



**SAINT
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March 2020

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Services at St Barnabas' Church

Sunday	9:30 am	Parish Worship
Monday	2:30 pm	Prayers in the vestry
Tuesday	10:00 am	Holy Communion (said)

First Tuesday of each month: Service of Holy Communion at Moor Haven Nursing Home on Ripponden Road, starting at 2:00 pm.

Baptisms and marriages by arrangement with the Vicar.

**Please submit items for the April 2020 magazine by 15 March.
Please e-mail files to paulmonk111@gmail.com**

People at St Barnabas' Church

Vicar

The Revd Dr Paul Monk
St Barnabas' Vicarage, Arundel Street, Clarksfield, Oldham OL4 1NL
Tel: (0161) 624 7708

Assistant Curates

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Lay Reader

and Warden Mr Peter Haslam (0161) 345 0215

Administrator Miss Sarah Gura (07708) 714 813

Treasurer Ms Gisele Onwumere

Parish Hall bookings The Vicar (0161) 624 7708

Letter from the Vicar

The cover of this month's magazine shows a single drop of water splashing everywhere as it hits the surface of a small pool. The splash was small because the drip was small.

This splash is a visual metaphor for the spirituality of love. The drop was nearly microscopic yet it caused a mini-explosion as it smashed into the still surface of the water. In exactly the same way, every act of love — however small — disturbs the surface of everyday life. It showers every-thing with itself. Ignoring the impact becomes impossible.

The flavours of Lent surround everything throughout the whole month of March. Lived properly, Lent is a period of God-focussed introspection. We look at God as He lives His life in us. We explore and meditate in order to see how God is inviting us to a life of greater love, greater joy and peace.

Across the whole of this Lent-lived month, God is inviting us to look closely at the ways in which every tiny act of love, however small, showers everything with itself.

If there is a theme to this month's magazine, it's the ways in which we can fling unexpected droplets of love as we live our everyday lives. Some are more obvious than others. Some look more spiritual than others. Indeed, some don't actually look spiritual at all. But, like the image on the magazine cover, they are intended to produce something beautiful.

Wishing you great joy as you seek Him in love:

PAUL

Church and Parish news

Helen Tyler

Many of us will remember Helen Tyler during her time working here as our placement student last year. We now offer our huge congratulations. She has passed her selection conference and will start ordination training in September.

Lent meetings

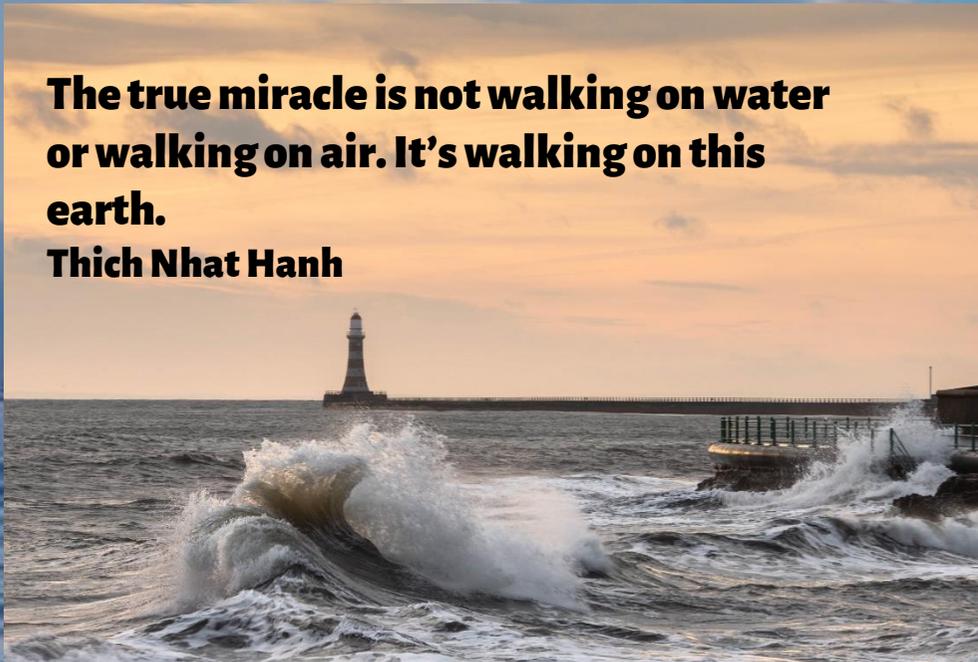
This year's Lent meetings involve Stations of the Cross . We meet in Moorside Church each Tuesday evening between 7:00-7:45 pm. All are welcome.

