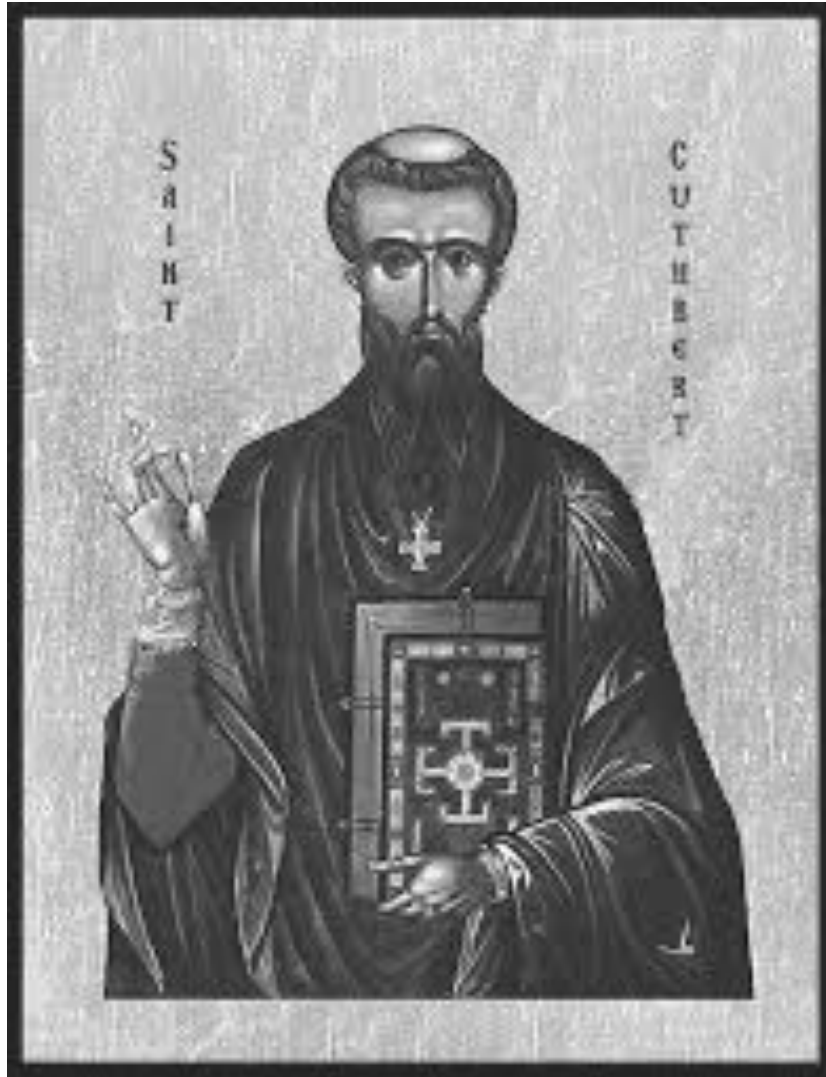


THE PARISH MAGAZINE

March 2020



20th March

Cuthbert, bishop, missionary, 687

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

85p

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Reflection: God Counts by Ones

I love that little story of the lost sheep in Luke chapter 15! It's the first of a group of three stories Jesus tells, and they're all about being lost and being found. So something important is going on in this text. In fact, this is what Christian faith is all about. It's about realizing that we're lost and discovering that God in Jesus comes looking for us until he finds us. It's about amazing grace.

God loves us so much that he doesn't want us to be lost. He wants to gather us in. He wants to bring us home. Think of that hymn of the converted slave-trader John Newton: 'Amazing grace! How sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. *I once was lost, but now am found*, was blind, but now I see!' It doesn't matter who we are, what we've done, or what our background is, God loves us whoever we are, and wants to share his life with us. So he comes looking for us.

I think that sometimes we find it hard to accept how welcoming God is. We get a bit like those Pharisees and scribes at the start of the story who grumble about Jesus inviting disreputable types to eat with him. We like to have our social networks sorted out. We don't like our taken-for-granted ways upset. We like to think that we know what will suit God best. But what Jesus does is so indiscriminate! Look who's coming to hear him, and look at who he's eating with: people stigmatized as 'tax collectors and sinners'!

Now I think those Pharisees are well-meaning. But however well-meaning, what seems to be happening is that their sensibilities about rituals and morals are becoming such a preoccupation that they've forgotten what God is really like. And the thing about God is that *God is free*. He can't be put in a box. He's too big for that. God is always

breaking out of the containers we try to keep him in. I'm thinking of containers of piety, however well-meaning. Or containers of fear, because change makes us feel threatened. Or containers of prejudice, when our horizons narrow and our ability to sympathize with people who are different gets restricted. Then God becomes small. Instead of we ourselves being made in God's image, we make God in our image. So Jesus tells these wonderful little parables: and they're like dynamite. They're intended to blow apart our picture of God and what it means to believe in God.

Take this story of the lost sheep. What a risk the shepherd takes on behalf of the one sheep which has got lost! You'd think he'd cut his losses and stay with the ninety-nine. But no. He leaves the ninety-nine alone in the wilderness and goes looking for the lost one. And he keeps looking 'until he finds it'. And then, when he finds it, he doesn't give it a good beating for going off on its own. Instead, he lifts it up and lays it on his shoulders, and carries it home. Nor does the story end here. The shepherd is so full of joy that he has to share it with his friends and neighbours: 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the sheep which was lost!' And so they have a party.

What a wonderful picture of God this is! It picks up on a famous image of God in the Old Testament which is celebrated in Psalm 23: 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. ... Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. ... Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.'

