

# THE PARISH MAGAZINE

## April 2023

But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified.

He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.

Matthew 28:5-6

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

**£1**

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### United Benefice Office

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**LARGE COPIES** of the  
magazine are available  
on request

## Reflection ....

Holy Week is a rollercoaster of emotions – enough to last a lifetime, but squeezed into just one week. It takes us from celebration to conflict, betrayal, uncertainty, despair and then back to a joy that lasts forever.

We could easily go from waving our palm branches and shouting “Hosanna” on Palm Sunday to singing “Christ the Lord is Risen Today, Alleluia!” on Easter day without going through the betrayal, injustice, agony, and hopelessness that the journey of Holy Week would take us on.

Holy Week can forever change us if we embrace the seasons of the week and the seasons of our lives, both the brightness and the shadow and the celebration and desolation. Life’s greatest challenges can give birth to life’s greatest possibilities.

Palm Sunday begins with celebration. This Palm Sunday, speak of your “hosannas” and joys. Lift high your palm leaf, and give thanks for God’s grace in your life. At our Family Praise service we will celebrate together as a community of all ages in the beauty of our Churchyard and Church. Let this be a day of gladness in spite of the ambiguities and conflicts of life - There will be enough time for suffering later in the week.

The next moment of Holy Week involves Jesus’ conflict with religious and governmental authorities. Jesus “occupies the Temple,” throwing out the vendors who make religion a mercantile enterprise. We ought to use this time to question our own part in injustice. From what unjust systems do we personally benefit? How could we pursue peace more intently? Join us to pray at our daily services of compline, as we pause in God’s presence and open our hearts to him.

Maundy Thursday joins memory and hope with betrayal and abandonment. Maundy Thursday invites us to remember God’s action in history and our lives, and live hopefully toward the future as we

recall the tragedies of life. In a world in which many are abandoned, who are we called to embrace and welcome? We will spend Maundy Thursday sharing a meal together and then recalling the last supper in our Holy Communion service. Those who would like to stay on will be invited to keep vigil for an hour afterwards, as the disciples did in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Then we get to Good Friday. It is a day of unmitigated suffering and alienation. Often Christians sing the hymn: “Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?” We ask ourselves where we would be when Jesus was crucified. Would we be among the jeering crowds? The faithful women? The cowardly disciples? There are several options for worship on Good Friday – join us if you can!

Holy Saturday is a day of uncertainty and suspense. For the disciples, there seemed to be no promise of a happy ending. Holy Saturday invites us to consider that which is unresolved spiritually in our lives. Where do you long for God to breathe his healing spirit? Where are we awaiting a resurrection? We will gather as the sun sets for a short vigil, to hear the stories of how God has saved his people, and to light the Easter fire, before we celebrate the first Eucharist of Easter together, for “love has come again, like wheat that springs up green.”

On Easter morning as we meet the risen Jesus as Mary Magdalene did in the garden, we will renew the vows of our baptism together. Practicing resurrection and living into our baptism takes many forms – protesting injustice, tending to our loved ones, doing something you thought was impossible, singing alleluias, being attentive to beauty... for this is the day that the Lord has made! Let us be glad and rejoice in it!

*Revd Abbie*



## **Cathedral Treasures – Lichfield Angel in the Top Ten**

The Lichfield Angel has made it to the final of a competition to find Britain's favourite cathedral treasure.

The Association of English Cathedrals launched a competition to find the best loved treasure based on their #Cathedral Treasures winter campaign.

And Lichfield Cathedral's Lichfield Angel made it into the top ten, with people asked to cast their vote for the overall winner.

The campaign was based on the latest volume by Janet Gough, OBE, author, lecturer and advisor on historic churches and cathedrals, called Deans' Choice: Cathedral Treasures of England and Wales.

The volume tells the story of 50 treasures from 44 Church of England cathedrals and six cathedrals from the Church in Wales - each one was chosen by the Dean or senior clergy of the cathedral featured.

The AEC shared these 50 remarkable treasures across their social media platforms over 50 days and ten treasures have made it to the final – determined by the number of likes, shares, and engagements throughout the campaign.

*The winner has yet to be announced.*

# Holy Week and Easter

## Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April Palm Sunday

- |      |              |   |
|------|--------------|---|
| 8am  | St Michael's | Holy Communion (BCP)  |
| 10am | St Michael's | Family Praise Holy Communion<br>with outdoor Procession of Palms<br>(Please come suitably dressed for whatever the weather) |
| 10am | St John's    | Holy Communion  |
| 6pm  | St Michael's | Journey to the Cross<br><i>A contemplative service of prayer, readings and hymns as we begin Holy Week</i>                  |

## Monday 3rd April—Holy Monday

- |     |              |          |
|-----|--------------|----------|
| 7pm | St Michael's | Compline |
|-----|--------------|----------|

## Tuesday 4th April—Holy Tuesday

- |     |              |          |
|-----|--------------|----------|
| 7pm | St Michael's | Compline |
|-----|--------------|----------|

## Wednesday 5th April—Holy Wednesday

- |        |              |                |
|--------|--------------|----------------|
| 9:30am | St Michael's | Holy Communion |
| 7pm    | St John's    | Compline       |

## Thursday 6th April—Maundy Thursday

- |       |              |  |
|-------|--------------|--|
| 6pm   | St Michael's | Bring and Share Meal <i>All Welcome</i>  |
| 7pm   | St Michael's | Holy Communion   |
| 8-9pm | St Michael's | Vigil concluding with compline<br><i>We wait prayerfully with Jesus as the disciples did in the Garden of Gethsemane. Stay for as little or as long as you are able.</i> |

