

THE PARISH MAGAZINE

February 2022



**The United Benefice of
St Michael Lichfield, with St John, Wall**

£1

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Reader: Trevor James 36 Heritage Court, LICHFIELD, Staffs, WS14 9ST Tel: 01543 258434	SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR FOR ST MICHAEL & ST JOHN Maureen Brand 01543 264880 For advice about safeguarding or to raise a concern please contact Maureen.
St Michael's Church Church Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 6ED	St John's Church Green Lane, Wall, Staffordshire, WS14 0AS

United Benefice Office

St Michael's Church, Church St, LICHFIELD, Staffs, WS13 6ED

Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri **CLOSED** Thursdays

9.00 am to 12.00 noon.

Tel: 01543 262211

E-mail: office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk

Reflection.....

Dear Friends,

Have you heard of Forest Church? It is one of the new forms of worship that grew in popularity during the restrictions on meeting indoors. A forest church service is always outside, rain or shine, and I have enjoyed a few in these past two years. Typically, we met in a churchyard and had very informal worship, with an opportunity at some point, to wander about the space and gather leaves, stones and things like that as part of the prayer. We would sing, listen to some thoughts and a spiritual reading, pray in an informal way. The bare bones of any service are very similar, but the very different style allows some to approach God who would not appreciate formal worship. During the time we could not meet as a group outside, two people would video their service and others joined them online. Worship has shifted into forms that just hadn't been considered until Covid caused us to search for different ways of meeting and praising God.

Forest Church, like Forest school, invites us to be and live outside, to notice the environment around us in detail and take it in. Both our churchyards have been a natural open space that people have walked through and valued, particularly in these trying times. There have been imaginative initiatives to engage people with some Christian reflections as they walked. It is not, of course, a new thing to worship God outside. Our Celtic ancestors would typically gather round one of their large stone crosses, some of them with stone pictures, like an ancient form of overhead screen. The St. Martin's cross outside Iona Abbey has several Bible pictures on one side, Mary and the infant Jesus; Daniel and some lions; Abraham stopped from sacrificing Isaac; the four gospel writers. Raised to proclaim an important place, they were used as preaching crosses and a space for worship. However,

maybe we had forgotten the values of worshipping God outside, in the big book of God's creation.

I have recently been reading a book called the Heartbeat of Trees. In an approachable way the author goes into the science behind many myths and realities about trees, around on earth 300,000,000 years so far. He talks of the forest as a community, trees communicating with each other through their roots. This is not of course, communicating as we do, but then trees are very different from us. Except, as I learned some years ago, if you take a molecule of blood and a molecule of chlorophyll, each has 136 atoms of hydrogen, nitrogen and carbon in the same exact and complex pattern, round a single cell of magnesium for trees and all plants, or a single cell of iron for blood. So maybe we are closer kin than we think. The book describes forest bathing, which is walking, sitting, lying, just being among trees, and how this has measurable beneficial effects on the human system, green, particularly the multiple shades of green you encounter in a forest, being a healing colour.

It should not surprise us if the natural world heals us just by being, we know well from Jesus' ministry that healing is close to the heart God. So, it seems obvious to me that healing would be woven into creation. So many people have said to me that being out for a walk, or just to sit outside has really helped them in the pandemic. A healing space. We know that Jesus went into the hills to pray, and even stayed out all night in doing so sometimes. Perhaps he too found not only the prayer restorative, but also the natural world around him. I'm not suggesting we stay out all night, but as nature wakes up and the buds burst open, how about noticing the details, looking for them, and praying in praise and thankfulness.

Chris Polhill

CLIMATE CHANGE PRAYER

From Quark to Planet

Creator God,
from quark to planet your universe is awesome.
Give us eyes to gaze at the wonders daily about us,
and the will to live in the harmony of your creating.
Help us to own the connections of all things,
even at cost to our own wants and comforts;
So we may live gently on earth,
and all creation praise you. Amen.

Chris Polhill

A Heart for Creation, edited by Chris Polhill

Wow God!
You did good making this planet!
It's beautiful, amazing,
from tiny wriggly things,
to trees and mountains,
and people of all races,
extraordinary people,

Just sorry!
For the mess we make.
The whole me first,
humans are tops thing;
the rows, and the violence,
no feeling for being part
of something so much bigger.
Help! Please!
we can't see how to do it,
how to undo the mess we've made,
how to work together.

