

# THE PARISH MAGAZINE

## June 2023

For we are  
God's servants,  
working  
together

1 Corinthians 3:9

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

**£1**

|  |  |
|--|--|
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| <p><b>Reader: Trevor James</b></p> <p>36 Heritage Court, LICHFIELD,<br/>Staffs, WS14 9ST</p> <p>Tel: 01543 258434</p>  | <p><b>Reader: Alan Toplis</b></p> <p>Streethay Lodge, Streethay, LICHFIELD, Staffs,<br/>WS13 8LR</p> <p>Tel: 01543 414651</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:alan.toplis@toplis.co.uk">alan.toplis@toplis.co.uk</a></p>                                      |
| <p><b>United Benefice Office</b></p> <p>St Michael's Church, Church St, LICHFIELD, Staffs,<br/>WS13 6ED</p> <p>Mon, Tues, Wed &amp; Fri <b>CLOSED Thursdays</b></p> <p>9.00 am to 12.00 noon.</p> <p>Tel: 01543 262211</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk">office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk</a></p> | <p><b>SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR</b></p> <p><b>FOR ST MICHAEL &amp; ST JOHN</b></p> <p><b>Maureen Brand</b></p> <p><b>01543 264880</b></p> <p>For advice about safeguarding or to raise a concern please contact Maureen.</p>                             |
| <p><b>St Michael's Church</b></p> <p>Church Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 6ED</p>   | <p><b>St John's Church</b></p> <p>Green Lane, Wall, Staffordshire, WS14 0AS</p>  |

## Reflection.....

At this year's Diocesan Readers Conference, the main contributor was Bishop John Davies, the former Archbishop of Wales. He proved to be a witty and thought-provoking speaker. He began by saying that he always precedes all public lectures by saying two words – 'Rowan Williams' – because there is always a question about his immediate predecessor as the elected Archbishop of Wales, so he feels that he can disarm such questions by just mentioning the name of his friend and illustrious predecessor, who is still such a very pre-eminent Welsh theologian. Before the lockdown our guest speaker had indeed been Rowan Williams, so we felt very comfortable in the presence of another Welsh theologian!

One of the principal points that John Davies emphasised was our collective attitude to church attendance data. His point was that nowadays people who come to join us come willingly in their desire to build up their spiritual life. He felt that in the past there was a degree to which people attended because of various social and domestic pressures, indeed family tradition or habit. His view is that we are now much more robust and that we know what our faith means to us, and that numbers are not our pre-eminent issue. He also did comment on the huge nineteenth century church building programme, indeed one that even continued into relatively recent times, where churches were built on the assumption of growth in attendance, most of which did not occur. The solitary Religious Census of 1851 confirms the reality of how many people were attending churches in comparison with the available seating capacity.

The other main point that he made was that we all need to be respectful of the other traditions that exist within the wider church,

and within the Church of England in particular. There are aspects of some people's religious observance that some of us might find close to incomprehensible. He cited the example of the use of incense: he explained that he had had trouble with parishes who had reacted strongly to the use of incense by clergy because it was alien to their tradition. For our benefit, he explained the intentions behind its use in practical faith terms, in other words it is an offering. His point to the troubled parishioners was that, whilst it was not part of his practice either, they needed to be respectful because everyone has their own individual faith and way of worshipping, and what works for one person may not work for another, but it does not mean that it is not valuable to that other worshipper.

The outcome of what John Davies was saying was that we should work together – very much as the Swanwick Declaration proclaims – to the utmost, and that this will be best achieved by collaboration on issues which we share. In this parish there are strong interests in the environment, both in terms of our historical valuable Old Churchyard but also in environmental protection and improvement and indeed in recycling [\*]; and we all support the work of the Pathway Project and the Lichfield Food Bank, with all that they achieve for disadvantaged people. Collaboration on a project, which I would define as *Christian Action*, will draw people together and this will also convey a huge message to people in the wider community, that what we do, we do in the Name of Jesus.

*Trevor James*

[\*] My ongoing collection of redundant spectacles, and unwanted hand tools and sewing machines, for Rotary projects in Africa still continues. Please do ask if you wish to contribute or find out more.



# NEWS FROM THE BELLTOWER

## CORONATION PEAL

On Friday 5th May, St Michael's Bellringers successfully rang the **5040 Cambridge Surprise Minor** in 2 hrs and 35 minutes for the coronation of King Charles III.

The ringers were Gillian Eastwood, Paul E Biblio, Alexander P Frye, Stephen W Horton, Andrew V Brown and Paul Jopp.

A team also rang on Saturday 6th May .

The ringers on Saturday were St Michael's own band plus visitors from Lichfield cathedral and Tamworth



Photo—the ringers from Saturday 6th May

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

# 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

4th June

10am St Michael's



## First Steps

Monday 5th June

10am—11.30am

Come and join us at our ...

## MESSY CHURCH

for craft, story, song and food on

**SUNDAY 11TH JUNE**

4.30 – 5.45pm

in St Michael's Church

Ages 0-11 yrs. welcome



## Deadlines!

For July Magazine: Deadline is

**SUNDAY 11th June**

Please send articles to David Shiel

AND the Parish Office

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

[office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk)

**Pew Sheet:**

every Thursday

7:30am

Contact

Parish Office



# DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD

Intercultural mission is about different cultures working together as participants in God's mission through mutual reflection, celebration and interrogation of differences so that all are understood and all grow to promote mission across ethnic, cultural and racial communities.

