

Tarleton & Rufford



Parish Magazine

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2026
ISSUE

DW

DAVID WILKINSON

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from the Curate

The Missionary Heart of our Diocese, By Fr Joe.

Exactly 100 years ago, in August 1926, our local church community was buzzing with immense legal and financial activity to make the Diocese of Blackburn a reality. Because the Church of England is established by law, creating a new diocese required a special Measure of Parliament, followed by months of legal work to redraw boundaries and transfer historic archdeaconries from Manchester. At the same time, local parishes and wealthy Lancashire mill owners rallied together in an ambitious fundraising campaign to secure the financial endowment required by law to support a new bishop. It all culminated on 12 November 1926 when the King signed the official Order in Council, instantly transforming our region's map and upgrading Blackburn's parish church into a cathedral.

But roughly around the same time as all of this was happening in the Northwest - another significant gathering was happening in London... The Anglo-Catholic Congress.

The Anglo-Catholic Congresses were a series of massive, high-profile gatherings held in London during the 1920s and 1930s to celebrate and advance the Catholic tradition within the Church of England. Sparked by the legacy of the 19th-century Oxford Movement, these events brought together thousands of bishops, clergy, and laity to promote traditional Anglo-Catholic theology, liturgical worship, and social justice initiatives. By organizing these packed rallies at venues like the Royal Albert Hall, the movement successfully demonstrated its immense scale, revived parish missionary work, and firmly established Anglo-Catholicism as a powerful, mainstream force within the global Anglican Communion.

It was at one of the Anglo-Catholic Congresses around this time that Bishop Frank Weston of Zanzibar gave a sermon in which he said the following:

"You have got your Mass, you have got your Altar, you have begun to get your Tabernacle. Now go out into the highways and hedges where not even the Bishops will try to hinder you. Go out and look for Jesus in the ragged, in the naked, in the oppressed, in those who have lost hope, in those who are struggling to make good. Look for Jesus. And when you see him, gird yourselves with his towel and try to wash their feet."

To understand why those beautiful words were so significant at the time, we need to understand the moment in which they were spoken.



For generations, Anglo-Catholics within the Church of England had fought long and difficult battles over worship. Priests had been mocked, prosecuted, even imprisoned for things which today we almost take for granted: candles on the altar, Eucharistic vestments, incense, reservation of the Blessed Sacrament, reverence in worship, beauty in liturgy, teaching about the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

These things mattered because they were not merely about ceremony. They were about recovering a truth. The truth of a God who truly comes among his people. A God who is not distant. A God who gives himself to us. A God who feeds his people with his own life.

And slowly, painfully, many of those battles had begun to be won.

"You have got your Mass, you have got your Altar..."

But Weston's concern was that Anglo-Catholics might stop there. That we might become content simply with beautiful worship. That we might admire the altar but fail to be changed by what happens there.

And so he continues:

"Now go out into the highways and hedges... Go out and look for Jesus in the ragged, in the naked, in the oppressed, in those who have lost hope..."

Weston loved traditional liturgy. He was fiercely devoted to the Blessed Sacrament. He believed profoundly in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

And it is precisely because he believed Christ was truly present upon the altar that he recognised the challenge of the Gospel itself: Christians must learn to recognise Christ beyond the altar too.

The Lord whom we adore in the Sacrament is the same Lord who meets us in the poor, the lonely, the suffering, the forgotten, and the searching.

The Eucharist does not simply bring Christ to his people; it also sends Christ's people into the world. At the end of every Mass we are dismissed with the words, "The Mass is ended. Go in the peace of Christ." Those words are far more than a polite way of ending a service. They are a commissioning. We are sent out.

TARLETON.CHURCH
RUFFORD.CHURCH

from the Curate

In the Eucharist, we receive the Body of Christ so that we may become the Body of Christ in the world. St Augustine famously said, "Behold what you are. Become what you receive." If we truly receive the self-giving love of Christ at the altar, then that love must begin to shape the way we live beyond the walls of the church.

I think it is particularly appropriate that the Diocese has chosen to make its centenary year a Year of Mission, because this Diocese itself was born from a missionary vision.