How to love your way,
earth and sea and human,
and how we fit together.
We could?
Find a gentle way,
give stuff up, take things on;
live a way of healing?
Reminds me now of Jesus,
his inclusive way of love.

Chris Polhill

*From: Living Faithfully in Creation
Time, edited by Katharine
Preston and Kathy Galloway*

THANK YOU

As we start the New Year, may we say a massive Thank You to our churchwardens, Sue Jones and Lyn Shiel, for all their work.

During 2021 they have been coping with the usual needs of the church - repairs and caring



for the congregation amongst many - plus the extra load in the interregnum and, of course, working to keep us all as safe as possible during Covid.

All this joins health and family calls too.

Thank you, Sue and Lyn.

MB

Deadlines!

For **March Magazine**: Deadline is
SUNDAY 13th February

Contact David Shiel
shielfamily@gmail.com

Pew Sheet:
every Thursday 7:30am
Contact Parish Office

CHILDREN'S SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

Family Praise

Sunday 6th February

10am St Michael's



First Steps



Monday 7th February

10am St Michael's

Come and join us at our ...

MESSY CHURCH

for craft, story, song and food on



SUNDAY 9th February

4.30 – 5.45pm

in St Michael's Church

Ages 0-11 yrs. welcome

In Memory of Peter Watson

14 July 1929 - 20 March 2021

Peter always had love and compassion to give. Those of you who knew him will have experienced this. What you may not have known was that he was very passionate about supporting the charity WaterAid.

When a community gets clean water for the first time, it's the start of something truly life changing. Right now some of the world's poorest and most marginalised people don't have clean water to drink. Without access to water, overcoming poverty is just a dream.



When we lost Peter in March, as a family we decided to set up a JustGiving page to raise money for WaterAid in his memory. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity and beautiful messages received from so many of you from St. Michael's and further afield.

WaterAid responded to us with thanks, sharing the impact these donations will have, and we'd like to take the opportunity to pass on our sincere thanks to you all.

"The generous gift of £1210 in Pete's memory means that more people will now have access to clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene, changing lives around the world"

The fellowship, love and support of St. Michael's has been invaluable during Peter's life and beyond.

With our heartfelt thanks

Anne Watson,

Emma (daughter)

and Andy (son)



Funeral Notice

Barbara Sheila Homewood

Barbara Homewood peacefully passed away on 27th December 2021 aged 74 years. Barbara worshipped at St. Michael's Church at Greenhill and supported her parish in many ways over 40 years, including Mothers' Union and her key roles with Guides and Church Magazine Distribution.

Barbara's funeral service will be held on **Friday 4th Feb. 2022 at St. Michael's Church, Greenhill, Lichfield at 11:00am**, followed by a private service of committal at Lichfield & District Crematorium. The church service will be live streamed from 10 minutes prior to the service. The church has a restricted capacity due to social distancing. Therefore we would appreciate if many of our friends can join us online. A recording will be available within 6 hours of the funeral service, accessed via the same link. It will help you if you click the link in advance to see the guidance notes.

The link is: <https://funeralvideo.co.uk/barbara-sheila-homewood/>

The password is: HO2022 (Password is the first two letters of the surname followed by the year).

We ask that those attending take lateral flow tests and wear face masks.

Please do not provide flowers for the funeral. It would support charities close to our heart if donations can be made to

St. Giles Hospice

<http://www.stgileshospice.com/how-you-can-help-us/donate/>

Cancer Research UK

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/get-involved/donate>

*From husband Brian and our 3 children,
Sarah, Judith and Christopher.*

The Revd Helen Barton

I moved to Lichfield with my husband, Stephen, just over five years ago for me to take up the post of Master of St John's, Lichfield from which I retired at the end of May. Prior to that I served in parish ministry in the Dioceses of Guildford, Durham, Newcastle as well as Lichfield.

Originally I trained in retail management with Marks and Spencer, Boots and John Lewis before becoming an Account Executive with a small advertising company in Soho which specialised in working for charities.

In my adult life I was always active in the churches I attended, involved in pastoral care and running Bible study groups culminating in being Teaching Director of a Community Bible Study group in central London which grew from 26 members to 80 in a couple of years. This prompted me to seriously consider ordination. However, when someone close to me said, "You will never make a minister!" I decided to retrain as an RE teacher.

On a school trip to Jerusalem the call surfaced again, but this time I said nothing to anyone until nine months later the Rector of my parish church said he thought I had a vocation to the priesthood. It was during my training at Cranmer Hall in Durham that I met Stephen.