## Friday 7th April Good Friday

- |        |                      |   |
|--------|----------------------|---|
| 8.15am | Whittington Pharmacy | Churches Together Walk of Witness<br><i>We join other Churches in a walk around Lichfield, pausing to hear the story of Jesus' death on the cross and to worship.</i> |
| 2pm    | St Michael's         | Messy Good Friday<br><i>The Easter Story, crafts, song and food. For all ages.</i>  |
| 2pm    | St John's            | Service of the Last Hour<br><i>A contemplative service where we pray as Christ's disciples at the foot of the cross.</i>  |
| 7.30pm | St Michael's         | Churches Together Good Friday Service<br><i>We join with Churches across the city for a service of hymns, readings, prayers and music from St Michael's choir</i>     |

## Saturday 8th April—Holy Saturday

- |        |              |  |
|--------|--------------|--|
| 7.30pm | St Michael's | Easter Eve Vigil and Lighting of the Easter Fire<br><i>We listen to the readings that tell the story of our salvation, go out to light the Easter fire and bring the flame into Church to celebrate the first Eucharist of Easter.</i> |
|--------|--------------|--|

## Sunday 9th April—Easter Sunday

- |      |              |   |
|------|--------------|---|
| 8am  | St Michael's | Holy Communion (BCP)                          |
| 10am | St Michael's | Holy Communion<br><i>With Easter Egg Hunt</i> |
| 10am | St John's    | Holy Communion                                |



# Regular Services and Worship in the Benefice

## Regular Services at St Michael's Sundays

8:00am Holy Communion

10:00am Holy Communion

### 1st Sunday

10:00am Family Praise

## Wednesdays

9.30am Holy Communion

## Thursdays

9.30am Morning Prayer

## Regular Services at St John's Sundays

10am Holy Communion

### Baptism @ 11.30am

Last Sunday of the month

## Other Services at St Michael's Sundays

*1st Monday 10.00am*

First Steps

*2nd Sunday 4:30pm*

Messy Church

*3rd Sunday 6:00pm*

Choral Evensong

*Last Sunday 12:30pm*

Holy Baptism

## Music in the Benefice

St Michael's Church

## Wednesdays

6.00pm Junior Choir Rehearsal

6:30pm Senior Choir Rehearsal  
(except on the Weds before 1st Sunday)

## Friday before 1st Sunday

7:30pm Music Group & Senior  
Choir Rehearsal

## Baptism Preparation

First Saturday 10:30am

at St Michael's

## Bells Practice

Every Thurs 7:30pm, St Michael's



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

## Family Praise

Sunday

2nd April

10am St Michael's



## First Steps

Monday 3rd April

10am—11.30am

Come and join us at our ...

## MESSY CHURCH

for craft, story, song and food on

**GOOD FRIDAY 7TH APRIL**

2pm

in St Michael's Church

Ages 0-11 yrs. welcome



## Deadlines!

For **May** Magazine: Deadline is

**SUNDAY 16th April**

Please send articles to David Shiel

AND the Parish Office

[shielfamily@gmail.com](mailto:shielfamily@gmail.com)

[office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk](http://office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk)

**Pew Sheet:**

every Thursday

7:30am

Contact

Parish Office



# DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD

## SEND MORE PAUSES

*Published: 1st March 2023*

Some emails (or texts or tweets) really should not be sent. You instantly regret sending that cross/rude/libellous message that you wrote in the heat of the moment but it's too late – it has gone and is forever more recorded in some digital Book of Judgement, never to be recalled nor expunged. Had you paused you might – on reflection – not have acted so hastily. It may have been better to wait until the cool morning light before pressing “send”.



We are living in times when feelings are running high. This is clearly true in the church over the matter of human sexuality. It is true in wider society too, as issues such as Brexit and gender identity cause heated arguments in politics and on social media. These things are important and there are – quite properly – deeply held views on all sides. There is nothing wrong with passionate, robust and conscience-driven debate. This is one of the ways in which we try to clarify where the truth lies in our common life.

But this season of Lent may teach us that such discussion is best had after careful reflection. We learn the importance of pausing before we

speak and engage. In the Lenten wilderness, we are primarily in listening mode. We discover the value of taking time out to think, pray and reflect. This does not mean we stop wrestling with deep and contentious questions or try and stop others from doing so. The Lenten pause is not a stepping aside from the demands of living but an opportunity to stop and listen carefully and pay attention, so that when we speak and act we do so wisely.

This necessary listening is threefold.

**We must listen to ourselves.** What am I feeling? What is troubling or moving my spirit at the moment? What preoccupies my thinking and why? How is this shaping my behaviour towards others?

**We will listen to others.** Lent is a great time for shared Bible study or Lent groups. We gather with our brothers and sisters in Christ to listen to one another (especially those with whom we disagree!). We also open our ears to what is happening in our streets, neighbourhoods and communities. What questions are being asked. For what do people long and why?

Above all, **we pause to listen to God** who sometimes speaks to us from within and through others and will always speak through scripture, worship, service and prayer. What is God saying to us, if we would only pause for a moment to listen?

In an age driven by relentless social media and constant digital distraction, there is precious little incentive to pause so that when we speak and act, we do so from a place of wisdom and compassion. Lent is the gift that reminds us of the importance of this measured attention to ourselves, to others and to God; the wisdom of pausing before pressing the button.