Grants

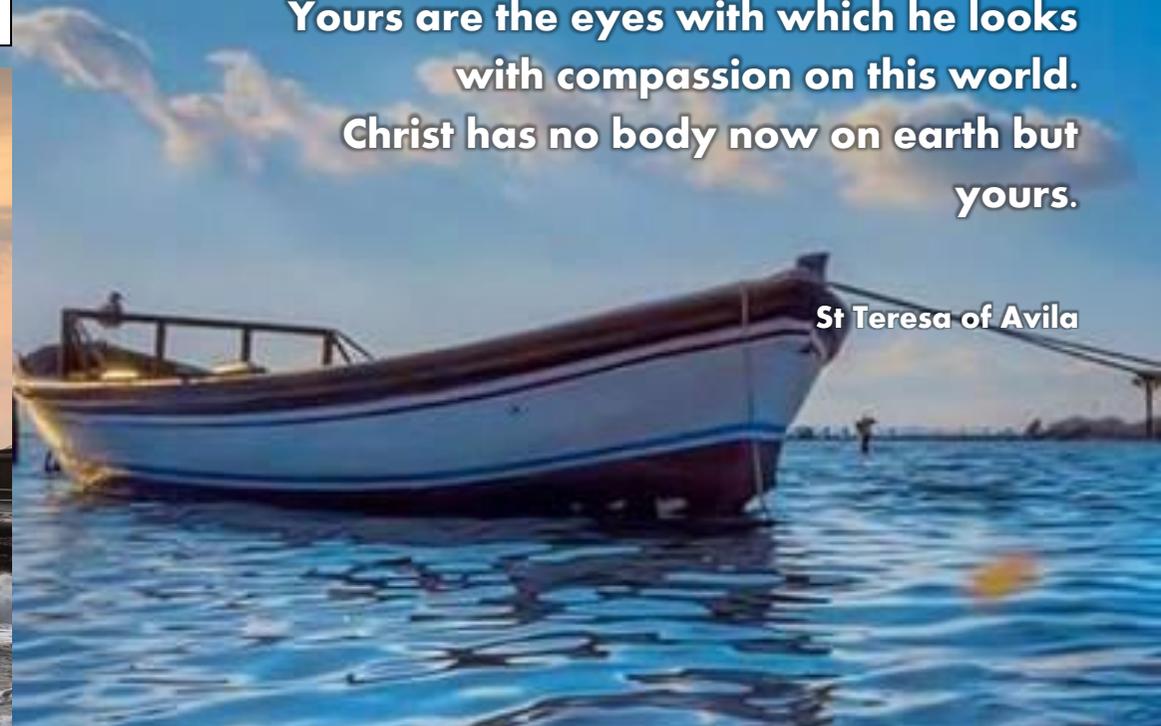
We are delighted to announce that the Church has been awarded a grant of £15,000 by the *Garfield Weston Foundation*. It was given to help us enhance the security of our Church buildings.

**The true miracle is not walking on water
or walking on air. It's walking on this
earth.**

Thich Nhat Hanh



**Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to
do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses
all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
with compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but
yours.**