I am very much enjoying being part of St Michael's and look forward to being part of the ministry team. Alongside of that, I am chair of trustees of Lichfield District City of Sanctuary. (In case you wonder what that is all about, the Revd Warren Bardsley will be preaching on it at St Michael's at 10am on Sunday 13 February which is Racial Justice Sunday.)



I love reading and am glad in retirement to have a little more time for that, as well as a weekly Pilates class, walking and watching films. Our puppy, Primus, is giving us a huge amount of pleasure, and if Covid were to subside somewhat we should love to be travelling around more of Europe by train.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCHYARD WORKING PARTY

The Churchyard Working Party meeting for this month will be held on **Saturday February 26th., from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.** We will be continuing our winter jobs, which include the fitting of more tree guards; clearing of overgrown plants from gravestones and headstones; and any essential winter pruning. **Refreshments (Tea/Coffee/Cake) will be served during our Mid-Morning Break.** Do please join us if you can.

Ray Allen 251654



Charity no. 1155536

A prayer for us at this time:

Almighty God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the church is governed and sanctified, hear our prayer for our benefice and the congregations of St Michael and St John.

Give us discernment to recognise the gifts and ministries you have given to us together with the grace to exercise them in harmony with one another and for the good of all.

May we have patience in awaiting the appointment and arrival of a new leader for our parish, and give support to those responsible for choosing that person.

Finally, may we trust you, the God of faithfulness and generosity, to guide us through this time of transition and change, so that we are ready to enter a new chapter in the life of our parish for the glory of your Name and the furtherance of your kingdom. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS 2022

Thank you to all distributors for collecting the subscriptions and to all those who have subscribed to the magazine for this year.

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW OVERDUE. Any latecomers, please hand your subscriptions to St Michael's, St John's or my home.

Newcomers, it is not too late to subscribe for this year. The price for the whole year is £10. Individual copies, £1. Please let me know if you would like to start receiving the magazine.

Liz Clarke, 16 Havefield Avenue, WS14 9XS. liz.clarke@virgin.net

CAN YOU HELP?

I am looking for volunteers to deliver all or parts of Barbara's former distribution. She delivered to the following addresses:

Mallicott Close, WS13 6DG

Woodfields Drive, WS14 9HH

Gorse Lane, WS14 9HQ

Shortbutts La, WS14 9BT

St John's, WS13 6PB

Dam St, WS13 6AE

Library, WS13 6LG

CAB, Levetts Fields, WS13 6HY

3 x Ashmole Close, WS14 9RS

1 x Elias Close, WS14 9TX

1 x Tamworth Rd, WS14 9HG

If you are able to help, please contact me.

Thank you.

Liz.clarke@virgin.net. 01543268862

LARGE COPIES of the magazine are available on request

The Chad Blog



A distinguished retired priest who played a key role in the D-Day landings in Normandy before serving as a vicar in the West Midlands and Staffordshire has died aged 97.

The Revd Preb Dick Sargent was ordained as deacon in 1952 and, after serving in Chester Diocese, was Vicar in Bushbury, Wolverhampton, from 1967-73 and Castle Church in Stafford from 1973-89, as well as being Rural Dean of Stafford from 1981-88 and a Prebend at Lichfield Cathedral from 1987 until his retirement in 1989.



Eight years before his ordination, as a 19-year-old, Dick was a Royal Navy sub-lieutenant tasked with landing troops on Utah Beach in the early hours of 6 June 1944. This included spending half an hour in the water getting boats off the sandbanks of Normandy beach.

Dick's efforts led to him being appointed to the rank of Chevalier in the Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur in 2016 – one of the highest distinctions given by the French Government. At the time of his award, in a Spotlight article, Dick said: "I am very delighted that what we did that morning has been recognised in this way – it fits in very well with Remembrance Sunday.

Dick, who died on Christmas Eve, continued to serve following his retirement having gained Permission To Officiate and worshipped in the Mid Trent churches.

The Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave, said: "Through almost ten decades of Christian faith and seven decades of Christian ministry, Dick exemplified what it means to live by faith, to care for the people of God, and to live life to the full. He was a priest of great commitment, integrity and courage, and we salute all that he gave to the Church of England, in this diocese and beyond."

An update on the Hawksworth Family

Rowan has not been able to send her usual monthly news about life in Hong Kong, as the family has been busy preparing for their move to China, for Peter to start his new job. However, they all had a very jolly Christmas dinner before setting off.