*Rt Revd Matthew Parker*  
*Bishop of Stafford*

# Book of prayer for the coronation of King Charles III published

News from



The Church of England is calling for a period of prayer leading up to the Coronation and has released a book of Daily Prayers for the Coronation of King Charles III. Running from Easter Day (April 9) for 28 days, up to the day of the Coronation on May 6, the book provides daily themes, reflections and prayers for use by individuals, churches or groups.

The booklet is designed to help people pray for The King, The Queen Consort and the Royal Family and their calling to a life of public service; to pray for our nation and the world at this special time; to learn about the spiritual significance of the Coronation Service and contemplate the person of Jesus – the servant King.

Commending the book of Prayers, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Archbishop of York said: "We are delighted to offer this book to everyone who wishes to join us in praying for The King, The Queen Consort and the Royal Family as they prepare for the Coronation.

"Looking ahead to this historic moment in the life of our nation, we give thanks for His Majesty The King's example of lifelong public service to others.

"The Coronation will be a time to celebrate community, faith and service – values that are reflected in these prayers.

"Please set aside some time each day between Easter and the Coronation to pray with us for Their Majesties, the Royal family and our nation."

The book of prayers combines themed daily readings and shares features of the Coronation Ceremony, exploring the Christian symbolism behind it.

The readings also reflect the value that King Charles III places on charitable work, environmentalism, volunteering and community life. The design of the Daily Prayers book carries a pattern derived from the spoon that The Archbishop of Canterbury will use in the

Coronation service to anoint King Charles. The spoon is first recorded in 1349 as preserved among St Edward's Regalia in Westminster Abbey.

Throughout history, the anointing is the most sacred part of the coronation ceremony and takes place before the investiture and crowning. The archbishop pours holy oil from the Ampulla (or vessel) into the spoon and anoints the sovereign on the hands, breast and head. The tradition goes back to the Old Testament where the anointing of Solomon by Zadok the Priest and Nathan the Prophet is described.

The Daily Prayers are available to order as a booklet from Church House Publishing now. They will also be available free via email and audio via the Church of England website and social media.

A wide range of further resources for cathedrals, churches and schools to use locally will be made available on the Church of England website in March.

## More information

Daily Prayers for the Coronation of King Charles III is available to order now from Church House Publishing as a 48-page, full-colour booklet.

Individual copies are priced at

£1.50 Large Print and e-Book versions will also be available by mid-March. Copies can be ordered direct via [chpublishing.co.uk/coronation](http://chpublishing.co.uk/coronation) or via booksellers.

The reflections and prayers in the booklet will also be available free via email and audio via the Church of England website and social media.

The Church of England has also launched an Information Pack. It outlines key events happening over the Coronation Weekend and the different prayer, worship and liturgical resources that the Church of England will make available in the weeks ahead. Visit [churchofengland.org/coronation](http://churchofengland.org/coronation)



## **BOOK REVIEW**

### **Hope for Ukraine - stories from the front line**

**By Kyle Duncan & Esther Fedorkevich**

[Baker Publishing via (eden.co.uk) £23.29]

This part-narrative, part wartime *dispatch*, *Hope for Ukraine*, transports the reader to war-torn Ukraine, and the front lines of Faith, Survival, and miraculous intervention.

From scrambling to escape the bombs levelling their neighbourhoods, fleeing from the sex-traffickers in the chaos of border crossings to rescuing orphans trapped by Russian tanks, heavy artillery, and ruthless Russian soldiers.

These are first-hand accounts which tell the stories of real Ukrainians enduring terrible hardships with grit and grace in their war-ravaged homeland.

The authors both have deep family ties to Ukraine, and they take the reader inside the conflict, with dramatic boots-on-the-ground stories and eye-witness accounts of Ukrainian refugees, aid workers, soldiers and families affected by the conflict.

Their stories reveal the unbreakable spirit of a nation under siege., showing that even amid the chaos and tragedy of Europe's largest war since 1945, God is indeed at work in redemptive ways.

*(First published in the St. Giles Church, Whittington, March 2023 Parish News: and reproduced here by kind permission of Ken Booker.*

Please keep the people of Ukraine in your prayers over the coming months.

**EDITOR**

## **A PRAYER FOR UKRAINE**

Living God

we pray for peace between Ukraine and Russia,  
peace with your justice.

May those who fear, know your loving presence  
those who grieve, know your comfort.

We pray for the talking to start  
and the fighting to end:

for Wisdom to guide the leaders into  
Your truth and the Way of Your Kingdom.

That Your kingdom may come,  
and Your will for us be done.

Amen

*Revd Christine Polhill*

## **St Michael's Church Easter Flowers**

We will be decorating the church for Easter on Saturday 8th April  
from 9.30am  
and would welcome all who would like to help.

If you wish to make a donation in memory of a loved one, please put  
the money, the name of the person and your message into a blue  
Gift Aid envelope and mark it Easter Flowers.

Many thanks  
Anne Lingwood

## Mother's Union Report for April 2023

At the end of February we enjoyed lunch at The Inkwell where we were all impressed by the standard of food and the quiet efficiency of the staff.

It was our turn to be efficient providers of food when we hosted a Lent lunch in church, serving soup and bread followed by cake and hot drinks. How wonderful it will be when our Parish Hall is built with a decent kitchen large enough to accommodate more than two (thin) people. Including some generous donations we raised £300 for Mother's Union charities. We learned that some people were unaware that M.U. is not just a Lichfield organisation. It has branches world-wide with members working to improve the lives of families, providing help, education and supporting women to raise their children. The money we raised was sent to our London head office and will be used where needed most, here and abroad.

Some of our members, led by June made posies for distribution on Mothering Sunday. On March 27<sup>th</sup> we will hold a meditation prepared by Lesley and Barbara incorporating prayers for Ladyday.