The goal of intercultural mission is to be intentional about reaching and integrating all people, regardless of their ethnicity and cultural differences, as they love God and love each other, taken from the scriptural base of Matt 28:19 'Therefore, go make disciples of all nations...'

The Revd Mark Poulson reflected on the meaning of intercultural mission in the Church:

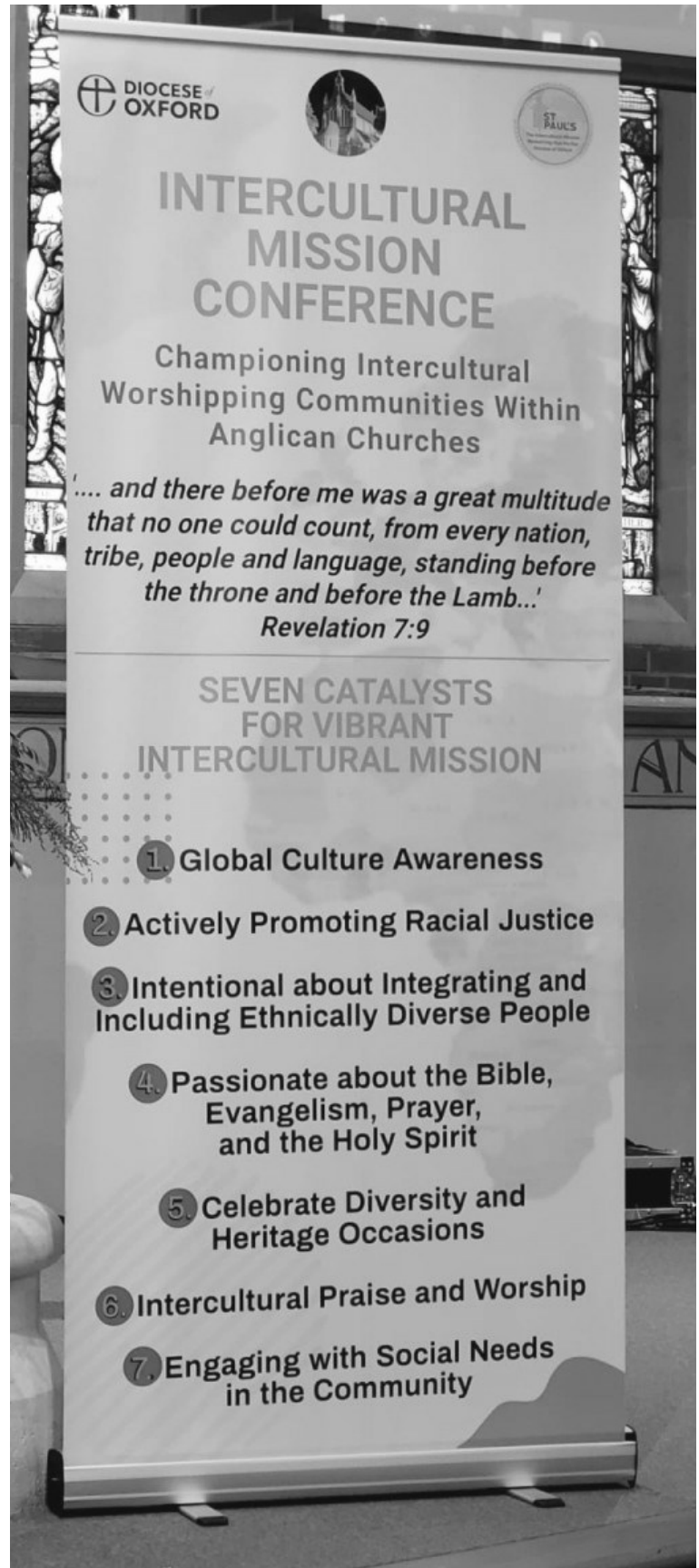
*"Interculturalism is not the same as multiculturalism. Its not about the passive acceptance and tolerance of multiple cultures in one place. It's about the dynamic exchange and interchange of cultural capital, individually and corporately. Its not about a cosy, comfortable appreciation of the food, dress and music of others, its about iron sharpening iron.*

*"The Church as the body of Christ is incomplete without every culture, every people group, every tribe, every language being fully represented."*

Guy Hewitt (Church of England Director of Racial Justice) said "We are a church on the move. We have to journey together to get to salvation together. We must understand the communities we live in, and the church can be bridges or barriers to how people see us. Institutional racism is pervasive and we struggle to unlearn what has been filtered

through us due to colonisation. However there is an ongoing opportunity for reformation and transformation. We as a church need to dare to be different, and not only to apologise for wrongs committed in the fathers name but to learn from that wrong doing to be able to deliver on the Great Commission to all."

It was a joyful and inclusive event, with all attendees joining up to the new Anglican Network of Intercultural Churches, which launched at the conference. Together with a new intercultural mission journal, The Oxford Journal for Intercultural Mission, the ANIC is a resource for churches with congregation or in parishes with UKME or Black Asian Minority Ethnic membership. This resource hopes to build a network of good practice of intercultural mission and worship across the country. It will provide a platform for churches with diverse communities to learn from each other and grow. Membership whilst not limited to these churches, and is open to monocultural churches, who may want to use some of the tools and experience identified to adapt worship delivery or learn from the experience of others.





# THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

## **Archbishops' Commissions - Reimagining Care *Values and Principles***



### **Universal**

Most of us will need some kind of care and support at some point in our lives. Longer lives and medical advances mean that social care has become a universal need, no longer confined to a minority of people who too often have been marginalised and invisible. Providing care and support, and paying for it, should involve a shared responsibility across society.

We are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), each of us unique but equal in worth before God. This amazing grace and acceptance of who we are, needs to be reflected in how we see and care for one another as a society.

### **Fair**

The lack of care and support when we need it is an injustice. Our collective failure to act to provide care and support is a sin.

The mission of the church is to carry on the work of Christ Jesus to 'release the oppressed' (Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:18). He identified with the marginalised in society, challenged the authorities, and turned the rules and norms of the day on their head.

This means paying heed to the voices that are seldom heard and taking action to create a system of care that is fair and provides equitable access.

## **Loving kindness**

Love is at the heart of care. It is why we care. To care for and to care about others is to live out Jesus' commandment to "love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34). This love is described in 1 Corinthians 13 and expresses itself in gentleness and kindness, reflecting the nature of God. How we care for one another needs to reflect this love. But to speak of 'love' can be a loose concept; the Christian approach to 'love' is rooted deeply in the Jewish idea of 'loving kindness', or hesed. It is about an attitude that is oriented towards the good and flourishing of the other. It is a primarily relational concept. It is not simply used as a one-off act of kindness. Loving kindness is therefore not simply a choice but an obligation to act with justice and kindness towards others over time.

Despite very challenging circumstances, the vast majority of carers both paid and unpaid want to provide good care. Loving kindness is part of the intrinsic motivation that causes people to choose care despite low pay and under-recognition. Loving kindness is a call to wider society to be organised for the long-term flourishing of every person.

## **Trust**

Trust needs to be at the heart of the relationship between carers and cared for. We each know what matters to us and therefore know best what we need, even if we cannot always express it. This means being given power to make our own decisions and deciding what risks we want to take as far as we are able. It also means listening to those who know us best: carers, relatives and independent advocates. We have heard too many examples where individuals had not been trusted, for example, in how they wanted to use their direct payments or in their attitude to risk.

## **Inclusion**

In Christ there are no divisions: "neither slave nor free, nor is there

male and female” to this we could add “neither able-bodied or disabled, neither neurodiverse nor neurotypical, nor is there old and young” (Galatians 3:28 or Colossians 3:11). Yet many disabled and older people face discrimination, both generally and in how they experience care and can feel excluded from churches and communities, from groups or from our workplaces. Disability remains stigmatised in our society. We should challenge ableism and ageism where we see and hear it.

## **Mutuality**

Promoting independence is rightly held up as a positive goal of care and support. Yet the best examples of care and support are based on inter-dependence and reciprocity – the idea that we each give and receive in different ways at different times. Regardless of our age or needs, we value relationships and belonging to community. We are social beings. The early church provides a model of living in community, of mutuality, and interdependence, where everyone has a part to play (1 Corinthians 12:12).

## **Empathy**

Compassion is expressed in helping others in greater need than us. Care flows out of compassion but it can be paternalistic. Doing to others what we think they need, rather than starting with the person, and asking what matters to them.

In the true meaning of ‘compassion’, we get alongside others in their situation, stand or sit shoulder to shoulder, and act as allies. Doing with not for others. This requires care to be based on empathy not sympathy. It requires a deep knowledge and understanding of the other, their hopes, their aspirations, the things they enjoy and the gifts they bring.

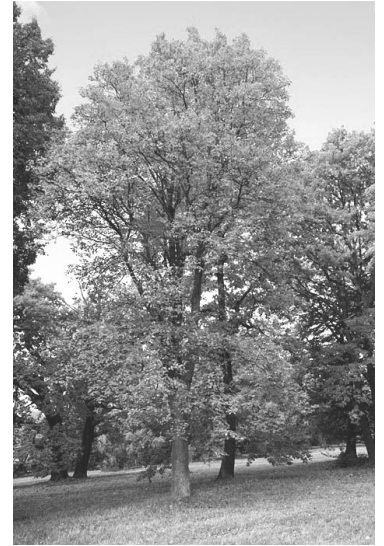
To find out more visit

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/archbishops-commissions/reimagining-care-commission>



# Coronation Tree For St Michael's Churchyard

The PCC have agreed to obtain a tree to **celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III**. The species that has been chosen is a **Wild Service Tree**. This is an English native and is a suitable tree to recognise the work the King has done for the environment for many years; and his commitment to serve the people of our country and his other realms around the World. As Prince of Wales he spoke about Climate Change, use of plastic and the importance of planting trees many years before these issues became everyday concerns. He was also instrumental in encouraging organisations to sow **Coronation meadows to celebrate 60 years since Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation**.



The Wild Service tree is a Springtime stunner. It is fairly rare and is a favourite with wildlife. Wood pigeons soften the seeds for propagation. The tree can reach a height of 25 metres when mature. The bark is brown, patterned with cracked, square plates. It has slender twigs.



The leaves are similar to maple, turning a rich red before falling in Autumn. The flowers form in clusters in late Spring to early Summer. They are pollinated by insects.

Our Churchyard Wild Service tree has been bought from Chew Valley Trees in Somerset. Its height is around 2 and 1/2 to 3 metres. It is container grown so it can be planted in Early Summer, although it will have to be watered frequently.