William Temple was Bishop of Manchester at the time and played a pivotal role in the creation of the Diocese of Blackburn. He understood that the Church could not simply remain distant from ordinary people's lives. The industrial towns and mill communities of Lancashire needed priests, parishes, churches, schools, and Christian communities deeply rooted among the people. Temple understood that the Church exists to carry Christ into the world. He is often quoted as saying, "The Church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members."



FROM THE CURATE

It therefore feels entirely appropriate that, in this centenary year, the Diocese has called us to a renewed focus upon mission. Mission flows naturally from the worship of the Church. Christ gathers us, Christ feeds us, Christ transforms us, and then Christ sends us.

The danger for the Church in every generation is that we separate worship from discipleship. We can surround the Gospel with beauty and yet fail to carry its hope into the lives of others. We can honour Christ in the Sacrament while failing to recognise him in our neighbour.

Weston saw that danger one hundred years ago, and his challenge still resonates today. Incense, music, ceremony, and beautiful worship are not ends in themselves. They are meant to draw us more deeply into the life of Christ. They are meant to form us into people whose lives reflect the love we encounter in worship. The beauty of worship is meant to form beautiful Christian lives.

As we approach our Parish Mission Weekend, perhaps Weston leaves us with an important question. Not only whether we recognise Christ in our worship, but whether we recognise him when we meet him outside these walls.

Will we recognise him in the struggling family, the lonely neighbour, the confused teenager, or the exhausted carer? Will we recognise him in the person who feels forgotten, in the person searching for hope, in the person struggling with addiction, or in the person who does not yet know Christ at all?

Because the call of the Church is not simply to bring people into the presence of Christ; it is also to carry the presence of Christ out into the world. The purpose of our Mission Weekend is not simply to run successful events. It is to help people encounter Jesus Christ, perhaps for the first time, perhaps afresh after many years away. That invitation begins with us. One of the simplest and most effective forms of mission is simply inviting someone to come along. Many people are far more open to such an invitation than we imagine, especially when it comes from someone they know and trust.

Perhaps there is a friend, neighbour, colleague, or family member whom you could invite to one of the events during the Mission Weekend. Rather than simply handing them a leaflet or mentioning it in passing, consider saying something like: "There's something happening at church which sounds really interesting. I'm planning to go. Would you like to come with me?"

Sometimes we hesitate because we assume that someone is "not a church person". Yet those are often precisely the people we should be inviting. After all, the Church does not exist primarily for those who are already here. The Gospel is good news for everyone.

Weston's challenge still holds true: "You have got your Mass, you have got your Altar..." Now go out. Go out and look for Jesus. And when you find him, "gird yourselves with his towel and try to wash their feet." Having encountered Christ in worship and been nourished by his grace, we are sent out to recognise him, serve him, and to make him known in the world beyond the church's walls.



Fr Joe & Fr Mark popped in the Rufford CE School for their "Father's Breakfast " in the days before Father's Day.

NEWS IN BRIEF



On the Feast of Title at Holy Trinity Church we gave thanks for the ministry of this place as we mark 140 years since the Church 's Foundation Stone was laid.

To mark the occasion we had Bishop Glyn Webster as our Preacher at Solemn Mass on that day, photographed with the Rector at the Foundation Stone.

RUFFORD SUNDAY 8am

There is no longer an 8am Service at Rufford.

COMMISSIONING OF NEW HEADTEACHER

Bishop Philip will Commission Jim Maloney as the New Headteacher of Tarleton Holy Trinity School on Friday, September 25th. Mr Iain Parkes, Diocesan Director of Education will present Mr Maloney with a Bible and the Rector will give him a Cross. Other items relating to the school will be presented by a Governor, a pupil and a parent.

Afternoon Tea at Tarleton on Saturday, August 22nd at 2pm. Ticket £12 including a glass of Presecco.

Tarleton Old Church open for Heritage Weekend, September 19th/20th.

MOTHERS' UNION NEWS

On Wednesday 10th June, we enjoyed an interesting talk on border control, followed by tea and biscuits.

On Wednesday 8th July, our last meeting before the summer break was a Mothers' Union meal at the Rufford Arms, Rufford, which was enjoyed by everyone — a very pleasant evening.