Our Summer programme of services, outings and meetings with other M.U. branches should be available for April. Take a look, ask questions and perhaps come to a meeting to find out more.

Betty Lyne



## On our travels again!

It has felt recently that we have been travelling more than we have been at home. This has been due to the postponement of trips that were booked prior to Covid restrictions. It was not very long after returning from Australia, that we were packing for our long-awaited trip to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands. We had a wonderful time in both places and were delighted to spend some time in Ecuador,



where, as yet, there are not many European travellers, although it is starting to open up to this market.

We began our trip in the city of Quito, the capital of Ecuador, high up in the Andes, a city with some beautiful architecture, including its cathedral, alongside the more modern buildings.

We visited the site of the Equator line and learnt a lot about its effect on, for example, the direction that water goes down the plughole!

We then travelled north into the Cloud Forest near the town of Mindo where we saw some wonderful wildlife, including toucans and hummingbirds.



David also took the opportunity to go zip-lining, in the pouring rain, while I preferred to go back to the hotel for a hot drink!

One of the highlights of the trip was staying just across the valley from Cotopaxi, the highest active volcano,

which constantly has steam and ash coming out of it. It is snow - capped, all year round, and gives a real sense of the grandeur of the mountains.

After visiting a factory for Panama hats, (which have always been made in Ecuador, not in Panama!) and many other interesting places, we then flew to the Galapagos Islands.



We spent time on two of the many islands and had a chance to see many different species of wildlife. The marine iguanas and sea lions seem to ignore the development of towns and just sit and sleep where they have always done, regardless of people. Sea lions have priority on the benches!

The birdlife on the Galapagos Islands is wonderful, with pelicans, frigate birds and the wonderful blue-footed boobies, (the colour of which is clearly lost in a black and white photo!) being some of the highlights.

I could go on for ever, about the giant tortoises, the lizards, the red crabs, the fish and turtles I saw whilst snorkelling (for the first time ever!), but I will come to a conclusion.



The grandeur, the beauty and the diversity of the places we visited were quite overwhelming. There is a growing awareness of the need to protect these islands from overdevelopment and exploitation, but there is a difficult balance to maintain between the need to preserve the wildlife and the need for the income from tourism.

We pray that we will always remember that we are stewards of God's world and each do our part to care for all of creation.

*Ruth Bull*

# ***Film Club***

***at St Michael's Church***

***FREE ADMISSION AND REFRESHMENTS***

***Doors open at 2pm***

## **Mrs Harris goes to Paris**

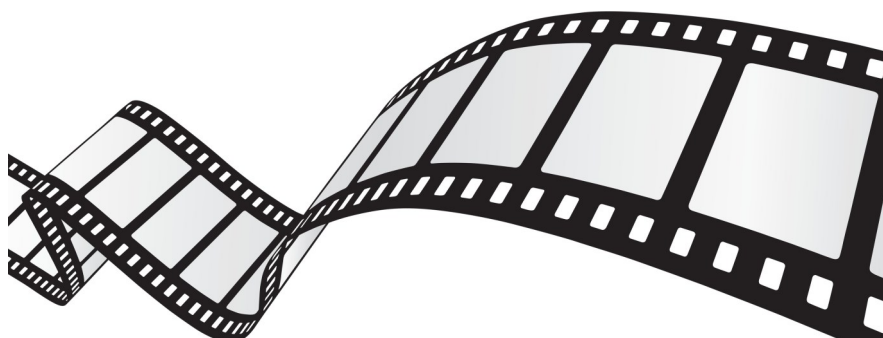
(2022, PG, 1h 55 Comedy/Drama) A 1950s widowed cleaning lady falls madly in love with a couture Dior dress, and decides that she must have one of her own. cake

**Mon 3rd April 2.30pm start**

**Tea/Coffee and Cake will be served**

**at the interval**

**All welcome.**



**Save the Date:**

**Next Film Club**

**May 8th**



The  
**Community  
Foundation**  
for Staffordshire

## The Big Help Out

### **Your chance to get involved in the Big Help Out!**

His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Mr Ian Dudson CBE, KStJ, and the Staffordshire Lieutenancy would like to encourage as many people and organisations as possible to get involved in the Big Help Out, to celebrate the coronation of King Charles

III. Representatives of the lieutenancy will also be taking part in the day. Staffordshire is fortunate to benefit from a higher than average take up of volunteering, when compared to the West Midlands region, and to the UK as a whole, and the county is known for its generosity of spirit.

During the Coronavirus pandemic over 12 million people across the UK answered the call for volunteers, supporting vaccination centres and checking in with people who were isolated. Now our task is to inspire a new generation of volunteers because the need in communities is greater than ever. His Majesty The King's Coronation is a chance to raise the profile of volunteering and give everyone a chance to join in, whether they have volunteered before or if it's their very first time, we want to the whole country involved. It is a chance to recognise the roles of His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen Consort in supporting public service, but also to build a lasting

legacy. A unique focal point, where we look ahead as a country, to renew and strengthen the amazing voluntary spirit millions have shown, and open the door for millions more to join in. In order to list your organisation, and explain more about what you will be doing, please go to The Big Help Out website.



If you register on the website, please let us know so that we will be aware of activity in the county via email, at [office@staffordshire.foundation](mailto:office@staffordshire.foundation)

<https://thebighelpout.org.uk/>

Of course, volunteering is something that can take place at any time, and we are fortunate to have many local organisations that support regular volunteering. To find out more you can contact Support Staffordshire if you are in Staffordshire.

