

# THE PARISH MAGAZINE

## September 2021



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

**85p**

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| <b>Rector:</b>   | <b>Curate:</b>   |
| <b>Associate Minister (NSM Part-time):<br/>The Revd. Ruth Bull</b><br>36 Broadlands Rise, LICHFIELD,<br>Staffs, WS14 9SF<br>Tel: 01543 252123<br>Email: <a href="mailto:dkbrlcb@hotmail.com">dkbrlcb@hotmail.com</a> | <b>Assistant Minister (PTO)<br/>The Revd. Jeyan Anketell</b><br>7 Wissage Lane, LICHFIELD,<br>Staffs, WS13 6DQ<br>Tel: 01543 268897<br>Email: <a href="mailto:jeyan.anketell@ntlworld.com">jeyan.anketell@ntlworld.com</a>   |
| <b>Assistant Minister (PTO)<br/>The Revd Chris Baker</b><br>15 Saddlers Close, Lichfield, Staffs. WS14 9ZW<br>Tel: 01543 256320<br>Email: <a href="mailto:C.J.Baker@bham.ac.uk">C.J.Baker@bham.ac.uk</a>             | <b>Assistant Minister (PTO)<br/>The Revd. Stephen Barton</b><br>1 Seckham Road, Lichfield WS13 7AN.<br>Tel: 01543 257692   |
| <b>Assistant Minister (PTO)<br/>The Revd Christine Polhill</b><br>Little Hayes, Beaudesert, Cannock Wood, Staffs<br>WS15 4JJ<br>Tel: 01543 674474  | <b>Reader: Lesley Allen</b><br>21 Boley Close, LICHFIELD,<br>Staffs, WS14 9AR<br>Tel: 01543 251654<br>Email: <a href="mailto:lesley.allen21@googlemail.com">lesley.allen21@googlemail.com</a>  |
| <b>Reader: Phil Clayton</b><br>23 Follows End, Burntwood, Staffs, WS7 3QZ<br>Tel: 01543 682141<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:phil@phil-clayton.uk">phil@phil-clayton.uk</a>   | <b>Reader: Trevor James</b><br>36 Heritage Court, LICHFIELD,<br>Staffs, WS14 9ST<br>Tel: 01543 258434  |
| <b>Reader: Alan Toplis</b><br>Streethay Lodge, Streethay, LICHFIELD, Staffs,<br>WS13 8LR<br>Tel: 01543 414651<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:alan.toplis@toplis.co.uk">alan.toplis@toplis.co.uk</a>                      |  |
| <b>SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR<br/>FOR ST MICHAEL &amp; ST JOHN<br/>Maureen Brand<br/>01543 264880</b><br>For advice about safeguarding or to raise a<br>concern please contact Maureen.                               | <b>United Benefice Office</b><br>St Michael's Church, Church St, LICHFIELD, Staffs,<br>WS13 6ED<br>Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri <b>CLOSED</b> Thursdays<br>9.00 am to 12.00 noon.<br>Tel: 01543 262211<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk">office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk</a> |
| <b>St Michael's Church</b><br>Church Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 6ED  | <b>St John's Church</b><br>Green Lane, Wall, Staffordshire, WS14 0AS   |

## Reflection.....

### ***'One more step along the world we go...'***

When I said 'Goodbye' to the children in school on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2020, little did we know that we were entering into the first of three lockdowns and all that Covid-19 would bring. At that point the key message to the children was that they 'belonged' to St Michael's and that they were going to be making history. I asked them to draw on our school values: belonging, friendship, respect, forgiveness, perseverance and courage.

### ***'From the old things to the new...'***

Reflecting on Lockdown 1, it was an adventure. Everyone was in new territory; the streets were silent, birdsong could be heard, the Peak District hills could be viewed from my bedroom window. Aside discovering new gems of footpaths in and around Lichfield on daily walks, we all discovered new ways of working and mastered new skills: teaching remotely, exercising with Joe Wicks, creating videos, meeting on Microsoft Teams, working with a maximum of 8 children at a time in school. School was eerily quiet and rooms at home became our new 'work spaces'.

### ***'As we travel through the bad and good...'***

Then came June 1<sup>st</sup>, when we were able to open school more widely. At this point some of our Reception and Year 1 children were able to join the critical worker children who had been in school throughout Lockdown 1. Sadly, we had no capacity to welcome back our Year 6 children, which was a huge disappointment and frustration to staff, parents and children alike. At this point things became more challenging. All staff were working back in school daily, teaching classes of 8 children and then interacting remotely with the children in their own classes not in school. Wherever possible learning took place outdoors and indoors the children had their own assigned desk with resources. Learning both in school and at home was so different.

Throughout though we saw immense creativity on the part of the staff and the children.