So the parable is like a re-telling of Psalm 23. And what it displays is God's amazing grace. What it shows is that *God counts by ones*. Each of us, whoever we are, is loved by God. And when we go astray, he comes looking for us. And when he finds us, he carries us home rejoicing. And the joy is unconfined: there is 'joy in heaven'!

For the Pharisees who criticised Jesus, holiness is preserved best by keeping apart. But for Jesus, holiness is about solidarity with the 'lost', those who are poor in whatever way, whether without money, or without friends, or without hope. For Jesus, holiness is not about turning in, but about going out. It's not about preservation, but about risk. It's not about building walls, but about building bridges. It's about love for the lost. It's about love for each person individually. God counts by ones.

There is not one of us who is not lost. We might think we're safe and sound in the middle of the ninety-nine. But in our heart of hearts we know we're lost and we long to be found. We long for love. We long for acceptance. We long for forgiveness. We long for freedom from our addictions. We long to be the people God made us to be. We long for joy.

The good news of the gospel is that God in Jesus seeks us out and welcomes us home. God's hospitality knows no bounds. God counts by ones.

Stephen C. Barton.

Deadlines!

For **APRIL** Magazine: Deadline is
MONDAY 16th MARCH
Contact David Bull

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

DIOCESE NEWS



Lent is a time for self-examination. The absence of flowers in church, the more sombre tone of hymns and liturgy, changes in the colour of vestments and altar frontals, our commitments to pray, fast and read the bible more diligently, all serve to create a space for thoughtful consideration of what our faith is calling forth from us in these present times. In what ways are we seeking to share the good news more deliberately, to join hands with others and roll up our sleeves for the good of our communities and to be good neighbours in order that as a nation we may discover a deeper mutuality and common cause?

This year on the First Sunday of Lent the set gospel reading is the story of the testing in the wilderness in Matthew chapter 4 verses 1-11. Reading it, I am struck by the fact that the passage opens and closes with two strong pointers that we might want to take as 'bookends' to frame our Lenten journeying. The first is the role of the Holy Spirit and the second is the ministry of angels.

In verse 1 Matthew writes that Jesus was "led up by the Spirit" into the wilderness, that is, 'up' into the Judean hills. The suggestion is that his wilderness encounter is not only to be testing and demanding but 'a time of the Spirit'. What we witness is the Spirit empowering Jesus to deepen and refine his sense of calling and mission just at the point where he faces very sharp challenges from the wiles of the devil. In the same way, as we seek to turn aside from the pressures of day to day life and the challenges we may face, through the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit we can discover a space to think and ponder and wait upon God with renewed expectation and delight. Our Lenten reflections and activities are thus a time when the insight, encouragement, empowerment and comfort of the Spirit can touch us and refresh us deeply. It is a time when 'the still small voice' can speak to us – remembering that when

God spoke to Elijah in this way (1 Kings 19 v.12), it was at a time for him of great vulnerability and deep discouragement. The Spirit overshadows us not only when we have the wind in our sails, but when life is at its most problematic. Paul encouraged the Christian community in Rome when he wrote that ‘the Spirit intercedes (for the saints) with sighs too deep for words’ (Romans 8 v.26). This is nowhere more so than in this time of seeking a closer walk with Christ in the wilderness, stress and distress of our lives.

On Ash Wednesday we are invited into the ‘keeping of a holy Lent’ and Lent is indeed given as a time for ‘holiness’, thus for the making-whole of relationships, situations, our communities and nation and our own selves before God. This emphasis comes out in the closing words of the passage, for when the devil left Jesus, ‘angels came and ministered unto him’. The angels signify the wholeness or making-whole-ness of the wilderness journey. They remind us that something holy and whole-making is being undertaken and it will be blessed and honoured. My own instinct is that the angels were always there, ministering to our Lord – which is the strong impression gained in Mark’s account of the testing. The fact that Matthew marks their impact as being at the end, may indicate that only at the end of the testing does their presence becomes apparent. It is often only when we look back that we see how we have been upheld. Either way, that angels ministered to Jesus as he was being prepared for what was to come, points us to the fact that our own preparations for the joy of Eastertide are likewise times when God’s messengers and messages are pressing to wing their way into our hearts and lives. Ours is only that we should open our hearts! Lent is a time to receive the ministry of angels – some of whom may be nearer to us than we might suppose or have noticed.

I hope and pray that this season of Lent may indeed be a time for you and your communities of deepening wholeness through the power and refreshment of the Spirit and because of the ministry of angels.

Ven Julian Francis, Archdeacon of Walsall

ST MICHAEL ON GREENHILL
LICHFIELD and ST JOHN WALL

Lent
Holy Week
Easter
Events and Services
2020



Lent Study Course for St Michael's and St John's

Caring for God's Creation

The Lent Study Course this year will look at environmental questions and how we as Christians respond to the issues raised by climate change and the degradation of the environment. The course will include Bible study, other resources for reflection, and discussion.

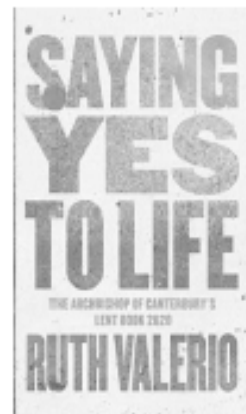
All sessions in St Michael's Church at 10.30am. (after the 9.30am service of Holy Communion)

Wednesday 11th March: **Why should we care?**
Gospel and creation

Wednesday 18th March: **Who is my neighbour?**
Climate change and global impact

Wednesday 25th March: **How shall we live?**
Economics and lifestyle

We will be using parts of the Archbishop's Lent book. 20 copies have been ordered.. You are welcome to have one and suggest a £5.00 donation made through the contactless terminal



Saturday 21st March, **Lent Outing to:**

The Science Museum

South Kensington, London (free entry)

08.30 train from Lichfield Trent Valley

Meet at Euston Station 10.am

The science museum includes a gallery "Atmosphere" which looks at our atmosphere and climate change. There is also a gallery on artificial intelligence and impact on our lives and environment. There are many other galleries which present the development of science and industry which raise questions about the opportunities and costs of technological advances.