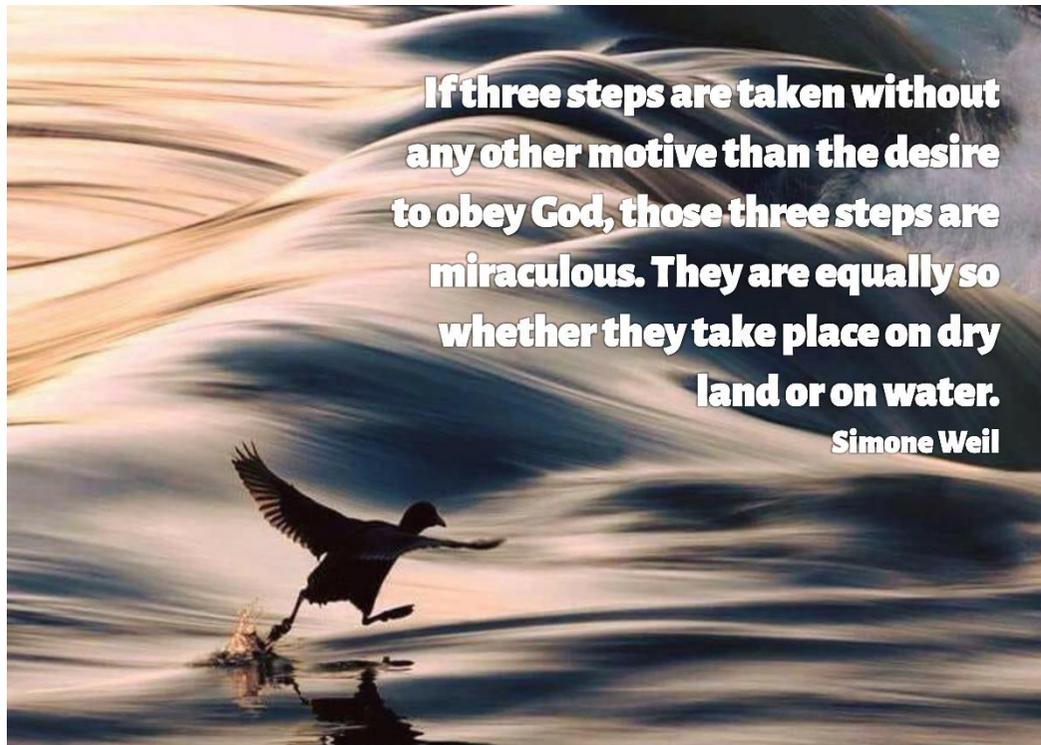
2020 dates for your diary

Sunday 22 March	9:30 am	Mothering Sunday.
Sunday 12 April	9:30 am	Easter Sunday.
Sunday 31 May	9:30 am	Whit Sunday.
Sunday 14 June	9:30 am	St Barnabas' Day and Annual Gift Day.

From the Parish Registers

Christian funeral

Monday 10 February	Eunice Markland at Waterhead Church followed by a committal at Hollinwood Cemetery.
Friday 28 February	Olwen Fish at Waterhead Church followed by a private committal at Oldham Crematorium.



Bible readings for March

Sunday 1 March

First Sunday of Lent

First: Genesis 2:15-17,3:1-7
Epistle: Romans 5:12-19
Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11

Sunday 15 March

Third Sunday of Lent

First: Exodus 17:1-7
Epistle: Romans 5:1-11
Gospel: John 4:5-14

Sunday 29 March

Passion Sunday

First: Ezekiel 37:1-14
Gospel: John 11:1-45

Sunday 8 March

Second Sunday of Lent

First: Genesis 12:1-4a
Epistle: Romans 4:1-5,13-17
Gospel: John 3:1-17

Sunday 22 March

Mothering Sunday

First: 1 Samuel 1:20-28
Epistle: Colossians 3:12-17
Gospel: John 19:25-27



**Arrrr This is where my treasure is.
Now, where did I put my heart?
(with apologies to Matthew 6:21)**

Forgiveness

**All of us have done wrong things,
so all of us need to be forgiven.**

These are the words said by the priest in a Church service:

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Memory verse

All have sinned and fall
short of the glory of God
(Romans 3:23)



Asking forgiveness

Write the name of the things we do wrong on the white bricks below. Then, in your mind's eye, put each brick into a bin, and ask God to empty the bin straight away. They are forgiven.



Living our faith

Jesus was good at distilling the laws of the Old Testament into short, pithy statements. Two of his most important are as follows:

- He summarised the Old Testament by telling us to **love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength** (Mark 12:30). In short, God wants us to love him with everything.
- He also tells us to **seek first the Kingdom of God in order to gain eternal life** (Matthew 6:33). Jesus' soundbite here means that we are to give God control of everything. He states it somewhat differently in the Lord's Prayer where he tells us to seek God's Kingdom because, that way, life on earth will start to look like heaven.