Because of the cancellation of all direct flights from Hong Kong to Chengdu, their new home, they had a long wait, staying near the airport, as four flights were cancelled.

Finally, they decided to fly to Shanghai first, and quarantine there. They plan to fly to Chengdu in the middle of January, where they will have to complete another week of isolation before they can explore their new surroundings.

We hold them all in our prayers as they make this difficult and exciting move.

Ruth Bull

Book Review

Do not miss out on the marvellous new book from our very own Historian –Trevor James. A follow-up to his recently published, and well-received, “*England’s Sainly Landscapes*” and “*Come Wind Come Weather*”

The new book draws together Trevor’s life-long interest in sport with his experience in observing and interpreting the landscape. He believes that Britain has a visible sporting landscape which is both a legacy of a traditional sporting enthusiasm for sport of every kind which is also continuing to develop, (which the recent Ashes series in Australia demonstrates.)

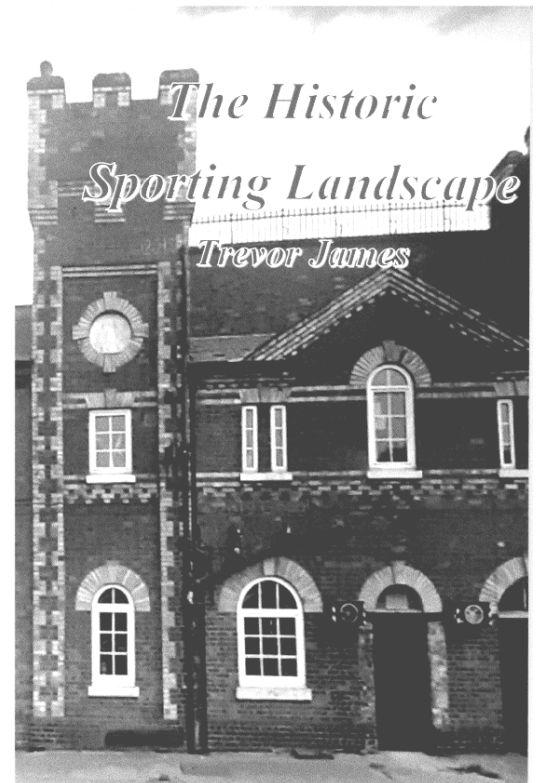
Back to Trevor’s new book -the front cover photo of which features the facade of the Whittington Heath Golf Club clubhouse, recently demolished to make way for, some would say, an unnecessary and unwanted HS2 railway line, demonstrates the potential fragility of our historic sporting landscape.

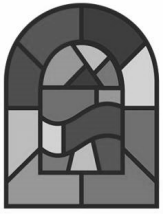
Many more examples of our sporting heritage fill the pages of this excellent volume, from the 1850 embryo Olympian Games in nearby Much Wenlock, to the many public houses and streets named after past sporting events and legends.

I thoroughly recommend this latest volume to readers as an interesting and entertaining way to pass an evening with a G&T (or a cup of Tea) in your comfiest chair.

Copies are available, at a cost of £10 from the Editor and the Churchwardens with proceeds, as previously, going to Church funds.

Editor





LIVING IN LOVE & FAITH

BENEFICE LENT COURSE

This Lent, across the benefice there will be a 5-week course entitled Living in Love and Faith. This is a course being followed throughout the Church of England and is part of some important research.

Living in Love and Faith (LLF) explores Christian teaching and learning about human identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

This is intended to initiate a process of whole Church learning and engagement, that will contribute to the Bishops' discernment of a way forward in relation to questions of human identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

Bishop Michael said: "These teaching and learning resources are an important part of the Church of England's engagement with the complex issues of human identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage.

"I hope that churches will have good conversations within and between themselves, whatever their background or tradition, as we listen and learn together. The Living In Love and Faith resources offer real-life examples of people's journeys from a wide variety of starting points to aid these ongoing conversations, while being shaped by the rich guidance of Holy Scripture, Christian tradition and contemporary science.

"We want these conversations to move graciously beyond polarising views, to bring people together and to help us all to grow as disciples of Jesus."

We hope that as many people as possible will take part in this 5-week course and share and hear opinions and ideas about these often very sensitive issues.

Keep an eye on the church website to find out when these groups will be meeting.