We hope everyone has a lovely summer break and look forward to seeing everyone again in September.

Brenda Banks - Mothers' Union Enrolling Member - Tel: 01772 381039



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CANON MARK SOADY – 30 YEARS' SERVICE AS A DEACON

St Peter's Day – 29th June – saw the thirtieth anniversary of Father Mark Soady's ordination to the diaconate at St David's Cathedral. Since then, his ministry in Wales and England has involved him working with a vast range of groups and individuals, sharing the love of Jesus and making a powerful difference within the communities who have benefited from his wisdom, kindness and direction.

On 11th July, parishioners were treated to a special exhibition of documents and artefacts relating to his three decades of faithful service. Photographs, letters, service sheets and memorabilia were displayed in Tarleton Holy Trinity Church. Visitors enjoyed audio and video recordings of notable broadcasts featuring Father Mark, who has played a key role at a plethora of high profile liturgical events. The fondness with which he is clearly regarded by King Charles and Queen Camilla is evident in the cards they have exchanged over the years, affection shared by many members of his current congregations here in Lancashire.

Article by: Shirley Gornall





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Attending the Diocesan Conference

Tarleton Ecumenical Walking Day



LYRICS & LAUGHTER

Last month we had another great afternoon at Lyrics & Laughter

Do join us for our next sessions on Thursday, August 6th and Thursday, September 3rd at 2.00 pm at St Mary's Church, Rufford



Weekly Rector Update E-mails

Please note that we have switched our e-mail updates from the Rector to a new platform. We attempted to move the current mailing list over, but if you have not received an update e-mail from the rector recently, please scan this QR code with your Smartphone, and follow the link to add your e-mail details, if you wish to be added to our mailing list.

Alternatively, please visit the following link:
<https://ruffordtarletonparish.churchsuite.com/-/groups/3o9yzhxx>

SERVICES & DIARY DATES

SPECIAL SUNDAYS

August 16th 9.15am at St Mary's Rufford - Patronal Service (Blessed Virgin Mary) ; Preacher : Ven Jane Atkinson, Archdeacon of Blackburn

August 23rd 10.45am Old Church Sunday at St Mary's, Windgate ; Preacher: Rt Revd Joe Kennedy, Bishop of Blackburn

WEEKLY SUNDAYS

9.15am Rufford & 10.45am Tarleton (except September 27th*)

*Confirmation: Sunday, September 27th at 10.30am at Rufford (no other services that day)

FEAST DAYS

August 6th 7pm Rufford Feast of the Transfiguration

September 21st 7pm Tarleton St Matthew Apostle

September 28th 7pm Tarleton Michael & All Angels

HEALING & WHOLENESS SERVICES

August 27th at 2.30pm

September 24th at 2.30pm

SUMMER EXPLORERS

August 17-20 - All places at this young people's activity days are fully booked.

Diocesan Centenary Mission Weekend: September 12th/13th - see centre pages for details

Parish Pilgrimage: week commencing September 14th

Commissioning of New Headteacher at Tarleton Holy Trinity School; Friday, September 25th at 1.30pm



James Pye was awarded the Jean Greaves Cup by Keith Greaves for his commitment to his faith and for setting an example to us all by inviting friends to join in at church.

Blackpool Big Day Out

By: Shirley Gornall

In the early twentieth century, bishops preached to large congregations on Blackpool beach, reaching out to the hundreds of holidaymakers who made their way to the town during the traditional 'wakes weeks' when northern factories shut down and entire communities headed out on trains and buses for their annual relaxation on the sands.

So Bishop Philip North built on Lancastrian tradition when he led the Blackburn Diocesan centenary celebrations with a Big Day Out in Blackpool on 16th May. Unfortunately, the day was meteorologically disappointing (a chilly 18 degrees cooler than the record breaking May Bank Holiday just a week later!) but the spirits of those who congregated in St John's Square weren't dampened by the intermittent showers. Following a morning of crafts, games, music and reflective activities in the church for younger participants, stand-up comedy and hog roast preceded outdoor worship.

This was a service designed to reach everyone and to make Christian faith relatable and accessible to the widest possible audience. Several people who had recently embarked on, or returned to, their journeys in faith had courageously made video recordings in which they told their personal stories and explained how speaking to God had made a profound difference to their lives. Pedestrians stopped and listened on the pavement, clearly moved by what they heard.