***'Give us courage when the world is rough, keep us loving though the world is tough...'***

September saw school open fully, but with very different routines and ways of working. Every class formed its own bubble, unable to interact with any other class. Children sat in rows facing forwards, with their own assigned seat and resources. They even had to eat lunch in their set place in the classroom. The playground and the field were zoned so that even outside the children remained in their class bubble and allocated zone. Handwashing and hand sanitising became a core task with additional cleaning at the end of every session. (It's amazing how many steps and active minutes trigger on your Fitbit with all the cleaning!) Heartbreakingly for St Michael's, no singing was allowed, not even outdoors!

***'Leap and sing in all we do...'***

The children returned to school demonstrating an amazing resilience and positivity. They were clearly happy to be back with their friends, even if school life was alien to how it had been previously. Whilst no singing was allowed, the children's positivity energised staff, who were extremely anxious and on another steep learning curve. During the Autumn term we did have to isolate several classes, which required us developing our remote learning programme. Teachers were back to overseeing learning from their own homes.

***'Round the corners of the world I turn, more and more about the world I learn...'***

January 2021 saw Lockdown 3 close schools again to all but critical worker children. This time we were overwhelmed by the number of critical worker children needing places and had to prioritise those children where both parents were working away from home. At this point we reviewed our remote learning offer, with teachers creating

videos at home and running daily Teams sessions with their classes. In each year group, one teacher was in school teaching the critical worker children and the other was at home overseeing home learning. Lockdown 3 was the toughest period for us as a school, but we emerged in March and welcomed all children back into school. As restrictions eased in wider society from May, we remained in our bubbles, but we did manage to hold our Year 6 Leavers service in church. Many thanks to Chris Baker, Ruth Bull and Richard Brooks for making this happen and to those who helped behind the scenes.

***'And it's from the old we travel to the new...'***

As I write, September should see us returning more or less to our pre-Covid ways of working and learning. There will be no bubbles, no requirement for whole classes to self-isolate, and we will be able to welcome parents and visitors back into school. It comes with a caveat that if there's a local outbreak, we need to be able to reintroduce all of our protective measures. As a staff, we have all struggled with not being able to meet face to face. We are taking a cautious approach, but it will be good to be able to meet together, even if in smaller groups, for the first time in 18 months. On the last day of term we had our first whole school worship since March 2020. We were all outdoors and it was so good to be together as a school. We are all hoping and praying that this will be the norm in September.

*Helen Robertson, Headteacher*

## **Deadlines!**

For **October** Magazine: Deadline is  
**MONDAY 13th September**

Contact David Shiel  
[shielfamily@gmail.com](mailto:shielfamily@gmail.com)

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

St Michael on Greenhill Lichfield

***The angels keep their ancient places***

A Michaelmas Celebration

**September 26th to**

**October 3rd**



Between our Patronal festival on September 26th and our Harvest on October 3rd, we will be holding a series of events that should appeal to a wide variety of different groups - and to let everyone know that St. Michael's is open for business. The overall title will be “The angels keep their ancient places” and most of the events will be angel themed.

**Worship and Prayer**

Sunday 26/9 8.00 Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

Sunday 26/9 10.00 Holy Communion—Patronal Service (live streamed)

Wednesday 29/9 11.00 Holy Communion for Michaelmas

Sunday 3/10 8.00 Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

Sunday 3/10 10.00 Family Praise for Harvest (live streamed)

Sunday 3/10 6.00 Choral Evensong for Harvest

**For all the Family**

Tuesday 28/9 10.00 School service (live streamed)

Saturday 2/10 10.00 The Angel Trail—an angel themed walk through of the church—with a Macmillan Cake Stall

## **Tours of the church and churchyard**

No charge, but please book a place through the website.

Sunday 26/9 14.30 Tour of the church building

Friday 1/10 10.00 Tour of the churchyard looking at the trees

Saturday 2/10 Tour of the churchyard, looking at the monuments and memorials

## **Evening talks**

8.00pm each evening, both in person in the church, and live streamed via Zoom. No charge, but please book a place through the web site.

Monday 27/9 - Dr. Joanne Allen - Angels in art - five things you didn't know about angels

Tuesday 28/9 - Dr. Trevor James - St. Michael. History and Theology

Wednesday 29/9 – Rev. Dr Stephen Barton - Angels in Scripture

Thursday 30/9 – Rev. Prof. Chris Baker - St Michael's Angels - the 19th century clergy and their parish

Friday 1/10 – Major Ted Green - The Angel of Mons (Spirituality and the Great War)

More details, and any changes to this programme, can be found on the church website .