Ruth Bull

St. Michael's Churchyard

At the November PCC Meeting it was agreed that a Hornbeam Tree should be purchased and planted in the Churchyard in recognition of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We do not have any hornbeams in the Churchyard so it seems appropriate to have a new tree in a prominent



The Hornbeam Tree planted by John Brown Nurseries at the beginning of December.

place for all to see .The tree was obtained shortly after the Meeting and planted in the Churchyard by John Brown Nurseries of Muckley Corner. To find the tree go to the 2 Churchyard Noticeboards near to the outside water tap and walk in the direction of the New Churchyard for around 20 metres; then turn right and walk forward for 15 metres and you will see the new tree complete with stake and tree tie. The tree is quite near to the Oak tree which was planted in 2012 to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Here is some information about the Hornbeam Tree:

- * The hornbeam's Latin name is *Carpinus betulus*.
- * It is a deciduous tree growing to 25 metres tall.
- * It has a wide, spreading crown.
- * The trunk is short and twisted with grey bark.

- * The oval leaves are small and crinkly with pointed tips and finely toothed edges.
- * They turn from green to yellow to light brown in Autumn.
- * The catkin flowers are wind pollinated.
- * The female catkins develop into papery, green winged fruits called samaras.
- * Hornbeams are native to Europe and East Asia.
- * Used in hedges, they keep their leaves when clipped.
- * The wood is creamy white, very heavy and hard. It is used
for furniture making and also makes good charcoal.



A mature hornbeam growing in the grass verge by the side of the road leading to the Staffordshire University Lichfield Campus building.

We invite you to join us for our **Family Praise Service at 10.00 a.m. on Sunday February 6th.** which is the **70th. anniversary of the Queen's Accession to the throne.** Towards the end of the service, weather permitting, **the Congregation will be invited to go outside for the Dedication of the Platinum Jubilee Celebration tree** by The Reverend Chris Baker. For those who prefer to stay inside Church, the dedication will be shown on the large screen in the Chancel Arch. Lichfield District Councillors Angela Lax and Colin Greatorex will be joining us for the Service.

We do hope you will be able to join us on this historic day in the life of our Church and indeed our country and Her Majesty The Queen.

Ray Allen



UNITED BENEFICE WALKING GROUP

UNITED BENEFICE WALKING GROUP

Date of Walk: Saturday February 12th

Meeting point: St John the Baptist Church / St Johns Hill,
SHENSTONE WS14 0JB **Car Park**

Meeting Time: 10.30a.m.

Distance Approx 3 miles

Type of Paths The walk will be mainly on pavements and some grass areas. Walking boots or shoes are recommended.

The walk will begin with a look at the Church Tower north of Church of St John. This C13 derelict tower represents the standing remains of the church replaced by the adjacent C19 building. In July 2019 'Friends of Shenstone Tower' group was set up to acquire and repurpose the Tower for community use. Repair works are now in progress.

We then follow the Shenstone Heritage walk as appropriate on the day.

The walk will finish back at St Johns Church car park

There are a number of pubs within the village or surrounding area for those wishing to book a meal following the walk

The walk is limited to 20 people

BOOKING ON THE WALK IS ESSENTIAL

<https://www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/walking-group-bookingpage.html>

Hilary Barker beneficewalkinggroup@gmail.com



MEMORIAL BENCH AT ST MICHAEL'S

As can be seen in the accompanying photographs, the wooden Memorial Bench near to the notice board and post box, facing Aldi and Tesco, erected in fond memory of "Tom Mono Ranjan Chowdhury" is in an unsafe and dilapidated state.

A number of the seating slats are rotten and broken and have become detached from the seat's concrete supports.



If you know of anyone connected to this gentleman, please speak to one of St Michael's Churchwardens or contact the Parish Office on 01543/262211
Thank you

Editor

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Diocese of Lichfield

Wave of Prayer

The wave of prayer is a daily act of intercession for the worldwide Mothers' Union used at midday at Mary Sumner House which runs throughout the year and encompasses all the places in which we are represented. During February 9-11 we particularly focus on our link dioceses – Lichfield in England; with Ankole in Uganda; Karnataka in India; Lainya in South Sudan; Abuja and Lagos West in Nigeria.

We thank God that, working in partnership and being grounded in prayer, Mothers' Union members across the world share their faith and take positive action when needs are identified in their local community.

Faith in Action

...if you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. (Isaiah 58:10)

MU in Burundi is planning to establish a Sustainable Literacy, Economic and Social Empowerment project. This would focus on supporting women who are sole providers for themselves and their families, unlocking their economic and social possibilities through participatory literacy savings and business training circles.