St John's dynamic music group and The Salvation Army band led and accompanied a rousing selection of traditional hymns and modern songs of worship, enjoyed by all ages. Bishop Jill's crowd-surfing inflatable dolphin enhanced the party mood – just for a fleeting moment this could have been Ibiza!

Bishop Philip's sermons are always memorable for their eloquence, energy and relevance. This was no exception. He focused on the Parable of the Lost Sheep, illustrating God's unconditional love and joy when someone repents and turns to him, emphasising that every individual is uniquely incredibly valuable. He illustrated the strap line for the centenary year: 'All for Jesus' by telling the story of St Teresa of Avila, a Carmelite nun and spiritual reformer, explaining that she had taken the name 'Teresa of Jesus' and that Jesus replied by referring to himself as 'Jesus of Teresa.' Bishop Philip urged everyone to shout out their own names to affirm that Jesus was indeed for them, and they for him.

The Blackpool Big Day Out carried powerful messages – that worship has personal relevance, that prayer makes a powerful difference, and that being part of a worshipful community – indoors or outdoors – is positively energising.

(Photograph shows the Lord Bishop of Manchester preaching by Blackpool Pier, circa 1910)

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Blackpool Big Day Out



A few of us went by train to the Blackpool Day of Celebration



The day after being crowned new Rose Queen Hartlyn came to church with her retinue and the outgoing Queen Isabelle with her retinue.

A WEEKEND OF



Holy Trinity
Tarleton



Tarleton Programme

As a market garden village, we've invited villagers and village groups to display what wonderful things we grow - with thanks to the creator God. All the displays promote Biodiversity. The local Scouts have built an insect hotel in the church grounds and Tarleton Holy Trinity Pupils (with some help) have restored their quiet prayer space in the school grounds. This Space will be re-dedicated at A FAMILY FRIENDLY OUTDOOR SERVICE AT 4pm on the Saturday.

Alongside viewing the displays there are activities:

11am A Talk on Sustainability and Flower arranging with Angela Coulton

2pm Children's Workshops: Music and Crafts with a Family Picnic



In preparation for the re-dedication of Holy Trinity Tarleton School's prayer space, pupils, Ex-pupil Cameron, Hattie, Angela Abram and the Coulton family have been working on it and sprucing it up.

The space will be re-dedicated as part of our Let's Go Green Weekend (Diocesan Centenary Mission Event), September 12th at 4pm

CELEBRATION AND MISSION



St Mary the Virgin
Rufford with Holmeswood

We are planning a day long party of thanks giving for 100 years of Ministry with a programme of events to suit all ages.

Refreshments will be served at Lunchtime.

10am School Choir
followed by Prayer Station Activities

11am Craft Session
11.30am Treasurer Hunt
12noon Chocolate Bingo

During the afternoon there will be Christian Folk Rock and a Songs of Praise
concluding with
3.30pm Chocolate Bingo

Do join us on the Sunday also for great celebration worship:
9.15am Rufford
10.45am Tarleton

St Mary The Virgin, Rufford with Holmeswood



HARVEST CEILIDH

Join us for a Church Celebration

Date : Friday 9th October 2026

Time : 7.00pm

Venue : Rufford Village Hall

Tickets : £13.50 per Adult / £4.50 per Child (11 & under)

Back again by popular demand the Rufford St Mary's with Holmeswood Ceilidh, doors are open to anyone who wants to join in. We look forward to seeing you all on what has been a really social and fun evening.

Whether you're 7 years old, or 70 years old – come along!
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Rufford C. of E. Primary School

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OUR NEWS FROM SUMMER TERM



The sun has certainly been shining in recent weeks, and we have been very busy here at Rufford enjoying the warmer weather.

Leading Worship:

Our school choir led the congregation at Rufford church in worship, themed around the Parable of the Sower. We acted out the story and then asked the community to consider, how often do we sow the seeds of Jesus? The seeds we explored were: compassion, courage, forgiveness, friendship, and most important of all, love.