***The angels keep their ancient places.***

***Turn but a stone and start a wing!***

***'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangèd faces,***

***That miss the many-splendoured thing.***

From "In no strange land" by Francis Thompson



# DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD

## *The Chad Blog*

### **LOVE ACTUALLY**

*Published: 1st August 2021*



Over the past few months, I have been gradually clearing a house which has belonged to my family for 49 years. This has required many hours of physically demanding work - lifting boxes, sorting contents, distributing much loved items to family members and transporting box after box of belongings to the charity shops and furniture recycling places of Shropshire and Wales. One of the great blessings has been the joy of renewing my acquaintance with toys and books and many photographs - memories of the families and communities with whom we have shared our lives. This activity has been physically challenging and time consuming but also emotionally demanding as we have remembered many years of happy family holidays, visits of family and friends and many special events.

As children of God, we are made for relationship and community and it is always good to be reminded of that and to celebrate it, even when it can feel as though we are being overwhelmed by a tidal wave of emotion. I don't mean this in some sort of 'hearts and flowers' way - all of us know that good and healthy relationships and communities, that enable human flourishing, are not easily achieved and take con-



stant attention and commitment, love, patience, resilience, forgiveness and not a little persistence and endurance.

The Rule of St Benedict, which is a particular treasure of my spiritual life, sheds a clear and demanding light on community and relationships.

First, the rule is clear: love costs. It costs the little daily things- serving meals, washing clothes, providing for the needs of others, dealing with each other with generosity and respect.

Second, love makes demands:

- It demands that we use our gifts for our own community.
- It demands that we make relationships a priority.
- It demands that we make community for others.
- It demands generous hospitality of the heart and the hearth.
- It demands that we share of ourselves: our gifts, our thoughts, our time, our resources, with others.

Most of all it demands that we allow, enable and encourage the people in our lives to be who they are called to be and to step into God's call on their lives.

The Benedictine spirituality of community is based on life with others under God, supporting, empowering and learning from one another. May we build such communities and make a place of welcome for all who still need to hear and to know that they too have a place in God's story and a home in God's heart.

*+Sarah*

*Bishop of Shrewsbury*

**ADVANCING IN HARMONY--** *With Thursdays in Black, Mothers' Union is making progress against Gender Based Violence (GBV) and sexual abuse in South Africa says Zonal Trustee Thembsie Mchunu...*

Ending GBV is Mothers Union's priority and the South African based diocese is no exception. The Thursdays in Black campaign, which promotes awareness-raising about GBV and supports victims of abuse and violence, provides support and helps them start a new life.

Thembsie, who joined Mothers' Union in 1978 says 'Victims are stigmatised. To stop this discrimination, we have educated members about abuse and how people can recognise signs of sexual abuse for example. Our next step was to form support groups, where possible, and counsel those who are ready to speak out.'

The Archbishop of South Africa, Thabo Makgoba, and his bishops supported the campaign to encourage people to speak out openly about GBV and sexual abuse. People who had witnessed GBV, perhaps among their friends or relatives, felt able to go public about it and take responsibility.

In South Africa, the extended family often lives together. Most cases of sexual abuse are carried out by relatives, and the majority of GBV by partners. MU members have gone into schools to educate children about abuse and let them know they can speak out and get support. 'Our members ask permission to work with the school, they go and teach the children about abuse, and then they are able to contact teachers to report the abuse' Thembsie explained. Change is slow but she is determined that they will make a difference. Citing the 16 Days of Activism campaign, she said, 'We are campaigning 365 days a year.'

On Thursdays, as well as dressing in black, she and other members visit support groups to find out what supplies or help they might need, such as toiletries and sanitary pads. 'Victims of GBV are often not working and they stay at home. Once they feel enough is enough,

they will just jump out without anything.’ As well as education, supplies and emotional support, Mothers’ Union also helps the groups to find work for the women, to help them get established in a new life.

**AMPLIFYING OUR VOICE** -- After COVID-19, we need to rebuild our sense of community. Mothers’ Union partnership with **/Together**, supports building stronger UK communities....

Is the UK a fatally divided country, and if so, how can we heal those divisions? This question has been exercising increasing numbers in the wake of Brexit and COVID-19. The charity **/Together** was set up in response to the reported rising levels of loneliness and isolation, profound inequality, increasing poverty and divisive political debates. Mothers’ Union works with **/Together** at the grassroots, to spread a message of healing and partnership working to bind communities.

**/Together** message aligns with Mothers’ Union main aims of belonging to a movement for change, and helping build communities where everyone thrives. Backed by the NHS, the Scouts, and organisations concerned with social cohesion such as the Jo Cox Foundation, and with the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, chairing the steering committee, **/Together** has a remit to try and heal divisions with the help of ordinary citizens.

**/Together** wants the UK population to have their say about what will bring people closer, in what is hoped will be the biggest survey since the last census in 2011. **/Together** will be using the survey results to identify ways of creating a closer and more equal society. **/Together** launched in July 2020 with a Thank You event for the NHS response to COVID-19 in which an estimated 14 million people took part.

