expecting to host the following events:

CHORLTON PROMS: a variety of musical acts, from blues to classical, from synth-pop to folk, at Wilbraham St Ninian's throughout the festival:

Friday 18th May 8pm	Moody Elf: soul/jazz/world-folk duo Kamal Arafa: Manchester-based singer/songwriter	£7.50
Saturday 19th May 8pm	Helgi: "the new Jake Thackray"	£7.50
Friday 1st June 8pm	Koalas: synth-pop duo Pablo: Chorlton-based guitar & violin duo, folk and west coast-influenced harmonies	£7.50
Saturday 2nd June 8pm	Polaris: RNCM-trained saxophone & harp duo Sam Jefferson: blues/folk singer/songwriter	£7.50

THE ART OF FOOD: Friday 25th May, Old & New Halls;:

a 3-course vegetarian / vegan dining event designed by Simon Rimmer, innovative chef who founded Greens restaurant in 1990. He has appeared in and presented numerous TV programmes but is probably most famous as the face of 'Sunday Brunch' and has lived in Chorlton for 18 years.

SECRET STAND-UP: stand-up comedy in the church on **Saturday 26th May** and **Saturday 2nd June** at **9pm**

ONCE UPON A TIME: storytelling in the church at **11am, 1 pm and 3 pm** on **Saturday 26 May** and **Saturday 2 June**.

More details on the website at <https://www.chorltonartsfestival.com/>