But when we follow Jesus, what does that look like today?

In today's world, Jesus is asking us to centre our lives on Him. He wants that 'everything' to include every aspect of our lives and faith.

Environmental holiness

God wants us to change the way we live. He wants us to respect his creation. That 'respect' could mean switching our energy providers, and recycling as much as we can and living simply.

- We can stop buying products wrapped in too much plastic.
- We can avoid products that are produced with disproportionate amounts of water.
- We can look carefully at the ways we use petrol and how often we use air travel.

Financial holiness

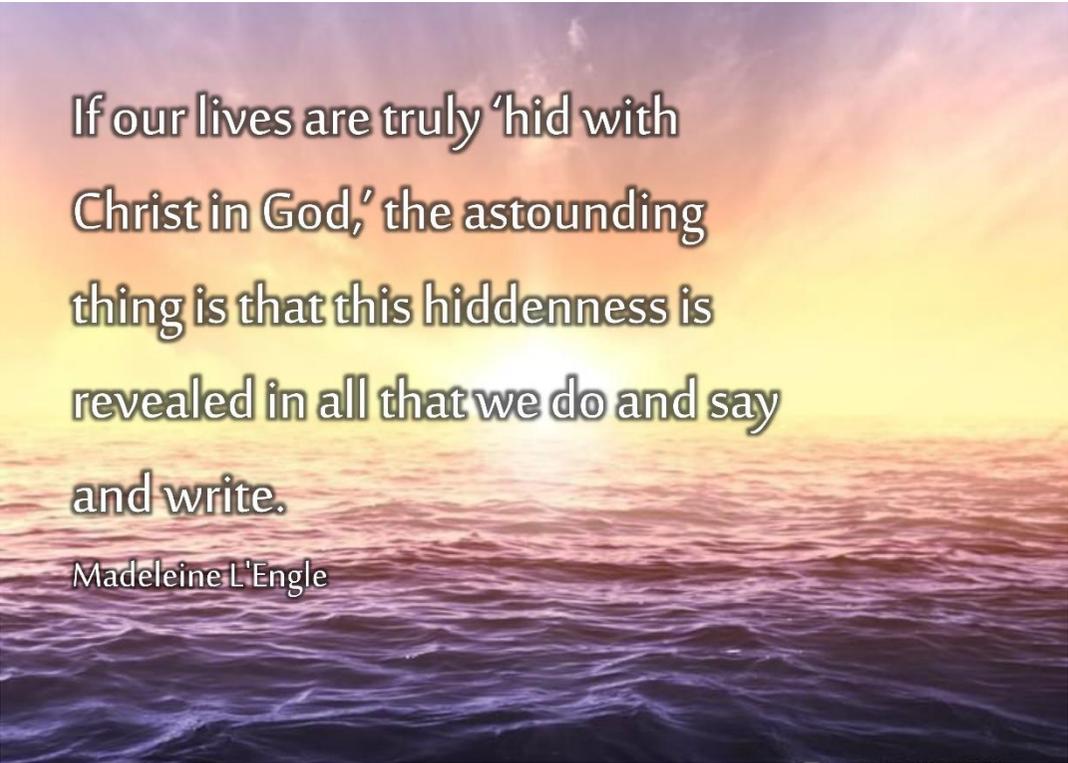
- While few of us have surplus money and even fewer are rich, all of us have spending power. Every time we spend our money we give power to a supplier. God wants us to use that spending power to make the world a better place. To that end, we can avoid the companies that pollute and treat the world badly.

- We can change bank away from those who invest in exploitation and look at ethical suppliers.

Social holiness

God wants us to accept people as they are. Reverend Jane writes on page 14 about the 'Inclusive Church' movement. Our church is a member.

- In practice, social holiness means a commitment to work against discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, sexuality, financial power, etc.
- Working against any forms of oppression or hatred. This work could involve campaigning, volunteering for social projects,

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and purple, with the sun low on the horizon. The water in the foreground is dark with white-capped waves. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, sans-serif font with a drop shadow.