The museum blog post for 28th January sets out some of the background:

<https://www.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/climate-and-the-collection/>

Sign up sheets for the trip and further travel details will be available.

Lent Services at St Michael's and St John's

Ash Wednesday 26th February

9.30am Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes (StM)

7.30pm Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes (StJ)

Sundays in Lent

8.00am every Sunday: Holy Communion, Book of Common Prayer at St Michael's

Lent 1 1st March

10.00am Parish Communion with hymns and choir (StM)

10.00am Holy Communion with hymns (StJ)

Lent 2 8th March

10.00am Family Praise with music group (StM)

10.00am Holy Communion with hymns (StJ)

6.00pm Holy Communion with hymns (StM)

Lent 3 15th March

10.00am Parish Communion with hymns (StM)

10.00am Holy Communion with hymns (StJ)

4.30pm Messy Church in St Michael's Church

Lent 4 Mothering Sunday 31st March

10.00am Holy Communion for Mothering Sunday (StM)

10.00am Holy Communion with hymns (StJ)

6.00pm Choral Evensong

Lent 5 Passion Sunday 7th April

10.00am Parish Communion with hymns and choir (StM)

10.00am Holy Communion with hymns (StJ)

Morning Prayer

Every morning Monday to Friday at 8.15am
in St Michael's Church.

Holy Week and Easter Services

Palm Sunday 14th April

- 10.00am Holy Communion including Palm Procession and Reading of the Passion. (StM)
- 10.00am Holy Communion with hymns and distribution of Palm Crosses (StJ)
- 6.00pm The Way of the Cross: Readings and Music for Palm Sunday and the Passion

Holy Week

Each service of Compline and Maundy Thursday will contain a short address given by Revd Mel Clark

Monday 6th April

- 7.00pm Compline (StM)

Tuesday 7th April

- 7.00pm Compline (StM)

Wednesday 8th April

- 9.30am Holy Communion (StM)
- 7.00pm Compline (StJ)

Maundy Thursday 9th April

- 7.30pm Commemoration of the Last Supper (StM)

Good Friday 10th April

- 2.00pm Service for the Last Hour (StJ)
- 2.00pm Messy Church in St Michael's Church
- CTIL evening event

EASTER SUNDAY 12th April

- 6.00am Dawn Service and Easter Fire
- 8.00am Holy Communion (StM)
- 10.00am Holy Communion: Full sung service (StM)
- 10.00am Holy Communion with hymns (StJ)

Full details at: www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk

Regular Services and Worship in the Benefice

Regular Services at St Michael's Sundays

8:00am Holy Communion
10:00am Holy Communion

2nd Sunday

10:00am Family Praise

Regular Services at St John's Sundays

10am Holy Communion

Baptism @ 11.30am

4th Sunday

Other Services at St Michael's Sundays

1st Sunday 12:30pm

Holy Baptism

2nd Sunday 6:00pm

Holy Communion

3rd Sunday 4:30pm

Messy Church

4th Sunday 6:00pm

Choral Evensong

Tuesday

School Service

Wednesday

9:30am Holy Communion

Music in the Benefice

St Michael's Church

Wednesdays

6.30pm Girls Choir

7.15pm Other parts &
St Michael's Singers

Bells Practice

Every Thurs 7:30pm, St Michael's

Baptism

Preparation second Saturday
at 10.30 am. at St Michael's

St Michael's Prayer Group,

For information contact June Frayn (264920) or Brenda Liptrot (251863)



Parish Surgery

For Baptisms, Banns and Weddings, staff are available at the Parish Office in St Michael's Church, Church Street on the **1st and 3rd Saturday mornings** in the month by appointment only.

Please telephone 01543 262211 or email office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk to make an appointment.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

First Steps



Monday 9th March

10am St Michael's

Family Praise

Sunday 8th March



10am St Michael's

Come and join us at our ...

MESSY CHURCH

for craft, story, song and food on



Sunday 15th March

4.30 – 5.45pm

in St Michael's Church
Ages 0-11 yrs. welcome

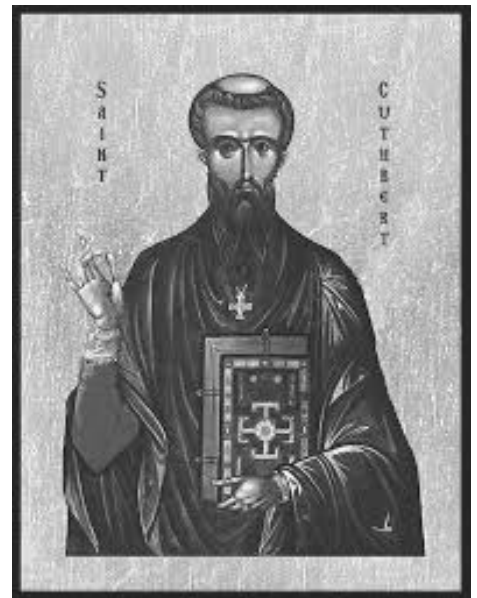
Saint Cuthbert

Bishop of Lindisfarne

Born 634/635, probably Northumbria, England

Died March 20, 687, islet of Inner Farne, or House, off Northumbria

Feast day March 20th.