By sharing the survey information, Mothers’ Union is hoping to encourage members in the UK and Ireland to do their bit by joining the people making constructive suggestions. **/Together**

**To find out more visit**

**<https://www.together-uk.org/>**



**LINKS AROUND THE WORLD** -- Joining up with other faith organisations increases reach...

To increase our impact, working with organisations like Side by Side enable us to be more effective, especially around priorities like ending gender based violence internationally. The Side by Side partnership allows us to join a network of faith organisations spreading God's word internationally and it builds cooperation with other organisations at a global level. It helps us to reach more people, more effectively.

Our partnership with Side by Side informs our work with UNCSW, the UN women's committee. Joining up with other faith organisations, as well as the Anglican community internationally increases our influence. We are all supporting change together.

For example MU's lead in Uganda, Barbara Mugisha, is on a Church of Uganda panel advocating to the government with Side by Side, and letting them know about gender injustice, especially during COVID-19, and pushing for change. It lets people know about measures like our radio project which rescued 25 young women from abuse and the need to expand these protective programmes.

**To find out more visit**

**<http://sidebysidegender.org/>**



# Camas 2021

By the time you read this we will be at Camas, or possibly even be home again. Organising the trip this year has been very difficult, partly because we didn't know for a long time whether it would be on and then by the make-up of the group. We're quite strong this year at 18 – we would have been 19 but Brigid Ray got a late call up as a volunteer staff member and has been there since the beginning of August. As well as Joe Sneddon, the Leader; there are Carley Harvey and Josh Sneddon, as 18-year old Young Leaders; four at 15 and 16; me (now called the Administrator) at somewhat older and the rest are 19-24. Apart from two friends coming for the first time, everyone is an old hand with many trips to Camas under our belts.

That is a factor in the decision to travel by minibus this year. Without young ones to make Family rail cards viable the train fares would have spiralled. Also trains, particularly Scotrail, are very unreliable at the moment. When I did my research on the trip I didn't realise that Joe, at 25 and able to drive an ambulance on a blue light, and Drew Dyson are considered too young to drive a 16-seater minibus. But Frazer Sneddon has kindly offered his services as a driver – he'll take the bus back to his parents near Glasgow while we're at Camas – and with my car we're able to get everyone in. I've made so many phone calls and exchanged so many emails with Calmac Ferries I feel that we're old friends!

We leave at 9 am on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> and return at about 10 pm on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> August. Instead of the usual Camas Family Praise we'll be taking part in the Family Praise on Sunday 5 September, with members of the group talking about their differing perceptions of the trip. This year will be unusual as we aren't allowed to live in community with the staff members in the same way as before, because of Covid rules, but it will still be special.

*Ted Green*

## Midland Sporting Statues

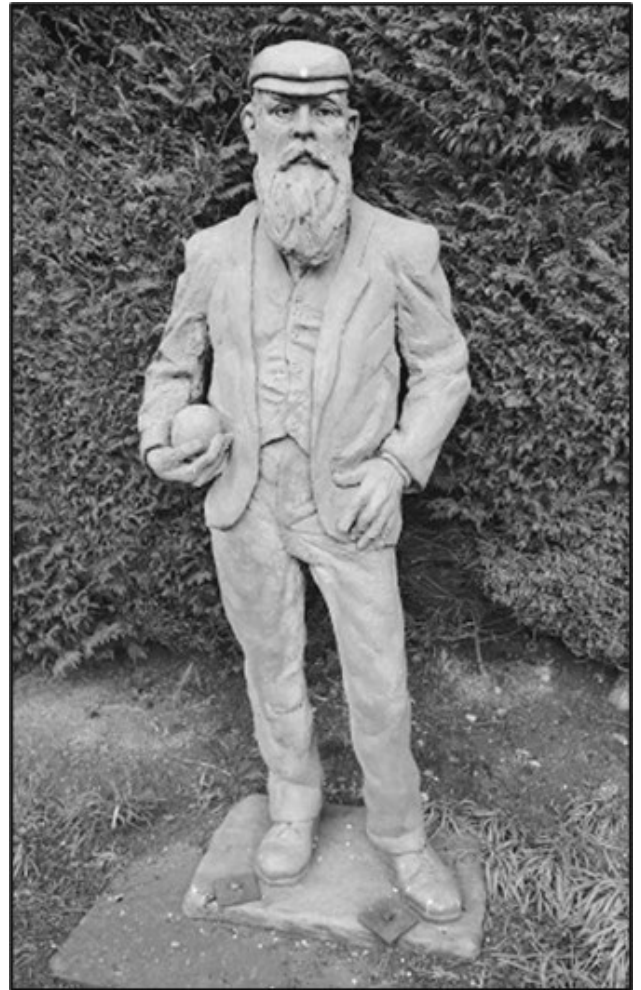
**A**t a recent talk to Lichfield St Chad Rotary Club the topic was features of the present landscape which were likely to become long-term features of the historic sporting landscape. My topic embraced street naming, blue plaques, public house names and statues. The last group attracted a lot of interest and so I have identified five sporting statues for you to enjoy in the Midlands.