The PCC decided that members of the Congregation be invited to make a donation towards the cost of the tree, the total amount being around £300. Whatever you are willing to give will be very much appreciated.

Please let me know if you would like to make a contribution.

We look forward to receiving the tree and planting it in the coming weeks.

*Ray Allen 01543 251654*

# Parish Picnic



Come and join us  
for food and fun  
at **St Michael's Church**  
(outside, weather permitting)  
on **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July**  
from **3pm to 5pm**

Donations of sandwiches and cakes gratefully received,  
but mostly, just bring yourselves!



# ***Film Club***

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

***FREE ADMISSION AND REFRESHMENTS***

***Doors open at 2pm***

## **Empire of Light**

*(2022, 15, 1h 55 Drama/Romance)*

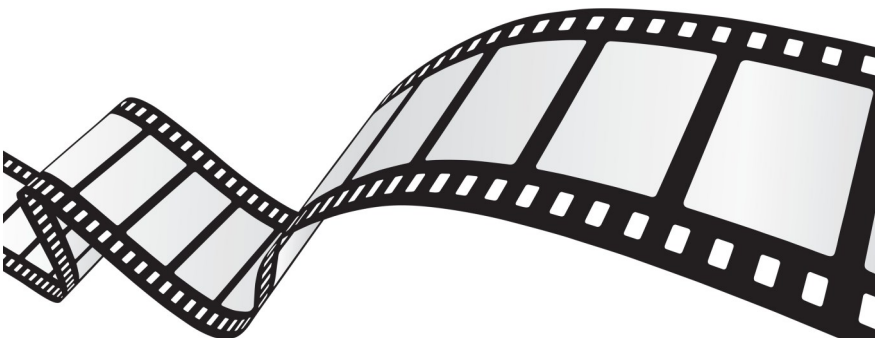
A drama about the power of human connection during turbulent times, set in an English coastal town in the early 1980s.

**Mon 5th June 2.30pm start**

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

**at the interval**

**All welcome.**



**Save the Date:**

**Next Film Club**

**3rd July**

# St Michaels Film Club

15<sup>th</sup> May

## The Movie Elvis Aaron Presley

### Biopic movie

This was on a blue - ray disc, I borrowed from Lynn Rock's collection. On taking it home to have a look at it, I couldn't get on with the sound track, and how the movie was presented. I told St Michaels film club team I was having problems with it and we decided to have a rehearsal after the Wednesday morning service the 10<sup>th</sup> of May. This was a 2hr 39 minutes film. We have never shown a movie that long before, and I was sweating as we were running out of time to get this running correctly with the soundtrack, to show it on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May.

Before I started the movie I told the audience 'if this movie is not to your liking I don't mind if you don't come back after the interval.'

Anyway they did come back. Looking around at the audience their eyes were glued to the screen. The actor who played Elvis, Austin Butler, blew us all away as Elvis, from the singing to the recreation of the iconic moments and the engaging performances his acting was insane!

Tom Hanks, who plays one of the most despicable character he's ever attempted, played Colonel Tom Parker.

I found this movie highly compelling to watch. After the movie ended a lady came up to me saying I'm so please you have shown this Elvis film. My mother who's in her late 80s is so glad she came to St Michaels film Club.

*Romulus Plimmer*

# PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION WINNERS



## Primary school:

1st. Gabriel

2nd. Charlotte Adams

3rd. Robin and Elliot McDonagh



## Secondary school:

Will Adams

## Over 16:

1st. John Gallagher

2nd. Sheila Irvine

3rd. Olga Vikhireva



## **Walking Group: Gentleshaw Common, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2023**

Despite the potential threat of rain, a dozen intrepid members of St. Michael's and St John's congregations met outside Ye Olde Windmill Inn, Gentleshaw, about 10:30 a.m. on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, ready to start our walk. For me, even getting to the start had been an adventure into the wilds of the Staffordshire countryside: my Satnav thinking it fun to take me down various single-track lanes to get me to our starting point!

Once we had all foregathered, two of our number (you know who you are!) decided they would deny themselves the pleasures of the 'sometimes muddy' walk and retreated to the alternative option of a drive and a coffee or two, while the rest of us headed across Gentleshaw Common on the start of a two-hour trek.

Walking paths, and gazing over fields that had been in untroubled existence for over a hundred and fifty years, it was amazing to think this area was, in many ways, not very different from what our grandparents or great-grandparents would have seen had they taken a similar walk back in the late 1800s. I do wonder whether my own grandparents would have risked it – my grandmother was notoriously mud-averse, and so would not have appreciated that by 'sometimes muddy,' what was meant was 'practically-always-



muddy-unless-we-are-having-a-forty-degree-heatwave.’ After the rain we’d had in March and up to the previous day before our walk, we had no chance! As we were kitted out in walking shoes, boots or wellies, it didn’t really matter; though I, for one, came a cropper trying to pick my way through one of the muddier spots, known by our leader as ‘the pigs’ walk.’ I slipped and fell onto the bank (the alternative was to fall towards the muddy, smelly stream, so I think I took the better option) – no harm done, except to my pride and some extra mud on my trousers. (I wasn’t the only one to slip, but don’t worry folks: I’m not naming you.)