A Fisherman's Tale:

Father Mark treated us to a very special performance from 4Front Theatre company called a Fisherman's Tale. It told the story of four of Jesus' disciples, who were fishermen. We followed their journey throughout their time with Jesus and their work after his ascension to heaven. This was a fantastic experience for the whole school. Some moments were very funny, and some extremely powerful. The songs were catchy too and had us all joining in. A very special afternoon - one for the memory box.

Father's Day Breakfast:

We hosted our very first Father's Day Breakfast, to celebrate the important Father figures in our lives. Children brought their dads and grandads for a brew, bacon butty and a chat before school. Two important father figures for us came too! Father Mark and Father Joe joined us! We will be hosting more breakfasts for men in our community later this year.

A new stage here at Rufford:

We have been raising money for a brand new stage here at Rufford. We have a large choir and many of our children play instruments or perform. The Gaskell family have been out and about drumming up support for our cause and recently completed a sponsored climb up Snowden. We reached our target! A new stage is coming! Thank you to all local businesses who supported us.





Rufford C. of E. Primary School



Summer of Sport and a Trip to Jungle Parc:

We have enjoyed a fantastic summer of sport this half term. The weather has certainly helped! We competed in the Spar School Games and held our annual Sports Day. It has been lovely to welcome various local schools to Rufford to play a series of football friendlies. We have also been awarded our 7th Gold Games Mark.

World Cup Fever has gripped Rufford! We held a special World Cup lunch followed by the first Rufford World Cup. After a series of tense matches between teams in Group A and Group B, a final was played with.... France declared the winners! Medals all round and a trophy lifted by the winning team!

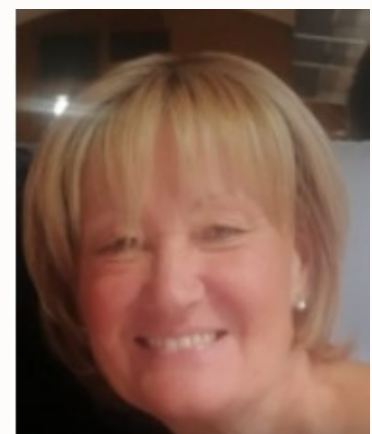
We also enjoyed a whole school trip to Jungle Parc in Warrington. We had to use all our courage, determination and resilience to keep going through the course and scale the heights!

Time to say goodbye....

Sadly for us all here, it is time to say goodbye to two legends of Rufford, who will be very much missed. Mrs Newsham, our Year 5 and 6 teacher in Rowan Class and also Assistant Head, has been part of the Rufford family for the past 14 years. She has decided that now is the time for her to put her feet up and start a very well-earned retirement. Mrs Newsham has touched the lives of so many families in our community and we wish her all the best as she begins this new chapter in her life. Thank you Mrs Newsham for all your service to school. Mr Peters joins school in September, as our new Deputy Headteacher.

Her husband, Mr Newsham, will also be hanging up his coaches' boots for our football team, again after 14 years of service. Mr Newsham has guided our team through many victories, tense-fought finals and tournaments. Thank you Mr Newsham for all your time, support and hard work. We will miss you a great deal!

From all of us here at Rufford, we wish you a very happy and healthy summer filled with love, laughter and precious family time. We will see you all in the Autumn Term!





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SAINTS

8th August St Fagan

Fagan (Latin: Faganus; Welsh: Ffagan), was a legendary 2nd-century Welsh bishop and saint, said to have been sent by the pope to answer King Lucius's (known in Welsh as Lles map Coel or Lleufer Mawr, who ruled the Britons 156–180CE) request for baptism and conversion to Christianity. Together with his companion St Deruvian, he was reckoned as the apostle of Britain.

King Lucius's letter does not appear in surviving sources before the 6th century; the names of the bishops sent to him does not appear in sources older than the early 12th century, when their story was used to support the independence of the bishops of St Davids in Wales and the antiquity of the abbey at Glastonbury in England. The story became widely known following its appearance in Geoffrey of Monmouth's pseudohistorical History of the Kings of Britain written around 1136CE. This was influential for centuries and its account of Ss Fagan and Deruvian were used during the English Reformation to support the claims of both the Catholics and Protestants.