**The 'Tipton Slasher'** was William Perry [1819-80] who was the world heavyweight boxing champion in 1852 and his statue, erected in 1993, is to be found in the Coronation Gardens at Tipton.



**Joe Darby** [1861-1937] has a statue at Halesowen Road in Netherton which was erected in 1991 to celebrate his national reputation as a 'spring jumper'. Spring jumpers could jump much further than long jumpers do today because they utilised rotating weights as they jumped. Darby was able to jump across canals!

**W. G. Grace** [1848-1915] is reputedly England's most famous cricketer but he is memorialised in Victoria Park in Stafford, with a statue erected in 1998, for his expertise at bowls. After his first-class cricket career was over, he had become well-known as a bowls player.



**Billy Wright** [1924-94] is celebrated with a statue at the Molineux Football Ground in recognition of his international reputation as a footballer and for his career-long loyalty to Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club.



**Duncan Edwards** [1936-1958] has a statue in the Market Place at Dudley. This is a local tribute to an extraordinarily talented young footballer who died as one of the Manchester United Football Club 'Busby Babes' in the Munich Air Disaster on 21 February 1958 and who has never been forgotten in that town.

There are a few more in the West Midland but these are a good cross-section in terms of the range of the sports involved and also in the motives for erection of the statues, ranging from poignancy to appreciation and sheer celebration.

*Trevor James*



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

## First Steps



**Monday 6th September**

**10am St Michael's**

## Family Praise

**Sunday 5th September**

**10am St Michael's**



Come and join us at our ...

## MESSY CHURCH

for craft, story, song and food on



**SUNDAY 12th September**

4.30 – 5.30pm

in St Michael's Church

Ages 0-11 yrs. welcome

# St. Michael's Churchyard

The season of mists and mellow fruitfulness is here, and the Churchyard does not disappoint with its Autumn bounty. I have spoken many times about brambles spreading and taking over large areas, but it is this time of year that we appreciate those delicious blackberries provided by the bramble plants. There's no getting away from the fact that blackberries are very popular, and we still have many fruits which you are very welcome to pick. Brambles are very good for wildlife, particularly birds and small mammals.



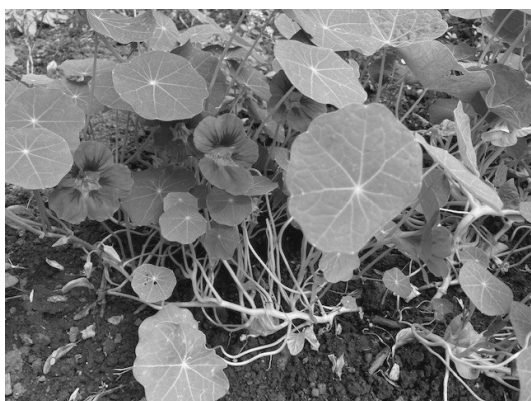
Starting from those lovely white/pink flowers we get the forming of the fruits up to late Summer. They then turn black, and we enjoy them either picked straight from the plant or cooked with apples to make delicious blackberry and apple pies and crumbles. Do enjoy looking for them, picking them and eating them!



Blackberries are of course not the only Churchyard fruits. We have the crab apples. There is a good crop once again this year and we look forward to jars of Maggie and David's crab apple jelly available in the Autumn from the back of Church.

You can see the many fruits if you walk up the Crab apple avenue towards the Church door.

We have a few elder berries growing and, apart from fruit there is a nasturtium plant growing in the Herb Garden. Nasturtium leaves can be eaten as part of a salad or just on their own.



Although we have a number of edible fruits in the Churchyard, it must be remembered that we also have those that are inedible, including one that can be seen in profusion at this time of year. It is the Wild Arum, which is often called Lords and Ladies. It has red berries when it is fully ripe, but it is very poisonous.

With all plants, whether edible or non-edible, the golden rule is: If you are not sure. **DON'T EAT!**

Lesley and I had a lovely walk in the Churchyard at the beginning of August and spotted many wildflowers with lots of bees and other insects getting the nectar. It was pleasing to see moths and butterflies including a Speckled Wood and a Red Admiral. Sparrow hawks are back. Do look



out for these and many other plants, birds, insects and small mammals



as you walk through our beautiful Churchyard.

