

The United Benefice of
St Michael on Greenhill, Lichfield
with St John, Wall

ST JOANNES
BAPTISTA



COLLECT AND READINGS
21st June
Birth of John the Baptist

Collect

Almighty God,
by whose providence your servant John the Baptist was wonderfully born,
and sent to prepare the way of your Son our Saviour
by the preaching of repentance:
lead us to repent according to his preaching
and, after his example,
constantly to speak the truth, boldly to rebuke vice,
and patiently to suffer for the truth's sake;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Old Testament Reading Isaiah 40 v1-5

¹ Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries out:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵ Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'

Gospel Reading Luke 1.5-25 & 57-66 & 80

⁵ In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶ Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. ⁷ But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

⁸ Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, ⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. ¹⁰ Now at the time of the incense-offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. ¹¹ Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. ¹⁴ You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.' ¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, 'How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.' ¹⁹ The angel replied, 'I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰ But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.'

²¹ Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. ²² When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. ²³ When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

²⁴ After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, ²⁵ 'This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favourably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.'

⁵⁷ Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸ Her neighbours and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

⁵⁹ On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. ⁶⁰ But his mother said, 'No; he is to be called John.' ⁶¹ They said to her, 'None of your relatives has this name.' ⁶² Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. ⁶³ He asked for a writing-tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And all of them were amazed. ⁶⁴ Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. ⁶⁵ Fear came over all their neighbours, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶ All who heard them pondered them and said, 'What then will this child become?' For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

⁸⁰ The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

Sunday Sermon

The link for the Sunday sermon is

<https://www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/sunday-sermons.html>

For those who receive this by post the text is printed below.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

ST MICHAEL

Those newly in need of prayer

Those in continuing special need of prayer:

Anthony Staples aged 6, Audrey Egleston, Colin Eastwood, Yvonne Harper, Ian and Judith Watson, Alison Cox-Toplis, Julian & Wendy, Jamie, Gary and Denise, Sam Bassett, Mark Berry, Dorothy Clayton, Jo Cobb, Dottie Collins, Robert Harris, Bill Hill, James Knight, Marielouise Oliver, Arthur Palin, Nick Rutter, John Tipper, Sheila Vaughan, Renee Wellings, Felicity Woodfield

Those who have died

Ivy Colley (interment of ashes), Lawrence Clark, Rosemary Hunt

ST JOHN

Those who are ill and their carers:

Pat Crowe, Jo Hearn, Ann Kinson, Allan Law

Rosemary Hunt died on 12th June. Sadly, we cannot hold a funeral for her at St Michael's as she has requested. There will be a family funeral at the crematorium. At a later date we will arrange a memorial service in church for Rosemary and invite all who knew and loved her to attend.

Prayer Requests

You can text prayer requests to 07388 529020

Daily Prayers from the Cathedral

The Diocese of Lichfield facebook page is where videos of daily prayers from the cathedral are being posted <https://www.facebook.com/LichfieldCofE/>

The Rector, Simon Baker

01543 253010

CHURCH NOTICES

CHURCHES OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER

Our churches are now open for private prayer only.

St Michael's Lichfield is open **between 2.00pm and 4.00pm** and will be open at this time every day. The church will be staffed during opening hours.

St John's at Wall is open on **Wednesdays and Sundays from 10.00am to 4.00pm**. The church will not be staffed during opening hours.

In both churches provision will be made for hand sanitization, cleaning and social distancing. We are delighted to be able to open our churches, but we also want to make sure that everyone is safe.

Rector and Churchwardens.

BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAY 24th JUNE

On Wednesdays at 10.30 June we continue our study of Paul's letter to the Philippians.

We will be using "Zoom". This is quite simple to use and doesn't require you to download any software. All you need is a laptop or other device that has a camera.

If you took part in last week's Bible Study, you will automatically receive a code to join the discussion. If you would like to take part starting this week, please email Chris Baker on ☎ c.j.baker@bham.ac.uk and he will send you a web link to join the study and some simple instructions.