On our route, we saw gardens full of spring flowers: though, as Chris pointed out, unlike in Lichfield, the woodland bluebells were nowhere near flowering. Here in Gentleshaw, we were higher up than those in the Lichfield Valley, so the temperature was often two degrees colder. Fortunately, the rain had held off and we were walking in pleasant Spring sunshine – though, until right at the end of the walk, it wasn’t so warm I felt like taking my coat off.

We meandered our gentle way, mainly off the roads, which was great for the quartet of dogs that joined us, from the pigs’ walk towards the ‘horsey hamlet,’ where two of our number peeled off to make their own way home. The rest of us climbed our way back up to Gentleshaw Common, which has changed in recent years: saplings that used to be cut down, keeping the land open and ripe for bilberries, are now allowed to sprout and grow so, slowly but surely, more and more of Gentleshaw Common is turning to woodland. However, our return to the Common meant we were close to the end of our walk, and where the thought of a pub lunch kept us (well, me, anyway) going for the final stretch.



I was told pictures of us by or at the pub were not wanted, but I will say we thoroughly enjoyed our lunch (nice big portions, so no-one wanted any dessert!) and the conversation flowed before we all headed off to our various homes ... My Satnav took me back a different way, but along lanes so 'single track' one of them had grass growing up the middle: maybe I need a new Satnav!

Very many thanks to Chris Polhill for designing and leading our walk, and to John for doing the research on the history of how the landscape has, or hasn't, changed. Roll on next month's walk!

by Nigel Oakley







## **WALKING GROUP :**

### **Cannock Chase**

**Date:** Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**Start:** 10.30 a.m.

**Meeting point ;** Rifle Range Corner car park, Penkridge Bank road, Cannock Chase WS15 2UA, Lat long 52.748917 -2003583.

**Walk terrain Details;** This is a walk across the high heathland of Cannock Chase. From the car park we walk to the Trig point, the highest point of the Chase with fine views towards Rugeley and beyond, we then return via woodlands. The route takes us past the site of the rifle ranges where high embankments mark the site of the ranges.

The walk is about 3 miles on flat terrain on good pathways, however in wet weather walking boots/ shoes are recommended.

As this is a walk across open country we will not be passing any pubs/ restaurants but the village of Milford has an excellent Pub, the Barley Mow, which serves food.

Please inform the Parish Office if you plan to come on the walk so that we don't set off without you.

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

01543 262211

Peter Norbury

[P I norbury@hotmail.com](mailto:P_I_norbury@hotmail.com) 01543 257812



# **SAINT MICHAEL'S CHURCHYARD**

## **WORKING PARTY**

We will be meeting on

**Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

**from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00**

**We will be weeding and dead heading plants in the Tower Beds and Herb Garden; and maintaining our new wildlife hedge.**

**Refreshments (Tea/Coffee/Cake) will be provided during the Mid-Morning Break**

For more information please contact

Ray Allen.

Email: [lesley@existenz.org.uk](mailto:lesley@existenz.org.uk)

Telephone: 01543 251654

# Churchyard Working Party



*The other Tower Bed with busy lizzie and perennial plants.*



*A Tower Bed fully planted for the Summer.*

At our May Working Party we planted a selection of summer Bedding plants in the 2 Tower Beds. We also planted Perennial plants, including heuchera, tiarella and a perennial wallflower, the beautiful variety called Bowles Mauve.



*Liz Clarke enjoying the Working Party Refreshment Break.*

Liz Clarke has been a Working Party member for a number of years, but, as you may know, she will be leaving Lichfield quite soon and going to live in the Yorkshire village of Easingwold. I thank Liz for her valued work in the Churchyard which I know she has enjoyed. She particularly likes clearing overgrown graves and revealing the many interesting inscriptions.

We also did a lot of weeding of the herb garden. It is now 2 years since it was first established and, although we have had the occasional casualty, most of the plants are growing well. There are over 30 of them. Some are wild, others are garden herbs, but all

have culinary or medicinal uses or both! There are 7 plants in flower now, with more to come as the summer progresses. Do look at the herb garden when you are in the Churchyard. It can be seen behind the Notice Board next to the long path to the New Churchyard.

## **Herb Garden Plants.**



Chives.



Sweet Woodruff.



Wild Strawberry



Borage.



Wallflower.



Jack By The Hedge.



Viola.

## NOSTALGIA, A THING OF THE PAST

After reading my article about Boscobel House in the March Magazine, Betty Lyne and I had an interesting conversation after the 10am service about King Charles II's escape from Cromwell's Roundheads after his defeat at the Battle of Worcester in 1651 and his subsequent seeking of refuge at Boscobel House and amongst his supporters in the surrounding area.

Betty recalled that, at the start of her early teaching career, she taught at a primary school at Lapal in Worcestershire. The site of the school, Howley Grange Primary School, was in a centuries old Grange or farmhouse used as a grain store by the monks at nearby Hales Owen Abbey. The Abbey was closed by Henry VIII in 1539.

The Grange, due to its popularity with the local owl population, was affectionately known as '**Owley**' Grange [*perhaps a precursor to J K Rowling's Hogwarts School in the Harry Potter books—who knows?*]

After the Abbey's closure the farm prospered and was in agricultural use until , the now renamed, '**Howley**' Grange was picked as the site of Howley Grange School.

Howley Grange was first linked with King Charles II's flight after the Battle of Worcester on account that he took refuge there, hiding in a large chimney whilst the Roundheads conducted a thorough search of the house. In their enthusiasm they thrust 15 foot pikestaff up the chimney; fortunately, it missed the Royal fugitive but disturbed an owl, which flew off unharmed, unaware that it had saved the sovereign's life.