Saint Cuthbert, bishop of the great Benedictine abbey of Lindisfarne (or Holy Island) is one of the most venerated English saints, who evangelized Northumbria and was posthumously hailed as a wonder-worker.

After a divine vision, Cuthbert, a shepherd, entered (651) the Northumbrian monastery of Melrose (Mailros) under Abbot St. Eata. In 661 Melrose was struck by the plague, afflicting Cuthbert and killing the prior, whom he succeeded. Thereafter, he aided plague victims while missioning throughout the countryside, reportedly performing miracles.

When in 663/664 at the Synod of Whitby the Northumbrians decided to adopt Roman rather than Celtic church customs, Abbot-Bishop St. Colman of Lindisfarne, one of the leaders of the Celtic party, resigned his see in opposition to Whitby. In 664 Eata and Cuthbert—who, although trained in the Celtic tradition, firmly supported the synod's decisions—were transferred to Lindisfarne, Eata as bishop and Cuthbert as prior. Thence, Cuthbert maintained reforms decreed by Whitby, instituted a severe rule, and extended his apostolate south, to Durham. A hermit by nature, Cuthbert retired in 676 to Inner Farne, where he devoted himself to prayer and where he built an oratory and cell. His fame for holiness grew. His successful efforts to protect birds (hence St. Cuthbert's [eider] duck) made him one of the earliest wildlife conservationists.

In 684 King Egfrith of Northumbria made him bishop of Hexham, a see that he exchanged with Eata in 685 for that of Lindisfarne. In 687 he again retired to Inner Farne. A small 14th-century chapel stands on the site of his final hermitage. He was buried at Lindisfarne, but his body was removed in 875 to protect it from Viking raids; after many moves in north eastern England, it was finally deposited (999?) in Durham Cathedral, which, until its destruction by King Henry VIII in 1538, was a great pilgrimage site. Numerous churches and monuments are dedicated to him.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Cuthbert>

Also of interest is the Life of Cuthbert by the Venerable Bede

<https://www.univ.ox.ac.uk/news/life-cuthbert-venerable-bede/>

Prayers for St. Cuthbert

Ever-living God, who didst call thy servant Cuthbert to proclaim the Gospel in northern England and endued them with loving hearts and gentle spirits: Grant us grace to live as they did, in simplicity, humility and love for the poor; through Jesus Christ, who came among us as one who serves, and who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Almighty God, the light of the faithful and shepherd of souls, who set your servant Cuthbert to be a bishop in the Church, to feed your sheep by the word of Christ and to guide them by good example: give us grace to keep the faith of the Church and to follow in the footsteps of 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.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCHYARD

Our Churchyard snowdrops have been looking beautiful again this year. As well as the large numbers in the open grassed area near Church, other taller ones can be seen on the bank separating the old and new Churchyards.



Here are a few facts about snowdrops that you may find interesting.

Snowdrops are not native to the UK,, their native range being Mainland Europe. However, they are clearly happy growing here and are a sure sign that warmer weather is on its way.



They are around 7 to 15 centimetres tall with white bell-shaped flowers at the end of an erect flowering stem with 2 or 3 leaves.

The flowers lack petals and are composed of 6 white flower segments known as tepals which look like petals.

They can be found across Britain in damp soil, often in broadleaved woodland and along riverbanks as well as in parks, gardens and meadows. They normally flower from January to March, but some flower as early as December.

The flower has long been seen as a symbol of hope for better times ahead.

It has a long association with the Christian festival of Candlemas and was often used to decorate Churches during the celebration. This earned it the alternative name of Candlemas Bells. It was good to see bunches of snowdrops on display in St. Michael's during Candlemas.

The snowdrop photographs were taken in the Churchyard in Late January.

The next **Churchyard Working Party Session** will be held on **Saturday March 21st., from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.** We will be continuing to clear headstones and graves near to the compost bays. Excellent work here has recently been done by the Working Party revealing even more snowdrops and also bluebells. **Tea/Coffee and cake** will be provided during the Mid-Morning Break.

Ray Allen 01543 251654



LARGE COPIES of the magazine are available on request



UNITED BENEFICE WALKING GROUP

Our January walk was to Barton Marina

The weather had been extremely wet for weeks prior to our walk but fortunately on the day we were blessed with clear skies and sunshine!



We started with refreshments in the cafe and then were able to walk around the lakes. The paths were full of puddles but we had all come prepared, so that wasn't a problem.



Once we got back to the marina some of the group decided to visit the shops and cafes and some continued to walk down to Barton Turns and along the canal to see the entrance to the marina from the canal side.

It was a very enjoyable walk and we had a lovely meal in The Waterfront

Angie

Join us for our March walk in Sutton Park. We meet at St Michaels Church on **Saturday 7th March 10.00am.**

We then drive to the car park at the back of Toby Carvery Sutton Park, Sutton Coldfield. **B74 2YT** Tel 01213542458 We enter Sutton Park at the Town Gate entrance. We will be leaving the cars here and starting the walk from this venue.

The walk is approximately 3 miles long. Solid paths, no stiles. Some slight gradients. Coffee or tea in the Town Gate café.

The walk takes us through Hollyhurst, past the Jamboree Memorial stone, Keepers pool and back to The Toby Carvery car park.

Lunch is booked at the Toby carvery for 1pm

Please could you let me know by **Thursday 4th March** if you plan to be on the walk so that I can confirm with the restaurant. I have booked 20 seats.