If our lives are truly 'hid with
Christ in God,' the astounding
thing is that this hiddenness is
revealed in all that we do and say
and write.

Madeleine L'Engle

The Letter to Philemon

The Epistle of St Paul to Philemon is generally known simply as 'Philemon'.

This brief letter is generally regarded as one of the undisputed works of Paul. It is also the shortest of his letters that we have. It consists of only 445 words and 25 verses in the Bible. Nowhere in the letter does Paul identify himself as an apostle with authority but as 'a prisoner of Jesus Christ'. He calls his co-author Timothy 'our brother', and addressed Philemon as a 'fellow labourer' and 'brother'.

Philemon was wealthy and allowed a small church to meet in his house in Colossae (**Philemon 1:1-2** and **Colossians 4:9**). He may have held a high position in this Colossian house-church, acting much like a modern bishop. We think Philemon was wealthy because his house was large enough to accommodate the church that met there.

For more information, please visit the following sites:

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/philemon>

<https://www.gospelproject.com/pauls-letter-to-philemon>

<https://www.crisismagazine.com/2017/pauls-revolutionary-epistle-letter-philemon>

At the time of writing, Paul was a prisoner (probably in Rome in 61-63 AD but it might have been in Ephesus). He and his co-worker, Timothy wrote to Philemon and two of his associates: a woman named Apphia, who may have been his wife, and a fellow worker named Archippus, who is assumed by some to have been Philemon's son. Archippus also appears to have had special standing in the church that met in Philemon's house (**Colossians 4:17**).

St Paul wrote on behalf of Onesimus, a former servant of Philemon who had left him. Beyond that, it is not self-evident what had transpired. Onesimus is described as having 'departed' from Philemon, once having been 'useless' to him (a pun on Onesimus' name, which means 'useful'), and having done him wrong. Perhaps he stole from his rich master. Many people today think Onesimus was a runaway slave who became a Christian believer. Paul sent him back to face his aggrieved master, and used this letter to seek reconciliation between these two Christians. We don't know how Onesimus came to be with Paul. Various suggestions have been given: perhaps Onesimus was imprisoned with Paul; or maybe Onesimus had been brought to Paul by others who wanted forgiveness and reconciliation; perhaps Onesimus came to Paul by chance (or in the Christian view, by divine providence); or Onesimus purposely sought Paul, as a friend of his master's and asked him to broker a reconciliation. Whatever the exact history, he was told to return to Philemon with this letter wherein Paul implored Philemon to forgive him and receive him as a 'brother beloved'.

Although not explicit, the text could be interpreted to indicate that St Paul did nothing to change Onesimus' legal position as a servant / slave and that Paul was complying with Roman law in returning him to Philemon. Conversely, the text could also be interpreted as saying Paul was demanding the legal freedom of Onesimus and, as an act of both trust and reconciliation, told Philemon he was accountable in the higher court of God to forgive Onesimus and set him free.

Curate's Corner

Are you aware that St Barnabas and Holy Trinity are officially part of the *'Inclusive Church Network'*? You will find posters attesting to the fact in our porches ... but what does it mean?

It means we have signed up (and advertise on the ICN website) that our churches are explicitly committed to being Christian worshipping communities where *everyone* is welcome. Our shared vision is expressed therefore as:

'We believe in inclusive Church: a church which celebrates and affirms every person and does not discriminate. We will continue to challenge the church where it continues to discriminate against people on grounds of disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality. We believe in a Church which welcomes and serves all people in the name of Jesus Christ; which is scripturally faithful; which seeks to proclaim the Gospel afresh for each generation; and which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, allows all people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Jesus Christ' (see *inclusive-church.org*).

Most churches consider themselves to be 'welcoming', but some people obviously find this not to be the case (that's why they feel the need to look online). And it's not just a question of providing the obvious resources such as hearing loops, ramps, literature in bigger print or adapted toilet facilities (though they are most welcome). There are many more things to consider to make our churches even more welcoming to all the 'differences' in ability, preference, experience, and life style mentioned above.