The pikestaff is still thought to be somewhere within the confines of Howley Grange but, despite many searches down the centuries, it has remained hidden: however during recent building works a Civil War era cannon-ball was unearthed in the school's playground—*who knows what other secrets Howley Grange School is hiding?*

But back to Betty's recollections of her early teaching career at Howley Grange Primary School, they make fascinating reading when



we cast our minds back to our own early school days and read some of the strange going-on in today's schools. (NOT St Michael's I might add).

[Nostalgia is certainly NOT a thing of the past, but something which can keep our minds aware and helps us to remember the happy times of our early lives and school days.]

*Editor*

## **MY EARLY YEARS IN TEACHING (Elizabeth Lyne)**

I told you how I had taught at a school built on the site of one of his hiding places. A pike had been found in the walls and my head master tried to find out more but could find no recent evidence after a possible sighting in the 1930's. I was invited to the schools 50th anniversary and asked for my memories, being the only original member of staff still alive. In view of the difficulties faced by modern day teachers we thought this might be an amusing example of the good old days.

### **Howley Grange**

In 1956 I took up my first teaching post in the reception class at Lapal, a popular and well run school. I hardly ever saw the rest of the infants who were accommodated at the chapel in Carters Lane. Some of the juniors were in mobile classrooms in the playground, most classes were over 40 and the new school in Howley Grange was eagerly awaited. I had a new intake each half-term and had to have about 12 children literate and numerate at Christmas and again at Easter to move up. In all 72 children passed through the reception class that year. A testing start to a career.

Parents of the infants were given the option to move their children to the new school in 1957 and Lapal was zoned. So many took up the option that Lapal would have been overstaffed and someone had to go. Last in was first out but to soften the blow I was offered the same position at Howley Grange and moved over the road with the children. The school was far from ready, opening was delayed a day or two but

even then it was a building site with almost as many workmen as children. The floors in the downstairs classrooms were not laid so we went upstairs. The banisters were incomplete, only having a handrail and a small child could have slipped through. What price health and safety? We relied on common sense and obedience and there were no accidents.

There was no hot water or electricity and one day I found a child swinging from side to side holding cables which hung out of the wall. Mr. Cook, the head came early to do paper work but got shut in the toilet until I arrived and heard his shouts. The door handle had been put on one side but not on the other.

Mr. Cook taught the 7-8yrs, I had the Reception class and Mrs. Lumb took the older infants. There was no ancillary staff so whoever heard the phone ran to answer it and any one of us would greet visitors or interview prospective parents. We had a lot of visitors to see the building as its design was considered unusual and interesting.

Our first care-taker was Mr Howells who was full of enthusiasm for the job. In the week before opening he and Mr.Cook made many plans. The Howells family were so excited with their brand new bungalow but on the second day of term we arrived to learn that Mr. Howells had died in the night. His wife carried on for a while until the Hampton family took over.

Dinners were brought in as the kitchen was not complete and the beautiful wood block floor in the hall had not been laid. For some months I had a ginger beer plant in the kitchen which I would bottle up every week and sell to the parents for school funds. It was quite a disappointment when I had to give up the kitchen to the dinner ladies.

There was never a problem with the pond and the frog spawn was useful for biology lessons. At first we had some white ducks given to us by the architects but one night the care-taker forgot to lock them up and the fox got them. Some years later when we had students on teaching practice one of them brought in an incubator full of duck eggs and it was fascinating to watch them hatch out. As the ducklings



needed warmth a lamp was fixed up in the stockroom over a makeshift pen. The smell was horrible but they thrived. I cannot remember where the ducklings went eventually. We didn't want to keep them for another fox.

Mr. Cook liked the idea of keeping animals but he didn't think it through very well. He would get the rabbits, tortoises or hamsters before their accommodation was ready. There would be a lot of muttering from the care-taker who was not an animal lover and was expected to perform miracles with wire netting and wood. Hamsters lasted longest but they were forever getting out of their cages and making nests behind the built in cupboards.

The playground had a lot of rubble strewn about until the builders finished and the playing field was roughly ploughed so children had to play carefully. When Mrs. Lumb had migraines I was some times at a loss as to how to manage 2 classes. It was a squash in one room and the playground awkward so once or twice I took them to the play area behind the pub at the end of the road. Far from complaining the parents thought this amusing, coming to their doors and offering to put their toddlers on the end of the crocodile.

In summer 1958 we were officially opened although we felt we had been there for ever. Staff numbers increased with Mr. Britten and Mrs. Woodhouse in the junior school which meant Mr. Cook could concentrate on being a headmaster. Next came Miss Hanson in the infant department and we were nearly complete. By the 1960's we had 8 classes and some young teachers fresh from college. At last there was someone who thought I was experienced.

Every day the children would have some form of exercise, games, PE or music and movement. There were not many fat children in the school. Several teachers were musical and taught singing. Mrs. Woodhouse devised a "pageant" at Christmas time which was so popular that it became an annual event. The whole junior school took part in telling the Nativity story, some making up the choir and the less musical (growlers) as the cast. The top class children chose the

main parts, Mary, Joseph, Gabriel and the kings. Children who could sit still entered first as shepherds and angels. Fidgets arrived later in the kings retinue. We performed in the evening and it fell to me to lead the children by torch light from a classroom to the hall. There was so much glass in the building that if we had lit the corridors the effect in the hall would have been ruined. (Health and safety was still to come) Mrs. Woodhouse's daughter and son-in-law worked for Sandersons and the cast was dressed courtesy of discontinued lines with crowns of their finest flock wallpaper. Even now a look at their sample books brings back memories.

