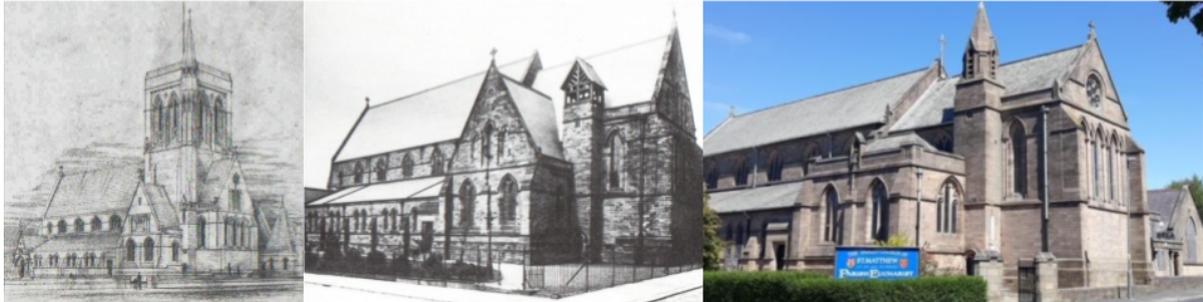

ST. MATTHEW WITH HOLY TRINITY

HABERGHAM EAVES



PARISH HISTORY PAGE

St. Matthew's with Holy Trinity is the Parish Church for Habbergham Eaves, which was an ancient township actually separated from Burnley by the River Calder and stretched over to Cliviger, Dunnockshaw, Halton and Ightenhill. By the 17th century though, the name usually was understood as referring to the farms in the South of Burnley.

However, as the town grew in population, The Rev. Robert Master felt that it wasn't enough that the town was only served by one Priest and Church school. Firstly, another school was built on Cog Lane and people also went to Mass there for about forty years. Then, Holy Trinity Church was built, with its foundation stone laid on 24th June, 1835 by the Bishop of Chester, and was consecrated on 10th November 1836. A famous tradition of Holy Trinity Church was the annual walk of witness, which at its height in the late 1940s/early 1950s had over 500 walkers and 150 choir boys from all of the



Holy Trinity Church

Anglican Churches in Burnley. Holy Trinity was also known to be the first Church in the area to have a surpliced choir, where the choir boys wore a cassock and surplice. St. Matthew's with Holy Trinity still continues this walk of witness on Trinity Sunday.



Procession with surpliced choir



Original design of St. Matthew's

As Burnley became more and more industrialised and the population grew massively, it was realised in the 19th century that more Churches were needed in Burnley. Three more Churches were consecrated, one of them being St. Matthew's. The foundation stone was laid on 7th October 1876. Three years later on 1st November 1879 the new Church was consecrated by the Bishop of Manchester. The first Parish Priest was Fr. Robert Giles.

Somewhat contrary to the Churchmanship of Holy Trinity Church, St. Matthew's was founded very much in the Anglo-Catholic tradition offering a form of worship with many sacramentals, such as lighted candles, incense and even the wearing of birettas (a hat with three fins and a pom-pom) when entering, seated or leaving at Mass. In the 1880's this was a cause of some scandal, so much so that the Bishop of Manchester refused to allow the parish an assistant curate



Eastward view of the Church



Typical communion table arrangement, with missals on short ends

until the Parish Priest assured the Bishop of his devotion to English customs. St. Matthew's also had a traditional Altar with a marble carved reredos instead of a communion table, and the Eucharist was said standing on the West side and facing East (the long side of the Altar), as opposed to the practice of placing the missals on the North and South sides (the short sides).



Liturgical features from left to right: Incense thurible, lighted candle, sanctuary bells, eastward facing Mass, exposition of the Host in a Monstrance, reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle, Priest wearing biretta

The life of a nineteenth century mill worker was harsh and dreary, and during this period under both the influences of the Oxford Movement and the Evangelicals there was a greater appreciation in the Church for a need to capture the hearts of the masses in industrial towns. More of the clergy came to an appreciation that their vocation was a "life", rather than a profession and High Churchmen advocated the importance of the Eucharist, which changed the interior of Churches to place a focus upon the Altar instead of lecterns or pulpits. Every sense was to be caught which meant colour through stained glass, brass, marble, and colourful Altar frontals. Of course, another aspect of lifting up the senses was music.