### **Coronation Champion Awards**

Her Majesty The Queen Consort has launched the Coronation Champion Awards through the Royal Voluntary Service. Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent's long history of community support, volunteering and charity work deserves to have its most extraordinary volunteers recognised, but we can't do that without the nominations being made. If you would like to nominate someone to be a Coronation Community Champion for their voluntary work, please go to the Royal Voluntary Service [website](https://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/volunteering/coronation-champions-awards/?dm_i=1T5F,87XUM,WTa29S,XQ9BB,1).

[https://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/volunteering/coronation-champions-awards/?dm\\_i=1T5F,87XUM,WTa29S,XQ9BB,1](https://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/volunteering/coronation-champions-awards/?dm_i=1T5F,87XUM,WTa29S,XQ9BB,1)

**St Michael's Church, Lichfield**

# **CHURCHYARD NATURE DAY**

*"Consider the wildflowers, how they grow" – Luke 12: 27*

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April**

**10am – 4pm**



Talks by local wildlife experts

Herb walk and lichen walk



Outdoor children's activities

Find out about the Churchyard



working party



Hot and cold drinks provided

- bring a packed lunch

# SAINT MICHAEL'S CHURCHYARD IN SPRING

Daffodils and Bluebells



Photos by Maureen Brand

## ST MICHAEL'S CHURCHYARD PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

*Theme: "Easter in St Michael's Churchyard"*

To celebrate the Easter season and the spring beauty of our Churchyard we are inviting all who visit or pass through St Michael's Churchyard to submit their photos of the Churchyard in all its spring glory.

They will be judged by the Rector and local experts, in 3 age categories - primary school, secondary school and over 16, and there will be prizes for the winners! Submit your photos via email to [stmichaellichfield@gmail.com](mailto:stmichaellichfield@gmail.com) **before Monday 17th April** with "PHOTOGRAPHY COMP" as the email subject, and let us know who the photographer is and which age category it should be judged in.

(If any people are present in photos they should not be identifiable)

The winners will be announced at our Family Praise service on Sunday 7th May at 10am and on facebook. Entries will be displayed on facebook and in Church so they can be enjoyed by everyone.

**TRAVELS WITH MY FATHER PART 2 – SOUTH VIETNAM  
(WITH APOLOGIES TO JACK AND MICHAEL WHITEHALL)  
BY TED GREEN**

The first thing to strike me after the 2-hour flight from Hanoi to Saigon (our guide told my son, Tim, and me proudly that only the government calls it Ho Chi Minh City) was the temperature, which went up from a pleasant 20 degrees to over 30. The other, which I noticed first as we were flying low over the city to land, was the number of skyscrapers and the amount of neon lighting. In many ways Saigon is a much more modern city than Hanoi.

The only thing that we did in Saigon that wasn't related to the colonial and civil wars from 1945-1975 was a trip to the Mekong River delta. We were about 30km from the coast on one of the three



main streams that, in itself, could have been a major river and crossing it twice in a small boat was quite an experience. The whole delta area is a “vast maze of rivers, swamps and islands” and is a source of much of the rice in southern Vietnam, a large amount of which is exported to countries like Malaysia that have opted to base their agriculture on palm oil. The Mekong is the world's 12<sup>th</sup> longest river and flows through six countries, but it's upper reaches are controlled by China whose hydroelectric schemes and water extraction are causing concern to the countries lower down the river.

Perhaps the most striking of the civil war sites we visited was the Cu Chi tunnel system in the 'Iron Triangle' between Saigon and the Cambodian border. The earliest tunnels were built in the 1880s during opposition to the French occupation, but this system was mainly built



in 1948 in the war against the French and was extended and heavily used by the Viet Cong (VC) against the Americans. There were many tunnel systems in South Vietnam, but the government has preserved this 120 km section as a memorial and tourist attraction. I stayed above ground, but Tim tried the tunnels and found them very tight-fitting even though they've been enlarged for western tourists. Also exhibited were some simple, but brutal, mantraps used by the VC. As an American air force general once threatened 'to bomb the North Vietnamese back to the Stone Age' it didn't seem inappropriate that weapons from that time should be used against them. As well as providing HQs, hospitals and weapons stores the tunnels also gave shelter for local farming families when US planes were bombing. As they were also home to snakes, scorpions and rats they must have been frightening to use, especially for the children. The tunnel site also has a rifle range where you can fire Russian and American weapons for about £1 per bullet, not something we felt the need to do!



The visit that had the most effect on me was the War Remnants Museum, which used to be called the War Crimes Museum before relations with the Americans improved. Having seen it I wasn't sure whether the earlier title wasn't more appropriate. Outside were planes and armoured vehicles left from the conflict and the ground floor was dedicated to memories of worldwide demonstrations against the Americans, especially after the Tet Offensive of 1968. There were newsreels, bringing back vivid memories for someone of my age, of the demonstration against the war at the US Embassy in London in 1968 that quickly turned into a riot. There were also many exhibits showing the resistance in the US to the war, which many believe led Lyndon Johnson to step back from the presidency in 1968. Upstairs

was harrowing as atrocities were described in detail, such as My Lai where a village population was butchered. The results of napalm and Agent Orange were also demonstrated, and we learnt that there are still children from that period who are institutionalised for life after physical or mental scarring or the result of birth defects.