NEW WEBSITE PAGE The text and questions to think about can now be found at <https://www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/bible-study.html>

WORSHIP BY ZOOM

We will be holding live worship by Zoom on the first and third Sundays of each month.

This Sunday 21st June followed by a Virtual Reception

As you will know Peter and Rowan and family will be moving to Hong Kong in July. We will say goodbye to them at the evening service (via Zoom) on June 21st, which will be followed by a virtual reception and presentation (bring your own drinks and nibbles).

Sunday 7th July at 6.00pm.

You can join the service from 5.45pm. The service will last about 30mins. There will be readings, prayers, a short address and hymns.

If you would like to join in please email Simon on simonbaker57@outlook.com and you will be sent a direct link. You do not need to have Zoom downloaded on your PC or other device. If you have already joined a Zoom service, you should receive the link a few days before. If you have not had a link by Sunday morning, please email.

VOLUNTEERING AND CHARITIES

LICHFIELD FOODBANK is continuing to function and is dealing with increased numbers of clients. Donations of items can still be made at the collection boxes in our local Co-op, Tesco and Waitrose supermarkets. The particular items needed are – **snacks (breakfast bars, crackers), custard and tinned meat**. If you can, please do support this appeal. You can access more information about the Foodbank on our website. There is information for those who would like to make a financial donation and a gift aid form.

The drop off point in church is now available when the church is open for private prayer.

GIVING TO CHARITIES

It is clear that many charities are suffering a significant loss of income due to the changes in our way of life at the moment. For many of them the demands on them will also increase. Please consider making a donation to a charity while you are confined to home so that others can benefit and our charities continue with their work.

GIVING

GIVING TO ST MICHAEL'S

Our accounts for last year show that we operated at a loss. In many ways that is due to the increase in utilities and costs as a result of the church being used as the main venue for all our activities. This is very worthwhile and just what we should be doing, however we do need to make an effort to put our finances back into balance.

We are grateful to everyone who gives to St Michael's church and helps us cover our costs. At the moment, we cannot supplement our donations by standing order with collections made in church. If you give through the envelope scheme please consider changing to a bank order, hold on to your envelopes or write out a cheque and put it in the church mailbox. In order to make one off or regular donations easier we now have a **JUST GIVING** page for St Michael's. please visit:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stmichaellichfield>

STAYING IN TOUCH

The office Phone is not currently being regularly monitored. The ministry team and others are continuing a ministry by telephone to keep in touch. Rector, Simon Baker (☎ 01543 253010)

ITEMS FROM OUR MAGAZINE

The Parish Church of St. John, Wall, Nr. Lichfield, Staffordshire

History

The village of Wall has a long and interesting history. Even before the Roman occupation there was a Celtic temple on the present site of St. John's church. It was dedicated to the god Cernunnos, one of the main Celtic gods, a cross legged figure with stag's antlers who was the Celtic equivalent of the Roman god Pan, invoked by the bards and Druids as a link between man and nature. The Celtic temple was succeeded by a Roman temple dedicated to the goddess Minerva and to Mithras, an unusual example of Mithraic worship because it was so far north.



At the time of the Romans, Wall, or Letocetum as it was then called, was a settlement of considerable size which had grown around the Roman fort at the junction of Watling Street and Ryknild Street. There were Christians, probably with a church, in this Romano-British settlement. In the early or mid 7th century Bishops and monks suffered as a result of a Welsh victory at Caer Lwytgoed which could have been Wall itself or a place nearby. This makes it likely that there was a monastery in the neighbourhood at that time. 1.

In the mid 13th century there is a record of a graveyard at Aldershawe which was presumably used by the inhabitants as a field cemetery although the general burial place was at St. Michael's, Lichfield, which became the parish church for the area, a link which is still present today within the United Benefice of St. Michael and St. Mary, Lichfield and St. John, Wall.