Working in the dioceses of Buhiga, Rutana and Mutana and with MU's close partnership with the church, participants would have the chance to alleviate themselves from poverty.

We aim to identify and train Voluntary Facilitators (VFs) to work within their communities across the Dioceses, each setting up a training circle for local women. Participants would receive education in this manner over two years and be encouraged to take up leadership positions within their communities and churches. Once confident in literacy, participants would be encouraged to attend MJU's financial savings groups, learning to identify business opportunities and grow existing ventures.

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02-18-2005

GOOD THING I FOUND YOU GIDEON ... IT
SEEMS SOMEONE HAS BEEN HIDING ALL YOUR
BIBLES IN HOTEL ROOMS

James Jordan Serjeantson - Rector 1868 to 1886



From the early 18th century until 1867, the clergy at St. Michael's were "perpetual curates" - appointed by the incumbent of St. Mary's. These were paid a cash stipend, but had no income from tithes and glebe lands, and were often of lower social standing than Rectors. At the start of December 1867, the then perpetual curate, Thomas Gnossall Parr, who has been in post as a Perpetual Curate since 1831, was made the first Rector of the parish. He was not to enjoy that title for any length of time and fell ill and died shortly afterwards on December 23rd 1867. He was succeeded in June 1868 by the first to actually be appointed to the post of Rector - James Jordan Serjeantson (pictured).

Serjeantson was born in Liverpool in 1835, the son of a Liverpool merchant and an Irish mother and attended Liverpool Grammar and Rugby Schools. In 1854 he matriculated at Trinity College in Cambridge and was awarded his BA in 1858 and his MA in 1861. He was a rowing blue and part of the University crew that lost the boat race in 1857 by 11 lengths. There have only been six larger losing margins in the 190-year history of the race, so I doubt it was an experience he relished. He was ordained deacon in 1859 and priest a year later, both at Lichfield Cathedral. He served a curacy at Stoke from 1859 to 1868 before coming to St. Michael's. He left Stoke in June 1868 to high praise from his incumbent and the Archdeacon, with gifts (including a hall clock) from parishioners and Sunday School children. He married Elizabeth Buckley, a clergyman's daughter in August that year and they were to have seven children.

It is clear from the records we have that he was an assiduous, hard-working parson, much admired and respected by his parishioners. In June 1877, he notes in the service register that "this is the 1000th sermon I have preached in this church". In June 1883, he was to write

again “this is the 2000th sermon I have preached in this church”. This is an average of around 130 per year! Some indication of his activities can be judged from the activities of Holy Week in 1882 shown below. In total there were 16 sermons or addresses that week, all preached by Serjeantson.

Palm Sunday	Morning	Holy Communion with 15 communicants
	Afternoon	Sermon on Philippians 2.8
	Evening	Sermon on John 15.13-14
Monday	Unspecified	Address “Christ suffered and died as a sacrifice for sins.”
Tuesday	Unspecified	Address “Christ suffered and died to make atonement.”
Wednesday	Unspecified	Address “Christ suffered and died as an example.”
	Evening	Sermon on St Mark 14. 71-77
Thursday	Unspecified	Address “Christ suffered and died to enable us to live a holy life.”
Good Friday	7.00	Sermon on Romans 4.25
	9.00	Sermon on St Matthew 26.39
	Morning	Sermon on Isaiah 53.3
	Afternoon	Sermon on Two words from the cross
	Evening	Sermon on the last words
Saturday	Unspecified	Address “Christ suffered and died that we might have life eternal.”
Easter Day	8.00	Holy Communion with 43 communicants
	9.30	Holy Communion with 17 communicants.
	Morning	Sermon on Isaiah 38.16 and Holy Communion with 49 communicants
	Afternoon	Sermon on Colossians 3.3 and baptism of five children
	Evening	Sermon on 1 Corinthians 15.14
Monday	Unspecified	Baptism of four adults
Wednesday	Evening	Sermon on Romans 5.2-21

He presided at the pastoral offices - 1123 baptisms, 1189 marriages and 215 funerals in total over the years of his incumbency and also presented 20 to 30 young people each year for confirmation. One of the more memorable funerals was that of William Corfield and his wife Theresa, his elderly mother and four young children who all died from suffocation in a house fire on Breadmarket Street, next to Dr Johnson’s birthplace in January 1873. The press reported that James Serjeantson’s voice trembled with emotion as he read the words of the funeral service around the grave before the coffins were lowered one by one.