Fagan is the patron saint of a number of churches, and gives his name to the village St Fagans near Cardiff, now the home of a Welsh National History Museum.

31st August Aidan of Lindisfarne

In response to a request in 634CE from St. Oswald, King of Northumbria, Aidan, a monk of the famous Abbey of Hy or Iona, was chosen by the Abbot Seghen for the special mission of rekindling the Faith in the Kingdom of Northumbria. He was consecrated Bishop (635CE) and, on his arrival took for his See the Island of Lindisfarne (Holy Island), where he founded the famous Abbey. His Diocese reached

from the Forth to the Humber. An inspired missionary, Aidan would walk from one village to another, politely conversing with the people he saw and slowly interesting them in Christianity. He died at Bamborough in the eighteenth year of a fruitful Episcopate (651CE). One tradition is to the effect that the young shepherd boy Cuthbert, at the moment of Aidan's death, saw in a vision the soul of the Saint carried up by angels into Heaven, and set about preparing himself to carry on the work for God to which the Saint had been devoted. After his death, Aidan's body was buried at Lindisfarne, beneath the abbey that he had helped found.

Reflecting his Irish origins, his Scottish monasticism and his ministry to the English, Aidan has been proposed as a possible patron saint for the whole of the United Kingdom. Aidan is represented in art, sometimes with a torch in his hand, sometimes with a stag near him.

11th September Deiniol

Deiniol was the son of Abbot Dunod Fawr, son of Pabo Post Prydain. The family, having lost their land in the North of England, were given land by

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SAINTS

the king of Powys, Cyngen Glodrydd. Consecrated first Bishop of Bangor by St. Dubritius in 516CE. Maelgwn Gwynedd endowed it with lands and privileges suitable for a bishop. He attended the Synod of Llanddewi Brefi in 545CE with Saint David when the subject of rules for penance was being discussed. His cult in North Wales was quite extensive and several churches are dedicated to him. William Ewart Gladstone dedicated St Deiniol's Library, a residential library in Hawarden, Flintshire, for arts and religious students, in 1896CE. He may be referenced in the name of the hymn tune, St. Denio ("Immortal, invisible"). After his death (572CE) the Cathedral at Bangor was dedicated in his honour. He was buried on the Isle of Bardsey. He is venerated in Brittany as Saint Denoual. In English and Latin his name is sometimes rendered as Daniel.

16th September Edward Bouverie Pusey

He was born at Pusey House in the village of Pusey in Berkshire (now administratively a part of Oxfordshire) on 22nd August 1800CE. He attended school in Mitcham before going to Eton College. In 1819CE Pusey became a commoner of Christ Church, at the University of Oxford. During 1823CE Pusey was elected by competition to a fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford. John Henry Newman and John Keble were already there as fellows. In 1828CE Pusey took holy orders, and he married soon afterwards. That year, also, the Duke of Wellington as Prime Minister appointed Pusey as Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, with the associated canonry of Christ Church. By the end of 1833CE, Pusey published Tract XVIII in "Tracts for the Times" on fasting, at the end of 1833CE, adding his initials (until then the tracts had been unsigned). Around 1841CE, Pusey became the main promoter of Oxfordianism (The Oxford Movement), with better access to religious

officials than John Keble with his rural parsonage. Pusey studied the Church Fathers, and the Caroline Divines who revived traditions of pre-Reformation teaching. His sermon at the university during May 1843CE, "The Holy Eucharist, a Comfort to the Penitent" caused him to be suspended for two years from preaching. The condemned sermon soon sold 18,000 copies.

By reviving the doctrine of the Real Presence, Pusey contributed to the increase of ritualism in the Church of England. In addition to his original works, Pusey also published multiple translations as part of the Library of the Fathers series, including of the Confessions by St. Augustine. Having been Regius Professor of Hebrew at the University of Oxford he died on 16th September 1882CE.

Provided by: Fr Philip Green

The Oxford Movement Window at Tarleton pays homage to Pusey



HYMNOLOGY

In this article I shall be looking at hymns associated with British Poet Laureates. They are appointed by the Monarch for an unfixed term and originally for life. Only one poet laureate serves at a time. The hymns they wrote can be found in the current Ancient and Modern hymnbook, the hymn number are shown in brackets ().