Many new hymns were written in this period and a great deal of others were translated from German, Greek and Latin, and were sung by larged surpliced choirs. This was met with full approval by the congregation but there were still local objections, like that of the Burnley Protestant Association which in 1889 complained about “the use of lighted candles on the Altar, stoles, birettas and surplices, the



Examples of surplice

customs of crossing and bowing, kissing the Gospel Book, elevating the Elements, elevating the alms dish and standing on the West side of the Altar so that the parishioners could not see the manual acts”. In 1890 there were even groups who wrote to the newspaper complaining about the very use of the word “Altar”, instead of “Lord’s Table” and “Eucharist”, instead of “Communion”.

The Church was also heavily involved with social work in the parish during the 19th century. In 1882 the death rate in Burnley was 288/1000 births and the town was described as “the most drunken in England”. In 1883 St. Matthew’s purchased a house which opened on four weekday evenings which operated as a club with instructional classes and was staffed by Sister Charlotte. In 1882, there was an attempt to establish a cottage hospital in the parish but it was decided it would be better to contribute towards the building of a general hospital for the town. In 1888, St. Matthew’s Women’s Help Society was founded, which continued until the 1920s.

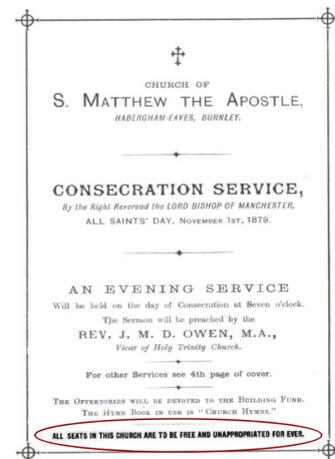
The site for a new school was acquired at the corner of Raglan Road and Piccadilly Road, which was completed in 1890. In the late 19th century, the spiritual life of the Church was very strong, with 225 receiving Communion at the Harvest Festival and 221 a Christmas in 1893. In 1895 St. Mathew’s hosted the Sacrament of Confirmation for the first time, confirming



Examples of various liturgical colours

73 candidates. Matins and Evensong were said daily, and there was a Mass on Thursdays, Saints days and two on Sundays, one at 8am and another at 11:30 after Matins. On one Good Friday 1894 there were six services including a children’s service and Three Hours Devotion. That Easter there were seven services with four Masses. In 1896 the Vicar Rev. S.E. Clarke, M.A. took great interest in properly educating the young in their faith and there were two Sunday Schools with “real and systematic classes”. He also wrote liturgical

instruction articles for the magazine on topics such as liturgical colours, the use of wafer bread, Sunday observance, daily Masses, history of the Prayer Book and Friday abstinence. Small groups of young people



A poster advertising that “all seats in this Church are to be free and unappropriated for ever”, many Churches employed pew rent at this time.



Example of box with dissolvable wafer hosts

would be invited to the vicarage for tea and discussions, where the Vicar would present both sides of various arguments equally, which was said to be very thought provoking. Three men from the parish took Holy Orders during this time.



Patronal banner

The 25th anniversary of the consecration of the Church was held in 1904. St. Matthew's also gave special prominence to the Patronal Festival (feast day of St. Matthew) and the Harvest Festival. There would often be processions with a band which would end in a farmer's field where coffee and buns would be served.

There was an Episcopal Visitation to St. Matthew's on 7th February 1907, where the Bishop examined the Church and fortunately declared he was most pleased with its beauty and order. This ended conflicts with the Bishop and in May 1911 two candles were placed upon the Altar, and the Vicar wrote:

“On Easter Day two standard lights for which a Faculty had been recently obtained, were used for the first time . . . They are placed in the Sanctuary because that is the most holy part of the Church. It is there - at the Altar - that our Blessed Lord manifests His Presence to His children, and the earthly Throne of our Lord has always been the part of the Church most richly adorned.”