This month, during the season of Lent where we re-focus attention on what it means to be a Christian disciple. I want to pose a challenging question. I would ask you to think and pray about it and perhaps contribute ideas to our ongoing commitment to the Diocesan vision of being '... a worshipping, growing and transforming Christian presence at the heart of every community.'

How do newcomers, young and/or old, experience a welcome as they bravely walk into our buildings on a Sunday morning?

[to be continued]

Revd Jane



SAINT
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Good Friday

Friday 10 April

Service for all the family, at 9:30 am
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Easter Sunday

A joy-filled family service for Easter
Sunday 12 April at 9:30 am

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Walter Hilton was an English Augustinian whose works influenced a great many people in the fifteenth century.

We don't know the exact date of his birth but it's thought to be around 1343. We also know very little about Hilton the man. His many quotes show he was well educated and some evidence suggests he trained as a canon lawyer at Cambridge University.

But we do know Hilton was a hermit before he joined the Augustinian friars around 1386. He was later the head of a house of Augustinian Canons at Thurgarton, near Newark, in Nottinghamshire.

Walter Hilton was an innovator. He was the first man to write a book of mysticism in the English language. At that time, Latin was the language of the Church, although others including John Wycliffe and his disciples worked to circulate manuscripts of an English Bible.

Walter Hilton's big idea was holiness. He said that every Christian is called to overcome sin. His greatest work *The Scale of Perfection* sets out in great detail the steps by which a soul attains what he called 'The New Jerusalem'. As he saw it, this goal came through ascetic practices and contemplation of God.

Hilton's second concern was to defend orthodox belief, especially in the conduct of the contemplative life. According to Hilton, the soul is formed in the image of God, first by faith but then in both faith and feeling. After passing through a dark night (in which humility and love work hand in hand), the soul learns a longing 'to love and see and feel Jesus and spiritual things.' When true love comes, it destroys vice and enables Jesus to become the life of the soul. A disciple is now able to see Christ working in all things.

We cannot date Hilton's works with certainty but scholars generally agree *The Scale* was written as two separate works that were later joined together. He wrote other works in addition to *The Scale* and many survive in both English and Latin. All are much shorter than either of the books that make up *The Scale*. Many are devoted to practical parish work as well as prayer and study. He taught that all

created things can be a means to holiness, which explains why some in today's environmental movement appropriate his teachings.

Hilton's spiritual writings held a wide influence during the fifteenth century in England. That influence was enhanced after his books were printed about a century later in 1494.

Hilton was clearly a man of great sanctity. It therefore seems odd that a man who set himself up as a guide for others later admitted that he had never experienced the familiarity with God that he described in his writings. But his path described a fairly common path of spirituality in Medieval Europe and many mystics embraced his system.

Hilton also translated many Latin works into English. His book incorporates much Latin scripture into his own English translations. His books are notable not only for their careful exploration of religious themes but as a glorious monument to Middle English prose.

He died on 24 March 1396. His works have inspired a great many later works and have been in print for the last three hundred years.