Hilary

hilarybarker@gmail.com

Tel 01543482027

Mob 07714958559

Ray Allen. 01543 251654





A letter from Naomi Herbert: Regional Development Lead, Mothers' Union

Dear friends, this Mothering Sunday, 22nd March, I am thinking of women and mothers I meet during my work in Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan, countries which have known terrible civil conflict in recent years. The extraordinary courage and resilience of these women in the face of hardship never fails to inspire me.

Since our founding in 1876, Mothers' Union has firmly believed in the good that can happen when women come together and it's what I witness in these countries and at home in the UK. For example, in Rwanda, women, girls, mothers and grandmothers have been the beating heart of the country's development since the devastating 1994 genocide. (Did you know? In 2003, Rwanda revised its constitution, empowering women to play a greater role in the country's growth. This sowed the seeds for Rwanda to lead the world in female representation in Parliament which today stands at 61%.)

On the outskirts of Kigali I met Philomene, who agreed to let me share her story of confidence with you. She tends her crops, raises her family and looks after her disabled husband. *"Farming is my main source of income"* she told me. *"but because the land was small I needed to expand to feed my children."* Philomene had joined her local branch of Mothers' Union in 2004 and had already found what a difference it made to her life. *"before I would drink and smoke. I was lost in darkness, but after being part of this group I know Christ and I have a pas-*

sion to share light amongst others”. To begin with she had been afraid to speak in front of others but with the support of the group, she has blossomed and now has the confidence to lead meetings herself.

There’s an exciting new growth happening in the UK too. Children in the diocese of Liverpool have started up their own Mini Mothers’ Union. Rosa (12) and Ella (11) explained: *“some of the mums had to take their children to adult meetings because they had no childcare. We would listen and sometimes we would give our opinions too. We discovered the adults actually listened to us and sometimes even asked for our advice!”* Motivated by their faith in God, the children started their own branch and projects. Now, through working together, they want to grow more Mini Mothers’ Union groups and strengthen the voice of their generation.

These inspiring children remind me of our founder Mary Sumner taking her message to town after town, building the grassroots foundations and developing Mothers’ Union into the global fellowship and community it is today. This Mothering Sunday, we want to sow more seeds of inspiration and hope, give more gifts of growth, and change more lives to work towards a better future in peace.

Help us share the gifts of confidence, strength and peace this Mothering Sunday and help Mothers’ Union give people the support to grow and flourish now and in the future.

My prayers and good wishes

Naomi Herbert

If you would like to support Give a gift that grows this Mothering Sunday, please speak to Elizabeth Allen, June Frayn, Lynn Rock

Mothers Union Report for March 2020

The first meeting in 2020 was our AGM when Elizabeth gave us a resume of the events of 2019 and we made plans for the coming year. Membership stands at 35 which includes 3 “at home “ members. These are people who cannot leave home to attend meetings but continue membership.

In February we followed a Wave of Prayer service. It is a continuous expression of our commitment in prayer to each other and to MU members in all the dioceses with which we are linked. These are Karnataka in India, Lagos West in Nigeria, Ankole in Uganda and Lainya in South Sudan. All areas experience extreme poverty in cities and rural districts and South Sudan in particular has been ravaged by years of war leading to a very unsettled population. In all these countries Christians are in the minority yet the MU is strong, helping educate in matters of health, schooling, parenting and marriage and managing finance. In some places they have their own uniform and are very proud to belong to the Mothers’ Union. As we pray for them, so they pray for us in the diocese of Lichfield which is humbling when we compare our lives.

Plans were made for the Lent Lunch in church on Saturday March 14th 12- 2 p.m. when there will be homemade soup, hot drinks and cake for sale. This year we will also have Bring and Buy stall so if you have anything to donate please bring it along.

Betty Lyne

St. Michael's Film Club

1. Judy

PG-13, 1h 58min, Biography, Drama, Romance

Legendary performer Judy Garland (Renée Zellweger) arrives in London in the winter of 1968 to perform a series of sold-out concerts.

Monday 2nd March 1.30pm start

Refreshments £3.00 from 1.00pm.

St. Michael's Church

All welcome.

Contact: Parish Office 01543 262211

2. Knives Out

PG-13 | 2h 11min | Comedy, Crime, Drama

A detective investigates the death of a patriarch of an eccentric, combative family. Starring Daniel Craig.

Monday 6th April 1.30pm start



Why do people go to St. Michael's church on the first Monday of each month? Is it for Fellowship? Food? or the Film?

I think it's for all three. In my experience the people are always friendly and the lunch provided with very limited resources is excellent value.

This month's film, "Downton Abbey", unsurprisingly, attracted a full church and seems to have been enjoyed by many. It was nostalgic, touching and often predictable, but with some pertinent social, cultural and historical references. It tells of an era of bygone glamour when the social order was a little different from today.

The story had everything! A beautiful setting with a grand ball and dresses to die for, bribery and corruption, extravagance, homosexuality, an illegitimate child, confessions, an attempted assassination of the King, money and class worries – you name it – it was there. The saga had reached 1927 and included a visit from the King and Queen and all the paraphernalia that such a visit might have included. The characters, well known from the television series, behaved in the manner one would expect with arrogance, treachery, hypocrisy, snobbishness and bitchiness. This was balanced by humour, kindness, understanding, tenderness, wit and love. Just like real life.....

One of my favourite scenes was the putting out of chairs the night before the King's visit. It was very atmospheric. All hands were on deck, so to speak, as the heavens opened and everyone became drenched. Concerns were expressed as to what would happen should it rain the following day. "No problem", said some-one "God will make it stop" and by Jove the next day the sun shone and we learned that "God is a monarchist"!