Theologically, he seems to have been very much against the ceremonial associated with the Anglo-Catholic Oxford movement and is recorded as a signatory of a letter of 1875 to the bishops that argued

against legalizing the use of eucharistic vestments and the eastward position for celebrating the eucharist. Some aspects of current worship at St. Michael's would have certainly made him uncomfortable! The service register indicates he was a strong supporter of the Melanasian Mission, formed by Bishop Selwyn, the former Bishop of New Zealand, and indeed one of his curates, Rev John Still (1869-1871), left Lichfield to become a missionary in the South Pacific, at a time just following the martyrdom of Bishop John Patteson in the Solomon Islands.

Serjeantson had gifts other than his preaching and pastoral abilities. Within twelve months of arriving in the parish he was awarded the prize for the best variegated geraniums at the annual flower show (which almost certainly didn't go down well with some of the more established exhibitors!) and he was also a valued member of the bell ringing team. His name can still be found on a number of memorial boards in the belfry, that commemorate the ringing of specific peals - for example he was part of the team that rang a complete peal of Grandsire Minor in 1876. He also served as a Workhouse Guardian and took an interest in various educational initiatives within the city.

In 1881 he and his wife, their two sons, Cecil (10) and Ronald (7), and three daughters, Mildred (5), Edith (3) and Monica (1) lived at the Rectory on Mount Pleasant, with a housekeeper, cook and two servants. Two other children died as babies - Edward in 1870 and Joyce in 1884.

He died on New Year's day 1886 and was buried four days later with the Bishop of Lichfield presiding at his funeral. His final illness seems to have been short - he was still presiding at funerals two weeks before he died. Elizabeth was to outlive him by 33 years. Their graves, and the graves of their infant children, are, at the time of writing, currently inaccessible in the very overgrown area at the east of the old churchyard. I have not succeeded in identifying them, although I have received many bramble scratches in the trying. But James Serjeantson does have other memorials. A fountain on Greenhill that was erected in his memory in 1886 contains the inscription.

Erected by parishioners and friends in grateful and loving memory of the Rev J J Serjeantson MA, Rector of St. Michael's, Lichfield.

In addition, a plaque in the chancel at St. Michael's reads

To the glory of God and in loving memory of James Jordan Serjeantson M.A. for 17 years rector of this parish who by the sympathy and energy with which he fulfilled his ministry on Christ endeared himself to his parishioners and by the brightness of his manner and his cheerful readiness with which he brought out the stores of his varied learning won for himself the esteem and love of all classes. He fell asleep January 1st 1886 aged 50 years.



Both memorials speak eloquently of the high esteem in which he was held in the church and the city and the love that his parishioners felt for him. He perhaps deserves more recognition as the first to be appointed Rector of the parish.

Chris Baker

WALL NEWS

St John's Church, Wall Churchyard

In the October 2021 magazine I included a photo of the new steps leading to the lower graveyard. On Sunday 19th December 2021 the steps were blessed by Rev. Linda Collins following the morning service. The photograph was taken on the day.



They were installed in memory of Timothy Bevan who tragically died 16th August 2007. The benefactors of the steps are Mr and Mrs Law the grandparents of Timothy.

Hilary



Daffodils in the Churchyard

In the October magazine 2021 I wrote that a Mr John Holder had planted more than 1,400 daffodils in the upper graveyard. Now in January it is pleasing to see that all his efforts are showing signs that spring is on its way. Daffodil shots are coming up all over the place. We look forward to the display soon.

Hilary

Memorial Book

Having the name of a loved one written in our Memorial Book is another way of remembering their life. The Book is kept in the case in the Prayer Corner and pages are turned twice a week, so that names are visible through the glass on the date nearest their death.

It costs £10 to insert a name. Please complete the form below and return it to a member of the Ministry Team with the remittance.

Memorial Book

Name of Deceased (as you wish it to appear in the Memorial Book)	
Date of Death:	Age at Death:
Name of Contact (in case of any problems or queries)	
Telephone Number:	

Please make cheques payable to
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From the Registers

Baptisms			
St John's	16th Jan 2022	Ayda Rose Payne	2 yrs

Weddings		
St Michael's	13th Dec 2021	John Haines & Nicola McLellan

Funerals			
St John's	16th Dec 2021	John Brown	96
St Michael's	17th Dec 2021	Arthur Palin	88
St Michael's	21st Jan 2022	Albert 'Roy' Handley	94

PROVERBS 10.11-14, 21

¹¹ Like a fountain of water, the words of a good person give life.
But the words of the wicked contain nothing but violence.