**The Churchyard Working Party** will be meeting this month on **Saturday September 11th., from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.** We will be continuing our work of cutting down the meadow and scattering some seeds in other parts of the Churchyard to encourage more wildflowers to spread. We will also be sowing a new Wildflower Seed Mix in other areas, in the hope that we get new, smaller meadows next year. Please bring your own food and drink for the **Mid-Morning refreshment Break.**

Ray Allen      251654

## An Unusual Festival

I hope we never experience another Lichfield Festival at St Michael's like 2021, but it's something I'm really glad I've done. Audiences at the church were limited to 60, all but one of our concerts were repeated a few hours later, Festival volunteers had to take a lateral flow test (which I hate!) every day that they were on duty, audience members had to go online beforehand to post their contact details and Brenda Liptrot and her fantastic team had to clean the church between concerts and before services. And yet it was a resounding success.

It's a toss-up whether the performers or the audiences were happier to be there. Top musicians have to practise every day, whether they are performing or not, and it must have been pretty soul destroying to do that month after month without being sure when they would be on a concert platform again. They expressed their pleasure and relief time and time again. Our audiences were delighted to be present for live music again and rewarded the performers with joyous applause. The connection was palpable.

Festival Director, Damian Thantry, and his team of Caroline, Natalie and Suzie had to change plans, often at short notice, as performers got Covid or were 'pinged by the app'. They remained cool, cheerful and charming under fire and deserved a medal for their efforts. One of the joys for Brenda and me is that the Festival team understand the enthusiasm of St Michael's for taking part in the Festival and they encourage us at every turn. Our team includes flower arrangers, stage builders and car parkers as well as the 'cream tea ladies' who became cleaners this year.

Two performers had to be changed at short notice. Alexei Watkins was no longer able to perform on the French horn and was replaced by 19-year old BBC Young Musician finalist Annemarie Federle

(pictured). She only had an hour the previous day to get to know her piano accompanist, Harry Rylance, but to hear them together you would have thought that they had been colleagues for years. Their concert was a fine way to start our festival and gave us all confidence that the complicated plans would work. On the second weekend The Mithras Trio had to be replaced and Harry Rylance brought up his Trio Mazzolini (pictured)



to entertain us. Their first train from London was cancelled and the second was late; they had to change on the train and only arrived 15 minutes before their concert. We have two stage configurations for concerts (2 blocks by 6 or 3 x 4) and I had picked the wrong one! With the whole audience watching, Damian, Harry and I rebuilt the stage at high speed and were rewarded with a round of applause!

Two artists played at many of our concerts: Danny Driver on piano and Chloë Hanslip, on violin. One bonus for me this year was that artists had time to kill between the two performances and I was able to get to know them better. Over 15 years of concerts at St Michael's I've found that performers are ordinary people with extraordinary talents and that was especially so with these two. When I was talking about 'coolness under fire' Danny said that one way to learn that is to become a concert musician. Especially at festivals things change

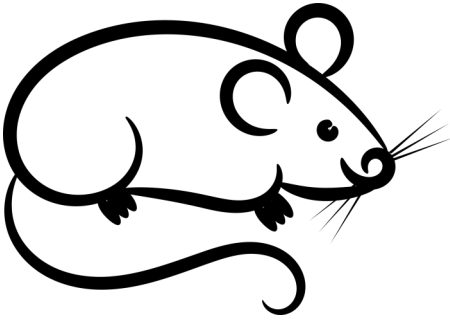
constantly and you just have to smile and get on with it. He even forgave me for introducing him as *Danny Dyer* at one point! I found out that Chloë had a baby early last year. For her, lockdown was a mixed blessing as she was able to have more time with her child than a concert schedule normally allows, but she did miss the audiences. She was home-schooled from the age of ten so that she could concentrate on her extraordinary talent as a musician.

They provided the two highlights of the Festival for me. On the first weekend Danny played Mussorgsky's *Pictures from an Exhibition*. If you haven't heard the last section, *The Great Gate at Kiev*, you've missed a treat. It was a wonderful way to end his concert and the whole audience was silent for a moment as they took in the sheer energy and excitement that he brought to the performance. On the second weekend I sponsored a concert by Danny and Chloë in memory of Caroline (with Dudley and younger choir members as my guests) and they played Beethoven's *Kreutzer Concerto*. It is one of Beethoven's finest pieces of chamber music and they brought it alive for the whole audience. Throughout I kept thinking how much Caroline would have enjoyed it.

I'll end with the message that Damian sent to us after the Festival: "A huge thanks to everyone at St Michael's for the typically warm (in every sense this year!), generous and efficient/organised welcome to the Festival audiences, volunteers and artists, and indeed our own team. I'm extremely grateful and delighted that so many supported us and came into the beautiful space that is St Michael's – and I hope they will be back! - to hear such wonderful music (and it is a superb setting for chamber musicians, without doubt!)."

*Ted Green*

# Food and Drink in St Michael's Church



We now have a pest control contract outside and inside church due to some recent furry visitors!

