



Parkwood Methodist Church



St. Mark's Parish Centre
53 Thornhill Road
Longwood HD3 4UL

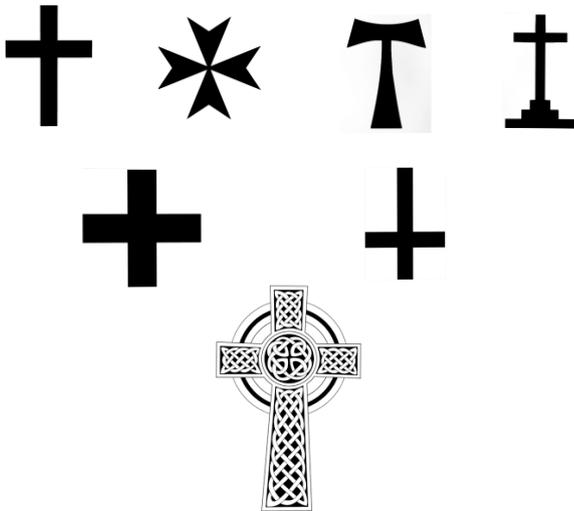
The Herald

September 2020

Signs & Symbols

Over the years the church has invented its own signs and symbols which mean something special to us and help us in our faith.

Did you realise that there are a large number of different types of cross? Do you know the names of these crosses?



There is something, however, about the sign of the cross that I didn't know until recently. Apparently the early church did not largely use the sign of the cross for nearly four hundred years after the life of our Lord. It would be quite rare that you would find the sign or symbol of the cross in an early church. Scholars have suggested there were a number of different reasons why the early Christians did not use the sign or symbol of the cross – there was the shame of their Lord being put

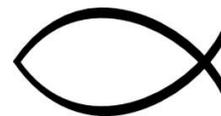
through this torture. Remember the early church was persecuted – just like it is being done again today in other parts of the world.

So what did the early church use? Well they weren't short of signs or symbols and let me tell you about a special one.

There was a very special sign that the early church invented - and I'd like to share with you the unusual story behind this:

In the early days of the Christian Faith it was dangerous for Christians to meet and worship together. If they were found out, Christians could be beaten and killed because of their Christian Faith. So they had to find a way of being able to let someone else know if they were a Christian - and they invented a very clever and secret way of doing this.

If they met someone on the road - which would normally be a dusty track, and they thought they may be a Christian - but weren't sure - they would draw two marks in the dust or sand which looked like this:



They did this - because these early Christians had invented this secret code around the sign of the fish - and this secret code would let another Christian know that you were a Christian.

It was, of course, the Ichthus sign which is still widely used today.

I've only found out recently also that the way that the head the fish was pointing - then this gave a clue to the other Christian where the secret meeting place was for their church - because if their secret church was found - it would be broken up and the Christians who went to this church would be either beaten - or even sometimes killed - just for being a Christian.

Signs and Symbols are all around us they have become part of our lives -they help us to give meaning to our lives.

Happy sign hunting!

John

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SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

18th John Oldham

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Many people are asking what did you do in Lockdown? There are even cartoons on Facebook saying this as though it is over. Sadly it isn't. Though I think there is light at the end of the tunnel at last. But what did I do in Lockdown?

I am an only child so the solitary existence might not have bothered me as much as it did some people. Occasionally I walked in the park and some people chatted keeping the 2m distance. I watched people bowling which I sometimes do anyway.

I shop online and mostly the delivery people run in and out. Literally. But this week I got Mr Chatty. He said he was running half an hour late. I'm not surprised. But I hope he did the other customers as much good as he did me.

My eldest son got a puppy to go with the older dog they already have. Badly neglected by her previous owner, she has already cost a ransom in vets bills. But I have had the fun of seeing her grow, in photos, and hearing about the mischief she gets up to.

Has my cooking improved? Did it need to do? I have cooked for all ages and for many different nationalities. But I have learnt to make a curry from scratch and small naan breads. And I still don't think pork tastes of anything unless its in a sauce.

Like many people I cleared out the spare bedroom. But this only resulted in several boxes of things needing a good home. This was solved by an advert on Facebook by a lady whose son had got his own place and needed "everything." I answered the ad and a man with learning difficulties arrived with his sister and her little girl. She introduced herself immediately by saying she was 2, this was her mummy and her name was Ellie-May. They almost cleared the spare bedroom and 2 cupboards. Another job done.

The garden is a work in progress and may always be. But it is a source of conversation with passers by. The Asiatic lilies, the roses, the solitary dahlia (I think the slugs ate the rest) and the bee bombs (please ask) have made a display worth seeing and commenting on. And many people have. I have taken up painting after 30 years. Castle Hill is even recognisable. Eileen Donan castle is proving more difficult. Amid like all hobbies it is a bottomless pit when it comes to spending.

I've knitted a blanket which will go to Africa and I'm into 3 squares of another.

The worst part of Lockdown is not knowing what day it is. If I was at church I would know it was Sunday. If I was at Friendship Hour, Linthwaite I would know it was Tuesday and if I was at ESOL, Fartown Trinity, I would know it was Tuesday also. The saving grace in all this is that Janet, my stocking putter on comes on Thursday. There was talk of her changing her day. Mercifully that didn't happen.

My cleaner was unable to come for 3 months and there are jobs I simply can't do. I wouldn't have a cleaner otherwise would I? Fortunately Janet helped me out.

If I have to remember something I make a note then forget where I put the note. But have I neglected my religious life in all this? I like to think I have not.

You only have to watch the news and read the ads to know where prayers are needed. The people who are ill, the people who are

caring for them and the friends and family who are missing them.

I pray for homeless people. I find it very satisfying that I can come home, lock the door and feel safe.

I pray for people who are missing from home, Madeleine McCann and Claudia Lawrence are just 2 but I know there are many many more.

I pray for people who are struggling. Not enough money. Coping with children being at home all day and having to feed them.

People with mental health problems. How do they cope with the changes in routine? Do they cope? All the vast numbers using the food banks. And the charities who have taken a massive drop in donations.

Lord in your mercy hear my prayers

Barbara Rushforth

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If you have internet access and would like to join in the "Zoom" on line service on a Sunday morning @ 11.00am.

Or the Parkwood Catch-up on a Tuesday @ 4.30pm. Just a light easy chat, nothing heavy. Please email me for details and I will pass your mail to the relevant person

THANK YOU - your support means everything

During lockdown it has been greatly appreciated that additional members of the congregation have transferred money to the Parkwood bank account (both for one-off payments and as regular giving). Other donations of cash and cheques have also been gratefully received over the past few months.

Thank you for your continued support.

Anne (Treasurer)

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Please note: We may not be meeting in the building but do remember there are still bills to pay so your financial support is appreciated. (Ed!)

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Photo from David Harris with his daughter, granddaughter and great granddaughter. Congratulations David and all the family.

Second Parkwood Holiday Bags Delivered



Thanks to all the team who helped us to deliver another Parkwood Holiday Bag to all the children who were part of our Messy Church and the Parkwood Children's Club. Thanks to all those who gave us ideas and items for the Holiday Bags. Thanks also to those who filled and delivered the Holiday Bags. They have been really appreciated by the families for giving the children something to occupy them during the holiday and remembering them during this time.

A few photo's from yesteryear for you to ponder and remember.