Nearly every problem was satisfactorily resolved with the promise of a romance between the widowed Tom and Lucy, the illegitimate daughter of Lady Bagshaw. Carson confidently predicts at the end of the film that Downton will still be thriving in one hundred years.

I am not sure, but will watch and wait, with bated breath, for the sequel.

Linda J. Lowe

The Children's Society

Sonia and I will be collecting HOME BOXES during March for the annual count. If you would like yours collected on a particular day, please ring me,
(phone number on the bottom of the box).

If you take it to St Michael's Church please ask a member of church staff to put it in the safe.

Thanks.
Maureen Duff

Summary of St Michael's PCC Meeting Tuesday, 11th February 2020

Lichfield Christian Schools Work Trust

After discussion, it was majority agreed to give a one off donation. It was unanimously agreed that the Trust does good work in supporting Christian values in schools but concerns were expressed over the presentation of accounts not in accordance with Charity Commission rules. A letter would be sent.

Safeguarding

The Policy has been updated but remains substantially the same. A few minor corrections were made.

Maureen Brand will be attending the new training course.

A discussion was had concerning safeguarding of children at the back of the Church during Services. Currently, parents accompany their children but it was felt that this could be an area of concern if parents were absent and that there should be a designated person.

Environmental Policy

This was the main topic of the meeting and the PCC broke into groups to discuss under the following headings (based on an on- line questionnaire): Worship and Teaching; Building; Land; Community and Global Engagement; Lifestyle.

This is very much a 'work in progress'.

The Environment Group met on 20 November 2019 and produced a paper outlining short, medium and long term goals. These include a series of sermons looking at environment issues and Biblical themes, a Lent course focussing on the environment, life choices and discipleship and a Lent trip on 21 March to reflect these values.

Streethay Development

Rev'd Mel has met the Headmaster who is very keen on community outreach and on teaming up to do events. We have already assisted

with our stage for their Nativity and further joint events are planned for the summer and beyond. Mel goes into school regularly and a visit to St Michael's is planned.

Church Mission Stats

Ted Green produced a report and the figures show an increase in attendance. We should be very proud of our efforts. However, it was agreed that Church is not just about Sunday, now a very competitive entertainment day and we should expand the Church in different places to attract, particularly teenagers, to our Church Community.

Churchyard

Ray Allen updated: Botanical Survey of St Michael's Churchyard is now available. Lottery Fund Grant Application has been made. A Faculty has been done for the removal of 4 dead trees abutting the boundary to the Health Club.

Water Tap

Sue Jones has made an application to LDC for a grant to provide water for the tap adjacent to the Open Churchyard. The meeting is in March. A Faculty will be required.

Tea/Toast/Talk

Come in for a chat. This starts in Spring, monthly, after the Wed morning Communion Service. To be linked with school drop off. The need will be assessed.

Rough Sleepers

Brenda Liptrot updated: there are 7/8 rough sleepers in Lichfield, of whom, 3 have been re-housed. The evening meal is no longer being provided as there was no take up and the beds are not always used. The scheme is scheduled to run until end of March but will be re-viewed.

Finance

Viv Oliver produced a first draft of income v expenditure. We will just about break-even but giving is down. We were urged to consider increasing our giving by a £1 per week to safeguard our future and to maintain our good works.

Church Music

Peter will be taking up a head teaching post in Hong Kong in July. Dudley will need support. Funds for a Musical Director are available but all options to be investigated. The format and programme of the choir stays the same. Recruitment contact with all schools is on-going.

Parish Rooms

Rector Simon updated: Information is being collated and grant applications made for preliminary surveys to be undertaken e.g. archaeological, geophysical.

Next of Kin Forms

These are now available to complete for use in emergency when a friend or relative may not be present.

Liz Clarke

FLOODLIGHTING

Sponsor St Michael's floodlights to mark a special occasion or remember a loved one!

Your donation will brighten up the skies over Lichfield for the night.

Contact the United Benefice Office on 01543 262211



WALL NEWS

Knowle Lodge Open Garden

The two dates for this years Open Garden at Knowle Lodge are **Sunday 26th April 1-5pm and Sunday 21st June 1-5pm.**

Once again we have been asked to assist with the afternoons fund raising event by providing refreshments of tea and cakes.

Therefore can I once again make a request for cakes on the day.

Please phone Hilary on 01543482027 if you are able to bake a cake

Hilary

If only books could talk.

Recently I was in the vestry at St Johns Church at Wall when I heard someone outside on the gravel. By the time I had a chance to open the door no one was there. There was however a sandwich box on the concrete slab. A message on it just said "returned". The enclosed was well wrapped so as not to let the parcel get wet. Inside was a Bible.

The Bible is quite good condition having just the outer spine missing. I enclose a photograph of the inside cover. Wall Sunday School October 1927.