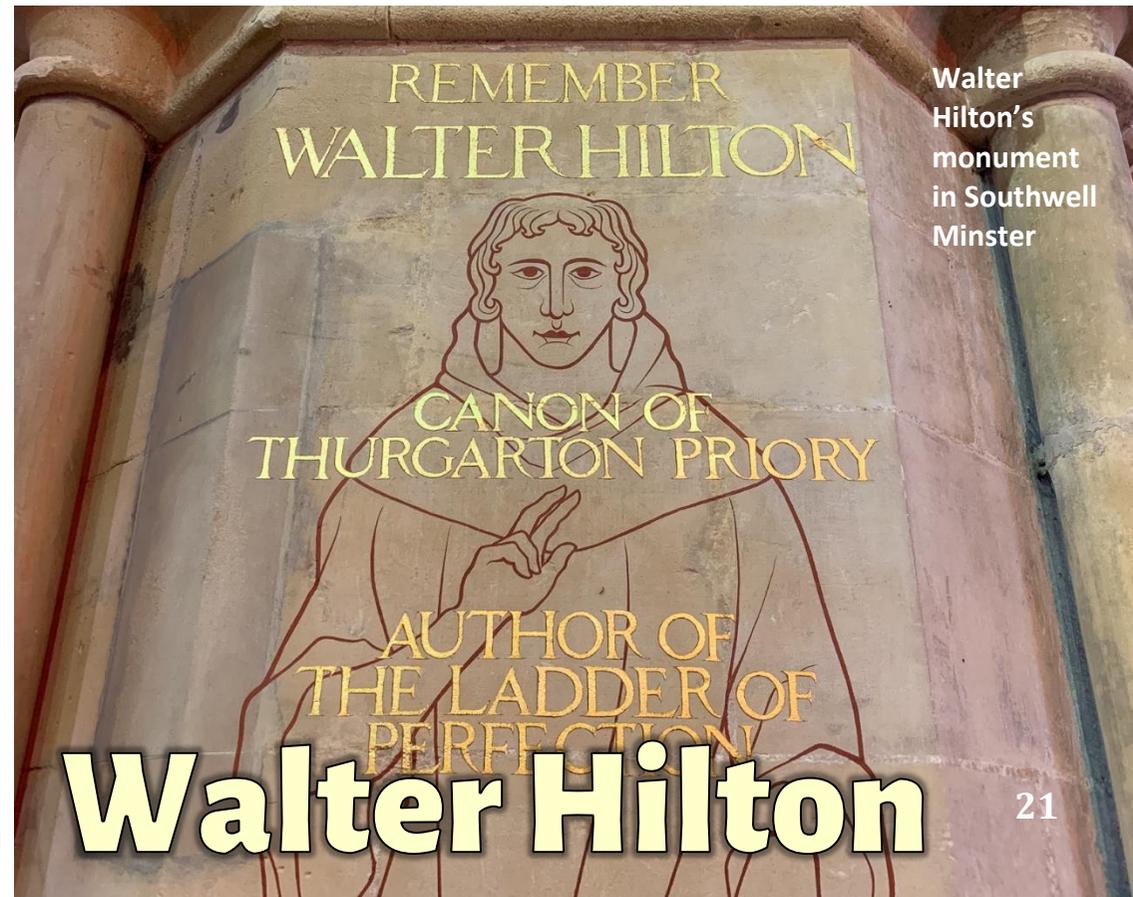
For more information, please visit the following sites:

<https://ccel.org/ccel/hilton>

<https://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/bestul-hilton-scale-of-perfection-introduction>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_Hilton

Please visit the CCEL site to find copies of Walter Hilton's works.



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Church diary

- Sunday 1 9:30 am: Service for **the First Sunday of Lent.**
- Monday 2 2:30 pm: **Prayers** in the vestry.
- Tuesday 3 10:00 am: **Holy Communion** in the Church.
2:00 pm: **Holy Communion** at Moor Haven Nursing Home.
- Weds 4 9:00-10:00 am: **Scripture breakfast.**
- Sunday 8 9:30 am: Service for **the Second Sunday before Lent.**
- Monday 9 2:30 pm: **Prayers** in the vestry.
- Tuesday 10 10:00 am: **Holy Communion** in the Church.
- Weds 11 9:00-10:00 am: **Scripture breakfast.**
- Sunday 15 9:30 am: Service for **the Third Sunday before Lent.**
- Monday 16 2:30 pm: **Prayers** in the vestry.
- Tuesday 17 10:00 am: **Holy Communion** in the Church.
- Weds 18 9:00-10:00 am: **Scripture breakfast.**
- Sunday 22 9:30 am: Service for **Mothering Sunday.**
- Monday 23 2:30 pm: **Prayers** in the vestry.
- Tuesday 24 10:00 am: **Holy Communion** in the Church.
- Weds 25 9:00-10:00 am: **Scripture breakfast.**
- Sunday 29 9:30 am: Service for **Passion Sunday.**
- Monday 30 2:30 pm: **Prayers** in the vestry.
- Tuesday 31 10:00 am: **Holy Communion** in the Church.
2:00 pm: **Holy Communion** at Moor Haven Nursing Home.

April 2020

- Weds 1 9:00-10:00 am: **Scripture breakfast.**
- Sunday 5 9:30 am: Service for **Palm Sunday** (we first assemble in the Hall).



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