On a lighter note, we were determined to visit the Rooftop Bar at the Rex Hotel where the US Army briefed the press on the current situation. As these were usually upbeat and the cynical press knew better, they were known as 'The 5 O'Clock Follies'. The building was a French car dealership in the 1920 and was remodelled into a hotel in the late 1950s, where some of the earliest guests included the first US soldiers sent to Vietnam in 1961. The hotel is a bit of an oddity at it still stands at 5 stories, surrounded by modern skyscrapers, some topped with the single Vietnamese star. While we were enjoying a quiet drink the air was split by the sound of two enormous amplifiers, part of the rehearsal for a Tet entertainment that brought us firmly back into the modern era.



The next, and last, port of call on our holiday was to be Siem Reap in Cambodia, the centre for visits to the Angkor plain, home of the former Cambodian capital and its many temples. If Saigon took us back 50 or so years, Cambodia would take us back a thousand. More next month.

*Ted Green*



## WALKING GROUP:

### Gentleshaw Common and adjacent paths

Date: Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2023

Start Time: 10.30 a.m.

Meeting Point: Ye Olde Windmill Inn, Windmill Lane, Gentleshaw, WS15 4NF

For directions of how to get there please visit the website

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

**Walk terrain Details:** From the Windmill inn, past Christ Church Gentleshaw, and turn right down Chapel Lane. A woodland path, sometimes muddy, that runs parallel with Gentleshaw Common, past the pigs, (this to me is the pigs walk) and through a horsey hamlet. Then through an oakwood and back to the inn along Gentleshaw Common.

Lunch

Ye Olde Windmill Inn

Windmill Lane

Gentleshaw

WS15 4NF                      01543 682468

(dog friendly)

[yeoldewindmill.co.uk](http://yeoldewindmill.co.uk) will give you the menu online if you need to know beforehand.

PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU PLAN TO COME SO THAT WE DON'T SET OFF WITHOUT YOU.

[beneficewalkinggroup@gmail.com](mailto:beneficewalkinggroup@gmail.com)

01543 262211

Angie King 07907 691053

Chris Polhill 07775 888562



# News from St Michaels' PCC

There have been 3 PCCs since the last news – 26 September, 21 November and 6 February. The following items have been covered.

## **Ministry.**

Worship Post-Covid for the common cup seem to be working well but are being kept under review by the Rector. PCC have considered and reviewed the special services in the lead up to and after Christmas and at the February meeting considered Lent, Holy Week and Easter services.

February PCC received a report on Messy Church and First Steps which are growing in numbers.

**Mission.** The Film Club for grown-ups is now back meeting on a monthly basis. And the film club for families and children which first met in the autumn half term 2022, met over Christmas and February half term.

The Rector has also strengthened links with St Michaels CofE School - she is preparing some older children for confirmation, the school has held services in church, a homework club meets once a week in church during term and the church is running a school uniform bank.

In November a 'warm welcome' project was set up in partnership with the fire brigade at the fire station. Numbers attending have been limited and it was called off in February 2023.

Prior to Christmas there was a repeat of the 'Bake and deliver' project. Also an ECO fortnight and ECO church took place.

## **Pastoral Matters.**

The majority of PCC members have undertaken or are undertaking safeguarding training. DBS checks have been completed. Risk assessments for church activities are being carried out, for example, warm welcome, homework club and Christingle.

## **Church Buildings.**

There are ongoing problems with leaks to the church roof. In February PCC gave its approval to repair a new leak in the choir vestry.

Investigative work is being undertaken into the leak at the west end of the church in the main building.

The suitability of the heating system was also discussed by the February PCC. Prior to the meeting the heating system had been serviced by a heating engineer who said the heating was working. PCC discussed ways of managing the heating system more effectively especially during services.

PCC has received updates on the Parish rooms' development which has now picked up post Covid. An application to HS2 for grant funding was unsuccessful but will be resubmitted with the additional evidence required. The cost of building materials has gone up requiring exploration of additional funding sources to complete interior works. An archaeological survey was carried out in the church yard before Christmas and we are waiting for the report.

Mock screen shapes for the proposed new audio-visual system were set up in February for feedback from the congregation and to support a Diocesan Faculty application.

Funding for the next stage of the church clock (which is now back in place) project, funding for its electrification is being sought.

## **Churchyard.**

PCC has received reports on the following activities:

- The relocation of the large metal bench to a more suitable position
- The churchyard achieving Gold Award by the diocese.
- A new watering system for the new Churchyard
- The work of the Community Payback Team and churchyard working party
- The development of a new tree planning scheme
- The removal of the smaller self-seeding ash trees

PCC noted that the planning and removal of all trees in the churchyard requires a Diocesan Faculty although in a limited number of specific cases the Rector can authorise the removal of saplings.

Following confirmation from the family concerned, a Diocesan Faculty application will go ahead for securing approval to remove the broken bench by the church door and a suitable replacement.

## **Finance.**

At the September and November meetings the treasurer provide updates on the General Fund (housekeeping) and said overall we are in a good position. Also at the November meeting PCC noted the Common Fund would be going up as Diocesan support would be ending.

PCC have also approved a discretionary increase in fees for 2023 for organist, heating and vergers fees. Other statutory fees for weddings and funerals are set by CofE

The February meeting received a report on external charitable giving and church running costs, including the Diocesan fuel grant revived.

## Other business

First Aid Training is to be arranged for after Easter

Plans for the forthcoming ACPM in May 2023 and the search for a new church warden were discussed

Approval has been given to fund material for making 2 new chasubles for the Rector

When available a copy of the PCC minutes will be posted on the noticeboard at the back of church. Our next meeting is 27 March 2023.

*Veronica Morris* PCC Secretary

### An environmental tip

#### ***Shopping for Second Hand Clothes***

If trawling through the rails at a charity shop is not your idea of shopping for clothes, you could try online. I have used Vinted and got an unworn Liberty top for about 30% of the RRP. It is so nice that I wore it for a meal out for Phil's 60th Birthday!!