On the morning of Harvest festival the children brought fruit, flowers and vegetables, often grown by their fathers. This would be arranged artistically in time for a service conducted by the three local clergy. After school it was unarranged and the mothers came to buy it back and swell the school funds.

Sports days were highly competitive with the juniors in 4 houses named after the hills we could see from the first floor. Romsley, Frankley, Clent and Walton. We also had some good sports teams and competed against other local schools. I found that unwilling girls could spoil games for the keen ones so I stayed after school to play rounders and netball with those who wanted to play. If there were not enough girls the boys would complete the numbers and it did wonders for the girls games and they could throw and hit as strongly as the boys. This quite terrified the opposition and we returned triumphantly from some matches with scores of 30 rounders to 1.

It was good to have some triumphs because we were always regarded as inferior to Lapal. Critics pointed to our smaller number of 11plus passes not thinking that we had fewer children to enter and in any case Lapal had more children from professional class parents.

By the time our roll had reached 200 we qualified for a school secretary but only part-time. How much more useful she could have been in the early days. With children from 5 to 11, a full complement of teaching staff, 2 dinner ladies and a part-time secretary we were complete.

# Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Diocese of Lichfield

## THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF CHANGE

For the past two decades, Mothers' Union has been working to promote literacy and education in Burundi, with a particular focus on empowering women. Naomi Herbert tells us more

In 2017, Claudette Kigeme, MU Provincial Coordinator visited a remote community in the Diocese of Buhiga, in the northeast of Burundi. She found that members were extremely poor. Their clothes were stiff with dirt; the children were almost naked.



This changed after participating in MU's literacy programme. Community members and their children are now clean, wearing nice clothes and shoes. The programme's participants were overjoyed to meet with the MU Burundi team during a visit conducted as part of a longitudinal study, which took place in September 2022.

This identified the most important impacts of the programme.

- Promoting literacy and education
- Allowing members to become lay leaders in their churches and develop a great appreciation for their mother tongue
- Transforming the lives of over 144,000 participants, particularly women, by empowering them and improving their status in their households, communities and society
- Improving the lives and wellbeing of 1,280 communities, including through increased income, improved hygiene and cleanliness, and increased access to education
- Promoting social inclusion and reducing conflict within families

One MU coordinator in the Diocese of Makamba noted, 'It opened the eyes of the participants... they started to question some cultural values that hindered girls' education.. women are no longer powerless.. they have dignity.'

***I have many things to say, let us clap for MU as they've done so many things in our life. Before we were sick, but now I am healthy. I used to be bitter, but now I'm sweet. – Joyce, literacy programme participant***

Joyce used to be in constant conflict with her husband. With the support of other women in the group, she took out a loan and bought rabbits and mice. She joined a family planning association and became a leader of a women's association. With the help of collective loans, she was able to buy a cow.

'I used to fight a lot with my husband, so that even the neighbours couldn't sleep well. Now we live in peace and are very happy.' On the parenting training, she says, 'I never planned to send my daughter to school, but now I see that it is important for my daughter to go.'

Significant progress has been made in breaking down barriers to women's leadership, increasing household decision making power for women, and challenging traditional gender roles that assign care work to women and girls. Women also have improved access to productive resources, leading to increased household income and financial sustainability.

The programme's flexible approach means it can evolve over the years, with transformative results. It has promoted social inclusion, particularly for minority groups, and has also helped to promote peace, reducing conflict within communities.

Directly benefitting 1,280 communities, the MU programme has also affected many more, through the ripple effect of the change, empowering women, improving gender relations and transforming communities.

## **A CHANCE TO STAND OUT**

**'The programme provides a space that not only empowers the participants but also provides room for men to support gender equality. It brings joy to all that interact with it and makes you believe that there are no boundaries for personal growth and development as well as spiritual empowerment... it helps to secure your rights and to defend them... it helps you express yourself freely... May this programme inspire others to the justice of gender equality and women's empowerment and to the world we all hope for, underpinned by faith in action.'**

*Nite Tanzarn, independent evaluation consultant*

## 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.

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Age at Death:

Name of Contact (in case of any problems or queries)

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If you wish to pay by bank transfer the details are

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Sort Code: 30 95 04

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

# *From the Registers*

| <b>Baptisms</b> |            |                |
|-----------------|------------|----------------|
| St Michael's    | 30th April | Maggie Brown   |
| St Michael's    | 30th April | Sydni Doyle    |
| St Michael's    | 30th April | Franklin Doyle |

| <b>Weddings</b> |            |                         |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------------|
| St Michael's    | 22nd April | Simon Weldon and Stacey |

| <b>Funerals</b> |            |   |
|-----------------|------------|---|
| St Michael's    | 27th April | Phillip Goodwin<br>(interment of ashes) |
| St Michael's    | 4th May    | Jude Keogh<br>(interment of ashes)      |