Article provided by Michael Gray

John Dryden (1631 -1700)

The first official poet laureate was John Dryden and he was appointed to the position in 1668 by King Charles II and served from 13th April 1668 until 1689. Dryden did not write any hymn of his own but translated the 10th century Latin hymn ' Veni, Creator Spiritus '. This ancient hymn has taken deeper hold on the Church's devotions than any other medieval hymn save, of course, the 'Te Deum'. The first verse of his translation is:-

Creator spirit; by whose aid
The world's foundations first were laid;
Come visit every waiting mind,
Come, pour thy joys on human kind;
From sin and sorrow set us free,
And make thy temples worthy Thee.

John Dryden joined the Roman Catholic Church in 1685. He was dismissed from the office of Poet Laureate in 1689 following the accession of the protestant William III and Mary II to the throne. Dryden, a catholic convert, refused to take the oath of allegiance to the new monarchs and was dismissed from the laureateship – the only holder to have been removed from office.

Translation of 'Veni, Creator Spiritus ', has been undertaken by many poets, including one poet in our hymnbook.

John Cosin (1594 – 1672) (241)

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,

Nahum Tate (1652-1715)

Nahum Tate was the son of an Irish clergyman, Faithful Tate, who was the author of some religious verse. The son was born in Dublin, and wrote, under Dryden's supervision, the second part of 'Absalom and Ahitophel'. He became Poet Laureate in 1692 until his death in 1715. and historiographer-royal, 1702. He is said to have been intemperate and improvident. He died on the 30th July 1715, within the precept of the Royal Mint, where he had taken refuge from his creditors, and was buried at St, George the Martyr, Southwark, London.

He wrote the Christmas hymn – While shepherds watched their flocks by night. (89)

Tate became friendly with the poet Nicholas Brady (1639 – 1726) and they worked together on numerous projects. Brady was born at Brandon, educated at Westminster, Christ Church, Oxford and Trinity College, Dublin. In 1696 they published A New version of the Psalms of David, fitted to the tunes used in Churches. It was dedicated to William III. The King gave his permission for it to be used in churches.



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Tate and Brady continued to work together and produce a number of hymns including:-

Through all the changing scenes of life (812)

As pants the hart for cooling streams. (591)

Alfred Tennyson (1809 – 1892)

Tennyson wrote no hymns, as such. When asked if he would write one the great poet replied: 'A good hymn is the most difficult thing in the world to write. In a good hymn you have to be commonplace and poetical. The moment you cease to be commonplace and put in any expression at all out of the common it ceases to be a hymn.' That may be the reason why so few famous poets have written hymns

None of Tennyson's hymns are in our Ancient and Modern Hymnbook but one is in the our New English Hymnal (455). The opening stanzas of 'In Memoriam' have long been popular as a lovely hymn, 'Strong Son of God, immortal Love,' the length in different hymnals varying from four to seven of the eleven verses.

'In Memoriam', which has been described as the 'most magnificent monument in verse that the pen has ever erected', was written to the memory of Tennyson's very great friend, Arthur Henry Hallam, whom he had first met at Trinity College, Cambridge. Hallam became engaged to the poet's second sister, Emma; but while travelling on the Continent in 1833, he died suddenly in Vienna, to the inexpressible grief of the Tennyson family. It was not until seventeen years after that 'In Memoriam' was published; which seems to indicate that Tennyson gave much time and consideration to the producing of one of the finest of all his poems.

Alfred Tennyson was one of the eleven children of the rector of Somersby, Lincolnshire, where the poet was born in 1809. No time was lost in having him baptised, for within two days of his birth the ordinance was performed in Somersby Church.

Interested in poetry from quite an early age, he commenced writing verses when only ten years old. His subject was flowers, and the poem was modelled on the style of Thomson's 'Seasons', which he had been studying. His elder brother, Charles, also wrote verses, and in 1827 they collaborated in publishing a volume of their work, entitled, 'Poems by Two Brothers'.

Educated by his father and at Louth Grammar School, Alfred entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1828, and a year later succeeded in gaining the Chancellor's Medal for English Verse, much to his own surprise.