[www.vinted.co.uk](http://www.vinted.co.uk)

Or you could try searching for charity shops online, they often put their better items on their websites.

Triftify is a useful website for finding UK charity shops. You can sort by items you want to buy or charities you would like to support

<https://www.thriftify.co.uk/>



*Angie King*

# Staffordshire City Nature Challenge (CNC) 2023

April 28<sup>th</sup> – May 1<sup>st</sup>



**CNC** is a global citizen science project with over 450 cities across the world inviting citizens to record the plants and animals they see, using the free **iNaturalist** app or website, over four days.

Your records will contribute to conservation locally, nationally, and globally. Record in your garden, on waste ground, in woods and meadows, etc.

**Lichfield Wildlife Group** is running two training sessions to help familiarize you with **iNaturalist**.



**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2 – 4 p.m.**  
College Hall, Lichfield Cathedral.  
Free refreshments.

Let us know you are coming  
01543 257812

[P\\_L\\_norbury@hotmail.com](mailto:P_L_norbury@hotmail.com) or  
just turn up on the day.

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2 – 4 p.m.**  
Beacon Park Discovery Hub  
(behind the bowling greens).  
Booking required. 01543 257812  
or [P\\_L\\_Norbury@hotmail.com](mailto:P_L_Norbury@hotmail.com)

**Everyone is welcome!** If you can, before the session, download the **iNaturalist** app on your smartphone or from the website.

<https://www.bnhc.org.uk/city-nature-challenge/>

## Staffordshire Ecological Record



CITY NATURE CHALLENGE IS ORGANIZED BY

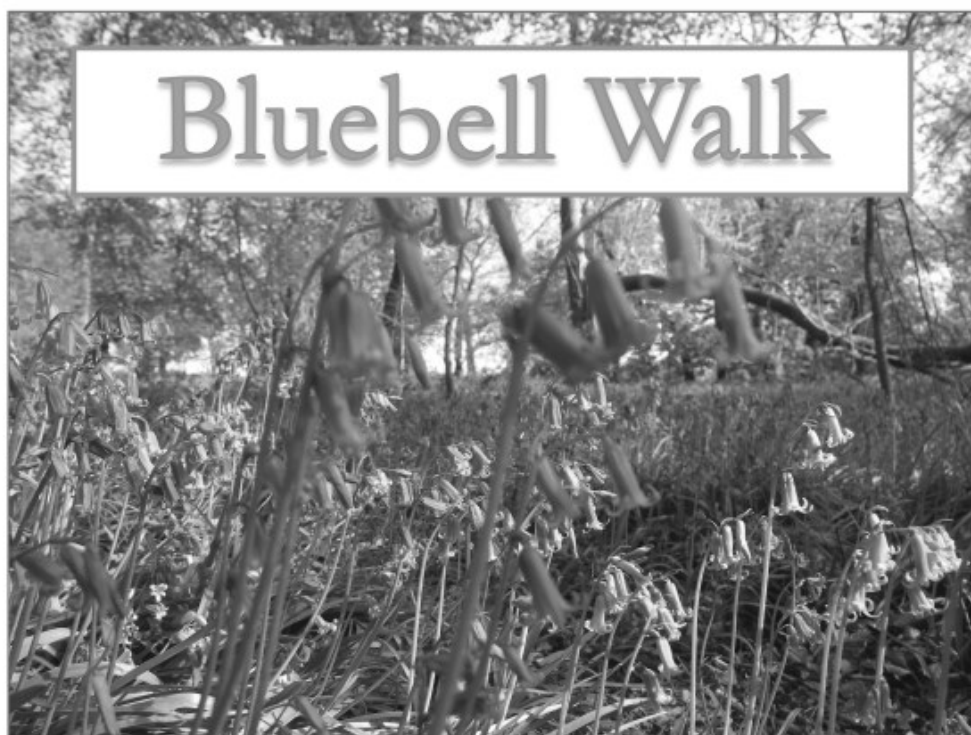






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## **LICHFIELD WILDLIFE GROUP**



**A guided walk at Piggott's Bottom  
Reserve led by Peter and Lin Norbury  
Saturday 29 April 10:00 a.m.**

**Thorley's Hill, Upper Longdon WS15 4LW**

**Meet in the car park.**

**Free admission / Donations welcome**

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

**Contact (01543) 257812**



[www.facebook.com/lichfieldwildlifegroup](http://www.facebook.com/lichfieldwildlifegroup)

## 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 the pages are turned twice a week, so that names are visible through the glass on the date of their death. It costs £10 to insert a name.

Please complete this form and return it to

✉ Parish Office, St Michael's Church, Church Street, Lichfield, WS13 6ED

✉ office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk

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 'PCC of St Michael and St Mary'

If you wish to pay by bank transfer the details are

Bank: Lloyds

Sort Code: 30 95 04

Account Number: 00114488

Please label your payment: **MEMBOOK** follow by your surname

# *From the Registers*

<b>Baptisms</b>		
St Michael's	26th February	Florence Barefoot
St Michael's	12th March	Benjamin Moulton
St Michael's	12th March	Samuel Moulton
St Michael's	12th March	Melanie Moulton