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# Bible Readings

**Sunday 4th June**

**Trinity Sunday**

**[White]**

Isaiah 40.12-17, 27-end

Matthew 28.16-end

**Sunday 25th June**

**Birth of John the Baptist**

**[White]**

Galatians 3.23-end

Luke 1.57-66, 80

**Sunday 11th June**

**Barnabas the Apostle**

**[Red]**

Acts 11.19-end

John 15.12-17

**Sunday 2nd July**

**Peter and Paul Apostles**

**[Red]**

Zechariah 4.1-6a, 10b—end

Matthew 16.13-19

**Sunday 18th June**

**2nd Sunday after Trinity**

**[Green]**

Exodus 19.2-8a

Matthew 9.35-10.23

**Sunday 9th July**

**5th Sunday after Trinity**

**[Green]**

Romans 7.15.25a

Matthew 11.16-19,25-end

**Sunday 18th June**

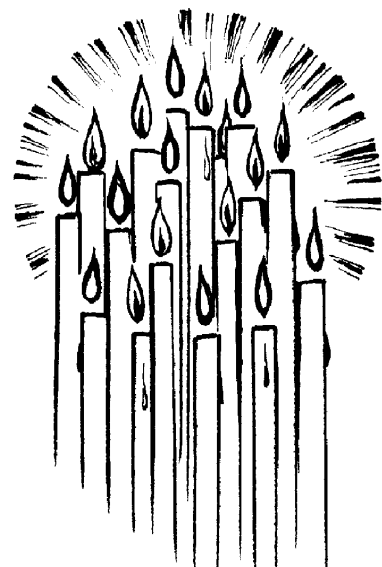
**2nd Sunday after Trinity**

**EVENSONG**

**[Green]**

1 Samuel 21.1-15

Luke 11.14-28





# St Michael's Rota – June 2023

| <b>Sunday<br/>8.00 am</b> | <b>4 June</b> | <b>11 June</b> | <b>18 June</b> | <b>25 June</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                           | David Bull    | Brian Smith    | Brian Smith    | Brian Smith    |

| <b>Sunday<br/>10.00 am</b> | <b>4 June</b>                  | <b>11 June</b>               | <b>18 June</b>                | <b>25 June</b>               |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
|                            | <b>Family Praise</b>           |                              |                               |                              |
| <b>Sidespersons</b>        | Maureen Brand<br>Mike Jones    | Judy and Mike Godfrey        | Brenda Liptrot<br>Ted Green   | Viv and Stephen Oliver       |
| <b>Reader</b>              |                                | Nigel Oakley                 | Brian Rostill                 | Kay Martin                   |
| <b>Servers</b>             |                                | Kay Martin<br>Elizabeth Salt | Kay Martin<br>Elizabeth Allen | Kay Martin<br>Elizabeth Salt |
| <b>Intercessor</b>         |                                | Nigel Oakley                 | Brian Rostill                 | Elizabeth Salt               |
| <b>Coffee</b>              | Elizabeth Allen<br>Trish Jones | Brenda Eley<br>Lesley Allen  | June Frayn<br>Betty Lyne      | Judy Godfrey<br>Anne Whatson |
| <b>Healing</b>             |                                |                              |                               | TBA                          |

| <b>Sunday<br/>6.00 pm</b>  | <b>4 June</b>     | <b>11 June</b>    | <b>18 June</b>  | <b>25 June</b>    |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
|                            | <b>No service</b> | <b>No service</b> | <b>Evensong</b> | <b>No service</b> |
| <b>Sidesperson</b>         |                   |                   | Ray Allen       |                   |
| <b>Reader</b>              |                   |                   | Ray Allen       |                   |
| <b>Communion Assistant</b> |                   |                   |                 |                   |

## PROVERBS

## PRAYERS



### Proverbs 12:5

The thoughts of the righteous are just; the advice of the wicked is treacherous. (NRVSA)

Honest people will treat you fairly; the wicked only want to deceive you. (GNT)

Good people have kind thoughts,  
but you should never trust the advice of someone evil. (CEV)

The thoughts of those who are right with God can be trusted, but the words of the sinful are false. (NLV)

### Proverbs 17:23

The wicked accept a concealed bribe to pervert the ways of justice. (NRSVA)

A wicked judge will accept a bribe, and that keeps justice from being done. (ERV)

A wicked *man* takes a gift in secret to pervert the paths of judgment. (JUB)

### Proverbs 21:3

To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice. (NRVSA)

Clean living before God and justice with our neighbours  
mean far more to GOD than religious performance. (MSG)

Do what is right and fair.

That is more important to the Lord than animal sacrifices. (ICB)

| Related Reading      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Old Testament</b> | Deuteronomy 16:18-20 ,<br>Isaiah 1:16-18 |
| <b>Apocrypha</b>     | Wisdom Chapter 8                         |
| <b>New Testament</b> | Luke 11:41-43                            |

Heavenly Lord, thank You for continuing to teach me Your ways.  
I know that You are a righteous God and that You hate the evil doing  
of people on earth. You want us to be righteous and just, standing up  
for what is right and fair at all times. Help me to always remember  
that only You are the one who ultimately judges mankind.

Jesus, You taught us not to repay evil with evil but instead to live at  
peace with everyone. Help us to unite together and be of one  
accord.

Lord, send your Spirit to help us to become more like Jesus in  
everything we do and say, every day of the week, not just on  
Sundays. I ask this in Jesus' name.

*Angie King*

And Finally

## Leafy letters

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in the gaps  
for these  
common  
trees?



Answers in the July Issue  
*Editor*

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