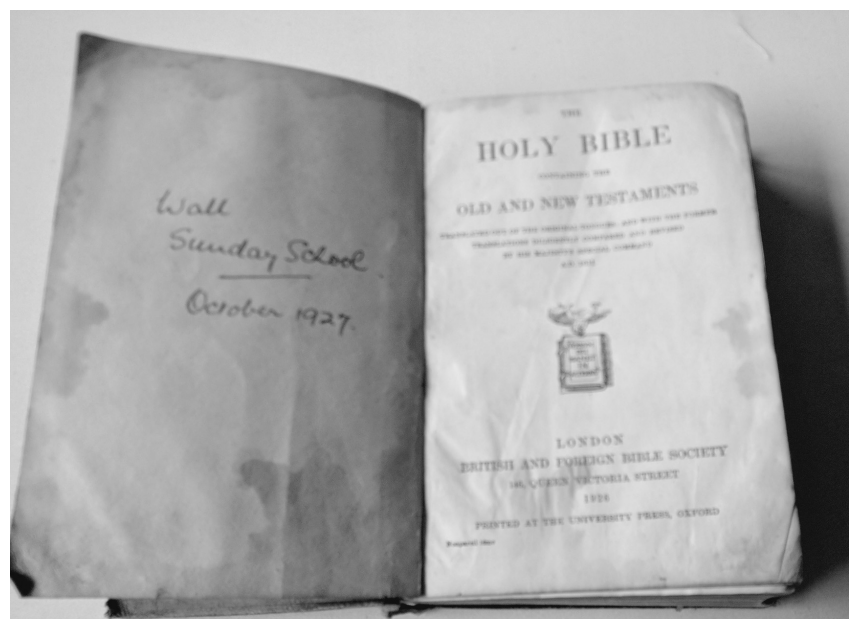
Where did it come from?

We would love to know.

The Bible has a history worth telling. So if anyone should know where the

Bible comes from please let us know.

Hilary



Epiphany

I am always aware that the church year is in Epiphany because John Polhill makes contact to gain access to St John Church Wall in able to put the star above the altar. I wonder how many of the congregation are aware that the star is present for the coming weeks. Then it seems just as soon the star is taken away.

Thank you John Polhill.

Hilary

Ramblings

March 1st is the first Sunday of Lent a period which lasts for 40 days and starts on Ash Wednesday which this year is on 26th February. It is traditionally a time of fasting and reminds us of the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert before He began His ministry. You can read the details in Matthew ch.4 verses 1 – 11 or Luke ch.4 verses 1-13. During that time of fasting Jesus was struggling with who He was and what that meant for His ministry. He was a man, hungry through lack of food but also filled with the Holy Spirit and there were decisions to be made. He had the power to provide bread, He could gain influence through political power and wealth, He could perform a miraculous sign which would ensure an enormous popular following. Instead of all these He chose the way of sacrifice and death. Yet without His death there would have been no resurrection.

So what are you giving up for Lent? Chocolate? If so why?

In the Orthodox Church the Lenten fast is taken very seriously. At the beginning there is Meatfare Sunday {farewell to meat!} after which no meat is eaten until Easter. This is followed by Cheesefare Sunday after which dairy products such as cheese, milk etc. are also given up. This causes a complete change in lifestyle for the period of Lent. Easter is celebrated with a feast with lots of meat and this joyful occasion often starts at midnight on Easter morning after the story of the Resurrection has been read in the churches and villages! The Roman Catholic Church also takes fasting very seriously. They abstain from

meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all the Fridays of Lent. The USA limits this to people between the ages of 18 and 59 (that lets me out!).

Some years ago we practiced fasting from TV! That also was a change of lifestyle and it ensured that we had the opportunity to talk to each other!

What will you do this Lent? It can at least be a time of taking stock of our lives as we think of Christ's self-sacrificing life which led to His total giving of Himself in his death for the sins of all people so that we can enjoy Life as God meant it to be! Without His death there would be no resurrection.....

Christine Higgs



**LICHFIELD
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Coach Trip to Gloucestershire



PHOTO: PETER NOTHURY

A visit to **Batsford Arboretum** to see the flowering cherry collection followed by a visit to Stratford **Butterfly Farm**



PHOTO: SHONWYTH/RSB

Saturday 18 April
Cost: £20 per person plus entry to butterfly farm (booking in advance)

Pick up at Boley Park Community Centre 8:00 a.m.

To book, please send a cheque, made out to 'Lichfield Wildlife Group', to:

Lichfield Wildlife Group, 21 Charnwood Close, Lichfield, SW13 6BU

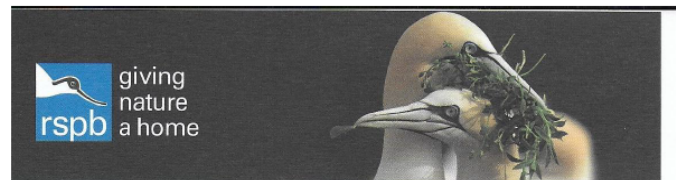
(Please include an email address so that confirmation can be sent.)

Under-18s must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Contact (01543) 257812

www.facebook.com/lichfieldwildlifegroup

Design: Edith Goodale



Lichfield and District RSPB LOCAL GROUP

Are you interested in birds and wildlife?

Join us at our monthly meetings at Lichfield Guildhall for illustrated talks on a variety of bird and wildlife subjects.

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month and begin at 7.30pm and end at about 9.30pm with a half-time break for refreshments and chat. Admission £4.

Our 2020 winter/spring programme is:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 14 th January | - Plover Lovers' World of Delights |
| 11 th February | - Wild Queensland and Red Hot Centre |
| March | - No meeting |
| 14 th April | - Saving Nature |
| 12 th May | - The Long Spring |

For more information call Dennis Muxworthy on 0121 353 6886 or email dennis.muxworthy@btinternet.com.