The Poet Laureate, William Wordsworth, may have met Tennyson at the University, for in a letter written during a visit there he mentioned that 'We have a respectable show of blossom in poetry – two brothers of the name of Tennyson, one in particular not a little promising'. An interesting utterance from a forth coming Poet Laureate regarding his successor.

The death of his father in 1831 prevented Tennyson continuing at Cambridge, and, altering his plans, he remained at home, devoting his time to the writing of poetry.

The first volume of his own verses was issued as 'Poems, chiefly Lyrical' in 1839, followed three years later by another volume bearing the simple title, 'Poems'. Considered his best work, two volumes, entitled 'Poems by Alfred Tennyson', were published in 1842.

His success was then assured; but the pecuniary profit was not commensurate with his fame. Most welcome therefore must have been the pension of two hundred pounds per annum conferred on him by the state in 1845.

An objection to his receiving this pension was once raised in somewhat amusing circumstances.

HYMNOLOGY

A young reporter, evidently ignorant both of hymns and Tennyson's work, 'covered' a Confirmation service of one of the royal children, at which the hymn, 'O happy day that fixed my choice', was sung at the request of Queen Victoria. Afterwards, in a report of the service in one of the leading London journals, the startling announcement was made that the hymn had been specially composed by Tennyson; added to which was a comment to the effect that if the Poet Laureate could not write something better he was not worthy of a national pension!

In 1850 Tennyson married Miss Selwood, a niece of Sir John Franklin, and settled for a time at Twickenham. Three years later he took up his abode at Freshwater, Isle of Wight. But his private life there was so disturbed by crowds of sight-seeing excursionists that he had a house built at Aldworth, Sussex, where he lived during the holiday season.

In the year of his marriage Tennyson was appointed Poet Laureate in succession to William Wordsworth. More than once he was offered a baronetcy but declined the honour. In 1884, however, after much persuasion, he accepted a peerage, and took the title of Baron Tennyson of Aldworth and Freshwater.

It is not necessary to enumerate here all the works which contributed to the fame of Tennyson, but mention must be made of the wonderful lyric, 'Crossing the Bar', written in the Laureate's eighty-first year. He evidently regarded these devout and solemn lines as his 'swan-song', for a few days before his death he said to his son, 'Mind you put 'Crossing the Bar' at the end of all editions of my poems'; an injunction which has generally been fulfilled. This short but profound work, comprises only of two verses, commencing:

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me,
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

it can scarcely be described as a hymn; but it is gradually finding its way into modern hymnals, and is often sung at funerals and memorial services. The hymn is sung to the tune 'Crossing the Bar' composed by Sir John Frederick Bridge for Lord Tennyson's funeral at Westminster Abbey, 12th October 1892.

Pre-eminent among the poets of Victorian England, Tennyson died in 1892 at the age of eighty-three and was buried beside his friend, Robert Browning, in Westminster Abbey.

Robert Bridges (1844 – 1930)

He is also known as Robert Seymour Bridges, and was Poet Laureate 1913-1930).

He was born 23rd October 1844, Walmer, Kent and died 21st April 1930, Boar's Hill, Oxford. Born of a prosperous landed family, Bridges went to Eton College and then to Oxford, where he met the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins. His edition of Hopkins' poetry that appeared in 1916 was rescued by him from obscurity through his personal sponsorship.

From 1869 until 1882 Bridges worked as a medical student and physician in London hospitals. In 1884 he married Mary Monica Waterhouse, and he spent the rest of his life in virtually unbroken domestic seclusion, first at Yattendon, Berkshire, then at Boar's Hill, devoting himself almost religiously to poetry, contemplation, and the study of prosody. Although he published several long poems and poetic dramas, his reputation rests upon the lyrics collected in 'Shorter Poems' (1890, 1894) and 'New Verse' (1925) containing experiments using a metre based on syllables rather than accents. He used this form for his long philosophical poem 'The Testament of Beauty,' published on his 85th birthday.



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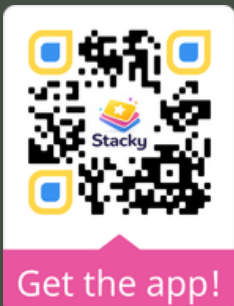


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