In 1840 John Mott of Wall House gave a grant of land and an endowment of £700 for the church and graveyard. This was augmented by a sum of £500 left by Robert Hill who was a previous owner of Wall House, and further funds were raised by public subscription. St. John, Wall, was built as a District Chapel in the Parish of St Michael's Lichfield. The finished Chapel of Wall was consecrated by the Bishop of Hereford on behalf of the Bishop of Lichfield in May 1843. In 1860 the church of St. John moved from Chapel status to that of a District Church. Not until later was the new parish of St. John, Wall formed 'carved from the parish of St. Michael's Lichfield, (and other surrounding parishes), the patronage of which was vested in the incumbent of St. Michael's and was styled a vicarage in 1868' 2.

1. From 'Lichfield: Churches', A History of the County of Stafford: Volume 14: Lichfield (1990) pp.134-155

2. London Gazette 6 May 1845

There have been seventeen incumbents of St. John. The first was Revd. Henry Oldershaw M.A. 1843 to 1859. The second, Revd. Samuel Andrew M.A. 1860 to 1863 saw the building of the Vicarage in Market Lane. This was sold in 1952 and is now called Littlefield House. The first Vicar of St. John's was Revd. William Williams M.A. serving for twelve years from 1864 to 1876. The Vicar between 1912 and 1930 was Revd. Josiah Warwick Adams who made the wooden pulpit and choir stalls which are still in use today. The Parish retained its own Vicar until 1951 when the Benefice joined with St. Peter's, Stonnall in 'Plurality'. The Revd. Frederick Ward-Davies served as incumbent for the two parishes for a long period between 1956 and 1978. In 1990, this connection with Stonnall came to an end since the parish once again regained its link to St. Michael's Lichfield when the Rector there, Revd. Derek Smith, took St. John under his wing and became its Priest-in-Charge. This union was cemented in 1996 when The United Benefice of Lichfield St. Michael with St. Mary and Wall St. John was created. For the first time this gave St. John a Rector- The Revd. David Kirk Beedon.

The church building

The church is brick built, with a white sandstone cladding and was probably designed by George Gilbert Scott, the well known Victorian architect. It stands on the site of one of the original Roman forts, the ditch of which runs from North to South under the chancel. The interior is of a very simple design, a short chancel, a nave without any aisles and a west tower with a spire. A picture of the interior dated 1859/6 shows box pews, benches in the centre of the nave, and a two decker pulpit on the north side of the chancel arch. In 1892 a peal of 8 tubular bells was installed in the spire and in 1920 a clock was placed there as a memorial to all those who had died in the first World War. The clock had originally come from Shenstone Court when it was demolished and the cost of the work was paid for by public subscription.



The present pipe organ was installed in 1883 at a cost of £150. It was made by Brindley & Foster of Sheffield and was originally operated by hand using bellows within the vestry. It must have been at this time that the two decker pulpit was replaced by a stone pulpit on the south side of the church. This was then replaced by the one made by Revd. Adams.



Two other features of the church are the splendid wrought iron lectern, the origins of which are sadly unknown, and the south facing stained glass window from the famous designer and maker C. E. Kempe's workshop. This window has the 'Tower' image inside the sheaf of corn which indicates that it was completed after Kempe's death.

Burials still take place in the churchyard. It was extended in 1910 (by Church Cottages losing much of their gardens!) and in 1926 an area between the churchyard and the Roman site was given by Miss Ethel Harrison for use as a churchyard. This was consecrated by the Bishop of Wolverhampton and brought into use in 1987.

Much work has been done to preserve the building and the church community for the next 150 years. In 1982 a major restoration was undertaken. The whole of the outside stonework, which had become black with smoke carried on the prevailing wind from the Black Country for over one hundred years, was cleaned and then repointed. Inside, after installing a damp course, much plastering and redecoration was carried out. The roof was lined and timber preserved. More recently the organ, bells and heating system have been overhauled. The front and back of the nave have been 'Re-ordered' to provide more space and the whole church re-carpeted.

An extension on the north side which houses a toilet, small extra meeting and storage areas and a kitchenette was opened by Bishop Jonathan on June 1st 2014. This exciting development means that the church community of Wall can continue to be a vibrant and relevant Christian presence within the village.