<b>Weddings</b>		

<b>Funerals</b>		
St John's	22nd February	Patricia Tomkinson

## **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**



# Bible Readings

**Sunday 2nd April**

**Palm Sunday**

**[Red]**

*Liturgy of the Palms*

Matthew 21.1-11

*Liturgy of the Passion*

Philippians 2.5-11

**Sunday 9th April**

**Easter Sunday**

**[White]**

Acts 10.34-43

Matthew 28.1-10

**Sunday 16th April**

**2nd Sunday of Easter**

**[White]**

Acts 2.14a,22-32

John 20.19-end

**Sunday 16th April**

**2nd Sunday of Easter**

**EVENSONG**

**[White]**

Daniel 6.1-23

Mark 15.46-16.8

**Sunday 23rd April**

**3rd Sunday of Easter**

**[White]**

Acts 2.14a,36-41

Luke 24.13-35

**Sunday 30th April**

**Mark the Evangelist**

**[Red]**

Ephesians 4.7-16

Mark 13.5-13

**Sunday 7th May**

**5th Sunday of Easter**

**[White]**

Acts 7.55-end

John 14.1-14

**Sunday 14th April**

**6th Sunday of Easter**

**[Purple]**

Acts 17.22-31

John 14.15-21

## St Michael's Rota – April 2023

Sunday 8.00 am	2 April	9 April	16 April	23 April	30 April
	Brian Smith	Sandy Baker	Brian Smith	Brian Smith	Brian Smith

Sunday 10.00 am	2 April  Palm Sunday	9 April  Easter Sunday	16 April	23 April	30 April
Sidespersons	David Bull Enid Barry	Maureen Brand Mike Jones	Pat Toplis Ted Green	Brenda Liptrot Mike Godfrey	Judy and Mike Godfrey
Reader		Kay Martin	Angela Burgess	Brian Rostill	Mike Godfrey
Servers	Kay Martin	Kay Martin Elizabeth Salt	Kay Martin Elizabeth Allen	Kay Martin Elizabeth Allen	Kay Martin
Intercessor		Elizabeth Salt	Ted Green	Brian Rostill	Trevor James
Coffee	Elizabeth Allen Trish Jones	Anne Watson Sylvia Burkinshaw	Brenda Eley Angela Burgess	Judy Godfrey Sonia Doidge	June Frayn Betty Lyne

Maundy Thursday 7.00 pm	6 April Commemoration of Last Supper	Easter Eve Saturday 7.30 pm	8 April Easter Eve Vigil and Fire
Sidespersons	Ted Green Maureen Brand	Sidesperson	Maureen Brand
Reader	David Shiel	Server	Elizabeth Salt
Server	Kay Martin		
Intercessor	Ted Green		

Sunday 6.00 pm	2 April  Passion Narrative	9 April  No service	16 April  Evensong	23 April  No service	30 April  No service
Sidesperson	Ray Allen		Lyn Shiel		
Reader			Lyn Shiel		

# PROVERBS

## PRAYERS

- *Pardoned*
- *Atoned*
- *Excused*
- *Absolved*
- *Welcomed home*
- *The slate wiped clean*



### Chapter 16.6

If we truly love God, our sins will be forgiven;  
if we show him respect, we will keep away from sin. (CEV)

Love and truth bring forgiveness of sin.

By respecting the LORD you will avoid evil. (NCV)

Be loyal and faithful, and God will forgive your sin. Obey  
the Lord and nothing evil will happen to you. (GNT)

By loyalty and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for,  
and by the fear of the LORD one avoids evil. (NRSVA)

Christ alone is the One who bore my sin when He died on the cross and bears it now while I am alive on earth. Through him, and with steadfast faith in Him, I will be able stand in God's holy presence. Jesus Christ, I thank You that I can face death safe in the knowledge that You're my Saviour. Almighty God, I truly love and respect you and thank you for your promise of forgiveness. I'm grateful that You've promised to keep me away from evil. In Jesus' name, I ask that you send your Spirit to guide me all the days of my life.

*Angie King*

# A prayer for Easter Eyes

My Lord, Jesus,  
You have risen to new life!  
Give me new eyes with which to recognise  
your presence in the world around me.  
Sharpen my vision so that I see beyond the  
ordinary events of each day and into the  
extraordinary reality of your grace.  
Brighten my view of the world with renewed  
hope in the coming of your Kingdom.  
soften my gaze so that I view others with the  
kind of tenderness and compassion you  
showed so  
many.  
May each  
day of this  
Easter  
season  
provide  
glimpses of  
your glory.  
In your  
sacred  
name,  
I pray.

Amen



## A Prayer for Easter Day

Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ has overcome death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's Resurrection may be raised from the death of sin by thy life-giving Spirit; through the same Jesus Christ Our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

- Book of Common Prayer

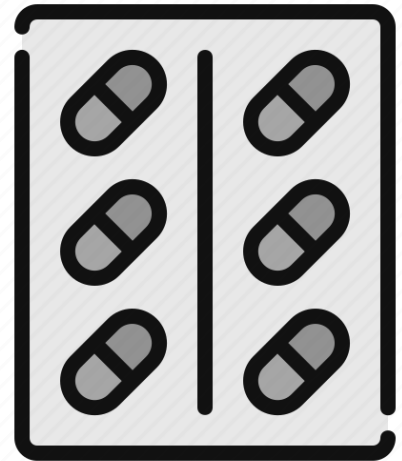
# And Finally...

May I thank everyone at St Michael's for their enthusiastic response to my request for empty tablet Blister Pack's. I currently have 3 full Tesco carrier bags to pass on to be sent for recycling.

Again many thanks for your support and please do continue to bring in your EMPTY blister packs for recycling.

Editor

PS There is also a collection point at St John's now as well.




## ADVERTISING IN THIS MAGAZINE

If you would like to advertise here, the prices per year are:

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