RSPB Lichfield Local Group

rspb.org.uk/localgroups

Gannets by Danny Green (rspb-images.com). The RSPB is a registered charity in England & Wales 207076, in Scotland SC037654, 363-1806-13-14

Bible Readings

Sunday 1st March

1st Sunday of Lent

[Purple]

Genesis 2.15-17, 3.1-7

Matthew 4.1-11

Sunday 8th March

2nd Sunday of Lent

[Purple]

Genesis 12.1-4a

John 3.1-17

Sunday 15th March

3rd Sunday of Lent

[Purple]

Exodus 17.1-7

John 4.5-42

Sunday 22nd March

4th Sunday of Lent

Mothering Sunday

[Purple]

1Samuel 1.20-end

Luke 2.41-52

Sunday 22nd March

4th Sunday of Lent

Mothering Sunday

EVENSONG

[Purple]

Micah 7

James 5

Sunday 29th March

5th Sunday of Lent

[Purple]

Ezekiel 37.1-14

John 11.1-45

Sunday 5th April

Palm Sunday

[Red]

Isaiah 50.4-9a

Matthew 27.11-54

Thursday 9th April

Maundy Thursday

[White]

Exodus 12.1-8 & 11-14

1 Corinthians 11.23-29

John 13.1-15

Friday 10th April

Good Friday

[Red / No Hangings]

Isaiah 52.13—53.12

Hebrews 10.16-25

John 18.1-19.42

Sunday 12th April

Easter Day

[Gold / White]

Acts 10.34-43

Matthew 28.1-10



From the Registers



Baptism

St Michael's	9th February	Baxter Mallory Scraggs	2 yrs
St Michael's	9th February	Meredith Adelaide Scraggs	8 mths



Wedding

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At Rest

St Michael's	17th January	Sidney William Abbotts	79
St Michael's	17th January	Ida Lott	90
St Michael's	31st January	Audrey Alice Minnie Weston	93
St John	12th February	Margaret Russell	79
St Michael's	21st February	Stuart Graham Butler (interment of ashes)	

St Michael's Rota – March 2020

Sunday 8.00 am	1 March	8 March	15 March	22 March	29 March
Sidesperson	Sandy Baker	Brian Smith	Sandy Baker	Martin Dewes	David Bull

Sunday 10.00 am	1 March	8 March Family Praise	15 March	22 March Mothering Sunday	29 March
Welcomer	Brenda Eley	Mary and Robert McAllester Jones	Pat Toplis	Maureen Brand	Angela Burgess
Sidespersons	Ray Allen David Bull	Judy and Mike Godfrey	Lynn and David Edge	Barbara Homewood Mike Jones	Brenda Liptrot Richard Keay
Reader	Stephen Barton		Alison Staines	Kay Martin	Angela Burgess
Servers	Maggie Easton Kay Martin		Maggie Easton Phil Clayton	Kay Martin Elizabeth Salt	Elizabeth Allen David Shiel
Communion Assistant	Maggie Easton		Phil Clayton	Elizabeth Salt	Sheila Vaughan
Intercessor	David Bull		David Easton	Peter Salt	Trevor James
Coffee	Elizabeth Allen Trish Jones	Alison Anketell Brenda Liptrot	Shirley Trelfa Angela Burgess	Judy Godfrey Anne Lingwood	June Frayn Betty Lyne
Healing				Chris Polhill Alan Toplis	
Transport	Ron Plimmer	Ray Allen	Elizabeth Allen	Brenda Liptrot	Ron Plimmer
Flowers	No flowers	No Flowers	No Flowers	No Flowers	No flowers

Sunday 12.30 pm	1 March Baptism	Reader	Intercessor	Server
		Rita Athersmith	Rachel Morby	Maggie Easton

Sunday 6.00 pm	1 March No service	8 March Communion	15 March No service	22 March Evensong	29 March No service
Sidesperson		Ray Allen		Margaret Freaton	
Reader		Ray Allen		Margaret Freaton	
Server		Elizabeth Allen			

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(from Mindful Christianity Today).

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<p style="text-align: center;">St Michael's Church</p> <p>Verger: <i>Lynn Rock 252634 or 07765 312411</i></p> <p>Sacristan and Head Server: <i>Maggie Easton 255308</i></p> <p>Organist and Choirmaster: <i>Peter Hawksworth 251938 or 07771 986538</i></p> <p>Music Group: <i>Richard Brooks 07918 906 350</i></p> <p>Transport Rota: <i>Brenda Liptrot 251863</i></p> <p>Pastoral Care: <i>Peter Salt 250723</i></p> <p>Flowers: <i>Diana Baker 01543 416232</i></p> <p>Safeguarding: <i>Maureen Brand 264880</i></p> <p>Junior Praise: <i>Viv Oliver 258054</i></p> <p>Bell ringers: <i>Gillian Eastwood 480017,</i> Thursdays, 7:30pm to 8:55pm. gillieastwood@gmail.com</p> <p>Mothers Union: <i>Elizabeth Allen 304938</i></p> <p>Social Team: <i>Contact via the office 262211</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">St John's Church, Wall</p> <p>Verger: Hilary Barker 01543 482027</p> <p>Pastoral Care: Christine Gilbert 07821 987999</p> <p>Safeguarding: Maureen Brand 264880</p> <p>Magazine Distributer: Eileen Carson 254107</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Other Useful Numbers</p> <p>St Michael's School: 227425</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Parish Magazine</p> <p>Magazine Distributor: <i>Barbara Homewood 255909</i> E-mail brian@britcave.co.uk Magazine Editor: <i>David Bull 07525 012272</i> or email: dkbull053@hotmail.co.uk</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Scouting and Guiding</p> <p>Group Scout Leader Carl Hall 07988 685378 chair@7thlichfield.org.uk</p> <p>Rainbows: <i>Becky Bickley 07703 671568</i> <i>Vicki Davies Friend 07970 549284</i> <i>Hannah Heath 07854 824443</i></p> <p>Brownies: <i>Julie Cragg 301098</i></p> <p>Guides: <i>Lisa Webb 07900 164587</i></p>	