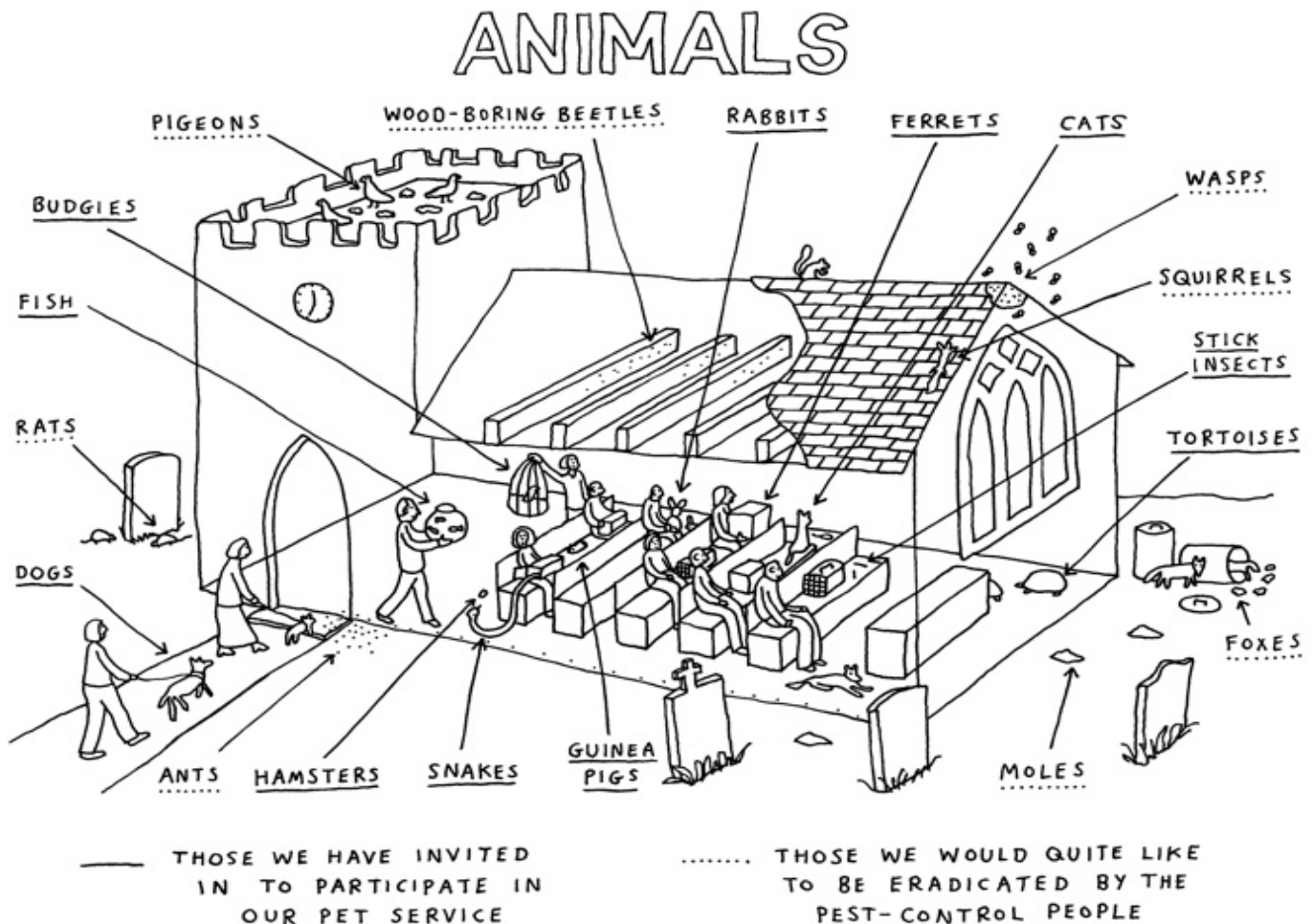
If you consume any food and drink inside church, please ensure that it is cleared away.

There are two vacuum cleaners available – one in the right-hand cupboard in the prayer corner and a second in the first cupboard leading into the vestry, plus dustpan and brushes in the kitchen area.

Thank you for your co-operation.

*Sue and Lyn*

Churchwardens



# News from the Hawksworth Family in Hong Kong:

It has been an incredibly busy month for us.

Our biggest piece of news is that Peter has been headhunted by St. Paul's Girls School (SPGS) in Chengdu, China. SPGS is an international school with an English curriculum with a sister school in London.

Chengdu is situated within the Sichuan province of mainland China and has a population of around 12 million. That's double the size of Hong Kong.

The school itself is brand new and will open January 2022. We plan to leave Hong Kong mid November. Due to travel restrictions we'll have to cross the land border into Shenzhen where we'll quarantine for two weeks. We'll then fly to Chengdu and complete a week of isolation in our new home. We're very much looking forward to our new adventure!