Hence, the tradition of the Church had been firmly reinforced.



The Church on fire

The longest serving Parish Priest of St Matthew's, The Rev. F.

Jones arrived in 1923 and remained until the end of world war two. During his time electric lighting was installed in 1924, but this was to lead to a fire in 1927 when it short circuited.

On Christmas Day 1927 as a family of the Church were walking past they saw that the Lady Chapel was on fire. Many neighbours and the fire brigade came to help, but unfortunately, the Church was burned to the ground. However the fire had not reached the vestries so during this time, Masses were held in the open air and money was raised.



Decorated Sanctuary with Altar having candles both next to and on it, adorned with a frontal and marble reredos, behind gated Chancel screen



The aftermath

Sadly apart from the loss of the valuable stained glass the marble reredos was also beyond repair, which was a cause of great sadness to the congregation of the time.

The Vicar, The Rev. F. Jones BSc., wrote:

“Everything was gone. The font is in fragments, the Chancel screen (marble and brass is destroyed, the lecterns were melted. There is scarcely a trace left of the oak choir screens, the memorial to Father Clarke, the choir furnishings, the organ, the great stuple cover of the font, the Altars. The floors were burnt out and the magnificent foundations, a network of stone walls, were laid bare.”



East end before and after the fire

The council declared that the remaining gables, arches and walls were dangerous and demolished all but the low walls. The original architect and also the designer of the windows had died so a perfect reconstruction would be impossible. It was decided that the new Church would have a lower roof (reduced by 18 feet) and smaller seating area so as to be warmer. The East wall was of the same design but rose window replaced the three lancet windows. A larger triple light window was put in the East wall of the Lady Chapel. The Lady Chapel Altar, frontal and ornaments were gifted by the widow of a former Vicar, Mrs. Clarke. The new font was gifted from parishioners of Patching, near Worthing.

In 1931 the new church was opened by the Bishop of Blackburn, Whalley and Burnley. The well respected Lancashire firm of Austin and Paley was given the task of re-building. An organ from a church in Farnworth by Laycock and Bannister replaced the old one, which may have caused the fire, and new stained glass was commissioned and installed in 1946 after it had been placed in the cellar during the war.



Old vs. new designs for font, High Altar, Lady Chapel



The Rev. C.G. Bellamy and The Rev. G.B Dickinson and servers

When The Rev. C.G. Bellamy became Vicar in 1956 there was a steadily growing congregation and increase in weekly contributions, he oversaw the building of the Church hall and the Church continued to flourish.

The hall was a prefabricated building from a firm called MARS of Hull. As part of walking days in June from 1956 to 1959 there were

processions which entered Scott Park and stopped at the bandstand where hymns were sung to the accompaniment of a band, onlookers were invited to the concluding service in Church. In 1958 the Mothers' Union was reformed and the first of



Mothers' Union banner on Walking Day 1956



Scout flags at the back of Church

several uniformed organisations was founded, a Scout troop soon followed by a Cub pack in 1959.

In the beginning of 1965 there was the inauguration of the United Service in Unity week. With trepidation and some regret, there was the change from the 1662 Prayer Book to the revised liturgy.

In 1968 The Rev. J. Finch became Parish Priest and enthusiastically renewed many activities in the social life of the parish. But he also had a devotion to the Church's inner life as well, and grounded the Church in an age he referred to as "bent on destroying authority, while at the same time needing it," and called reminded his parishioners:

"The local Church should stand on her traditional authority, meet as the people of God at the Altar, and go out into the world in the power of the Holy Spirit!"

Rev. Finch maintained that in the presentation of the liturgy, good music and good ceremonial were vital and had made new vestments and frontals which enhanced the beauty of the Sanctuary.