¹² Hatred stirs up trouble.
But love forgives all wrongs.

¹³ You can expect wise people to speak with understanding.
But people without wisdom can expect to be punished.

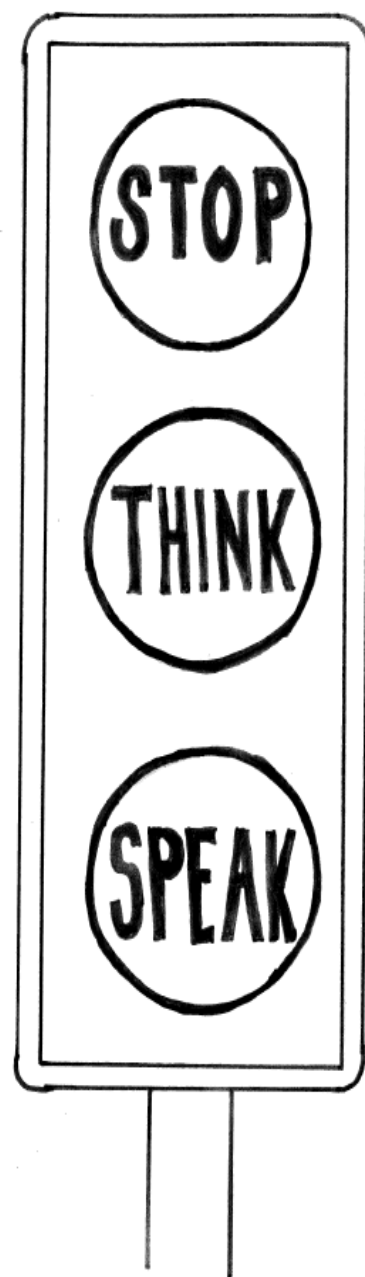
¹⁷ The person who accepts correction is on the way to life.
But the person who ignores correction will be ruined.

¹⁸ Whoever hides his hate is a liar.
Whoever tells lies is a fool.

¹⁹ If you talk a lot, you are sure to sin.
If you are wise, you will keep quiet.

²⁰ The words of a good person are like pure silver.
But an evil person's thoughts are worth little.

²¹ A good person's words will help many others.
But a foolish person dies because he doesn't have wisdom.



Lord, Solomon has taught us that the words of the good people contribute to the well-being of our community, whereas the speech of the wicked undermines it. He warns us that some people speak too much, often without thought for the feelings of others.

Father, help us all to listen carefully to others when we are involved in a conversation. Send your Spirit to guide us and to help us to think before we start to speak so that we may help each other. As Paul taught us, help us to bear with each other in love, considering our words carefully so that we may 'maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace'.

Amen

Angie King

**HATRED STIRS UP
TROUBLE, BUT LOVE
FORGIVES ALL WRONGS.
PROVERBS 10:12**

Bible Readings

Sunday 6th February
4th Sunday before Lent
[Green]

1 Corinthians 15.1-11
Luke 5.1-11

Sunday 13th February
Racial Justice Sunday
[Green]

Isaiah 58.5-12
Luke 6.17-26

Sunday 20th February
2nd Sunday before Lent
[Green]

Revelation 4
Luke 8.22-25

Sunday 27th February
Sunday next before Lent
[Green]

2 Corinthians 3.12-4.2
Luke 9.28-36[37-43a]

Wednesday 2nd March
Ash Wednesday
[Green]

Joel 2.1-2, 12-17
Matthew 6.1-6, 16-21

Sunday 6th March
1st Sunday of Lent
[Purple]

Deuteronomy 26.1-11
Luke 4.1-13

Sunday 13th March
2nd Sunday of Lent
[Green]

Genesis 15.1-12, 17-18
Luke 13.31-end



.....**AND FINALLY**

After my first twelve months in the Editorial hotseat may I express my sincere thanks to ALL involved in the production of the St. Michael's Parish Magazine.

I have received many, much appreciated, encouraging comments throughout the past year and I hope that contributors continue to provide the variety of interesting and informative articles for publication in 2022..

[Editor]

PS.

The lucky winners of the “three-spired Cathedrals” photo competition in the December 2021 issue were:-

***Lesley and Ray Allen---* Congratulations** and Well done!

The answers were: -

St. Mary's Cathedral Edinburgh

Lichfield Cathedral

Truro Cathedral

They have received their prize ***of “Drawing Somerset's past”*** which I am sure they will thoroughly enjoy.



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