The Rev. J. Finch, Reader, Organists and Choir

In 1972 the Church was rewired and in 1976 replacements for the chair kneelers were made by ladies of the congregation, which were tapestry covers which bear the names of Burnley Churches, Christian symbols, Biblical themes and various activities of the town.



Holy Trinity Church interior before closure

For Holy Trinity Church, things were becoming more difficult, and by the late 1970s' the Holy Trinity School had moved to its present site nearer to St Matthew's. As the population too diminished and the new motorway split the parish in half, Holy Trinity became unviable as a Church on its own.

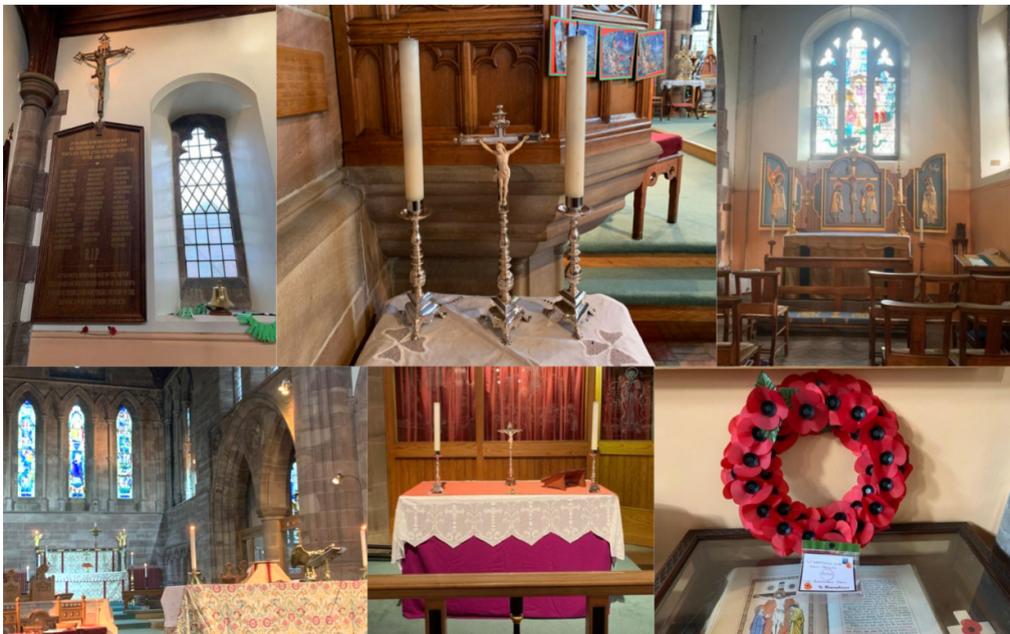
Despite being from a different tradition in churchmanship, both congregations worked exceedingly

hard to integrate with one another and with the sale of the Holy Trinity Church as well as the St. Matthew's Church Hall a new hall could be rebuilt, with a new Vicarage and the interior of the Church re-ordered as it is today, with the installation of the nave Altar.



Before and after the installation of the nave Altar

While St. Matthew's with Holy Trinity does not continue every tradition from the St. Matthew's Church of the 19th century regularly, it maintains a dignified and reverent form of sacramental worship in a tradition familiar to both St. Matthew's and Holy Trinity. Much of the Church's history is reflected in the high standard of music, decorated vestments, precious sacred vessels and gestures as well as the vibrant parish life and community endeavours.



Interior aspects of the Church today including war memorial, Lady Chapel, St. Paul's Chapel



Fr. Alex Frost, Mtr. Enid Briggs and Rev. Kat Gregory-Witham.

club by the children (Jesus A Friend For All). The full details of these can be found on the Church website.

The current Vicar is Fr. Alex Frost and the other clergy are Mtr. Enid Briggs and Rev. Kat Gregory-Witham. The parish is very active and maintains a close relationship with local schools and works to support the community through food bank and breakfast club initiatives. There are a number of Masses on Sundays, Saints days and throughout the week and in addition there are activities oriented towards children including a family service and the Sunday School, called "JAFFA"