At the beginning of the month Gabriel had an accident at our local beach. He'd managed to climb onto a plastic raft situated on the sand and burnt his feet. The temperature that day was 35c. It resulted in a four day stay at the Queen Elizabeth hospital in Kowloon. Thankfully he didn't need an operation and his feet have healed beautifully.



Due to the low uptake in covid vaccines, the HK government lowered the eligibility age to 12+.

This meant a week after Milo's twelfth birthday

he was able to have his first vaccination. He felt very grown up. The level of care was outstanding. The nurses at every stage took the time to talk to him and explain what was happening.

We continue to explore the surrounding islands. This month we went to the island of Po Toi. We caught the ferry from Stanley, located on the south eastern part of HK island. It takes about 30 minutes to make the crossing and we were rewarded with some wonderful views of the much smaller islands as we travelled. Po Toi itself is a small island with a large fishing community. We didn't have much time to wander around but we did manage a lunch with friends at a wonderful seafood restaurant.



All of the food was fresh from the sea and the flavours were just glorious. The children have become adventurous with their food palates! We enjoyed deep fried squid, steamed prawns, fried noodles and fried rice, and deep fried tofu were just a few of the dishes! The restaurant was on the beach and we had the occasional wave splash up. We'll be going back to the island before we leave to explore the ancient rock carving and rumour has it there's a haunted mansion that's said to be a big hit with the tourists!



The following week we met with some new friends who've not long moved to HK from Sweden. We met for lunch at Shake Shack (They do wonderful burgers and Milo is a big fan of the Caramel milkshakes!) After lunch we took them for a walk through HK garden and over to the botanical gardens. The primate section was reopened to the public again. We got to see some wonderful species of primate. The trip was cut a little short due to a growing electric storm but we all had an enjoyable day!



As a family we have compiled a list of all the places and things we want to visit before we leave. The list seems to grow day by day! We're planning a trip to the Tsz Shan monastery to see the largest statue in HK, Guanyin, standing at an impressive 76 meters tall!

That's all I have to report for now! It's been busy but fun!  
We hope you're all safe and well.  
Take care, much love,  
The Hawksworths xx

# UNFINISHED SERMON

## Anger

### Sermon for Trinity 10 at St Michael's Lichfield, 2021

#### (Eph 4.25—5.2)

Lots of people in the world today are angry. Supporters of Donald Trump were so angry after last year's U.S. election that they stormed the Capitol, claiming that the election was stolen. Anti-vaccers are protesting in the streets of European cities because they're angry at government restrictions on their personal freedom. Climate and environmental activists are angry at the ongoing spoliation of rain forests, the pollution of the seas, and the intransigence of governments and fossil fuel industries. The #MeToo movement embodies the anger of women in a culture of rape and misogyny. The #Black Lives Matter movement expresses the anger of blacks in a culture of racism. The current TV series of *Baptiste* portrays the fear-fuelled anger of white Europeans in the face of the migrant crisis. And all the time, fuel is poured on fires of division by irresponsible use of social media and by the opportunism of populist politicians. Of course, examples could be multiplied.

What 'Paul' says in the Epistle to the Ephesians, which we read from just now, is strangely pertinent and even *counter-cultural* in the kind of world I've described. For what Paul offers is a vision of the world where all that alienates human beings from one another, all that builds walls of separation, has been overcome by God-in-Christ, union with whom by faith makes new community possible. Says Paul: 'For [Christ] is our peace; in his flesh he has broken down the dividing wall, that is the hostility between us ... that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace.' (2.14-15). Now, Paul is talking about the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles. But I think what he says can be extended to all kinds of barriers which divide humanity, barriers constructed usually out of *fear*. And what Paul is saying is that the high calling of the church is to witness by its common life to the unity, the miraculous *oneness*, which God-in-Christ has made

possible.

This brings us to our text for today. If chapters 1-3 of Ephesians are about our oneness in Christ, chapters 4-6 are about *how to realize that oneness in practice*. And one of the pieces of moral wisdom that keeps recurring has to do with *anger*:

Verses 26-27: 'Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil.'

Verses 31-32: 'Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.'

And a little later, when offering wisdom on how to live together in families, he says to fathers: 'Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord' (6.4).

You can see why Paul should make such a big thing about anger: it's because anger is an emotion that threatens the peace—the unity, the harmony—of the community. Because it's addictive, because it tends to make us think negatively, and because it pollutes the social sphere if left unprocessed, anger is an emotion likely to rebuild the walls of hostility previously broken down.

But I guess you might be wondering: *is anger always wrong*? What about '*righteous anger*'? Didn't *Jesus* get angry when he went into the temple precincts and overthrew the tables of the money-changers? Does not the Bible tell of *God* getting angry and acting in judgement on Israel when the people went after other gods?

So, maybe it's time we got *more* angry! Maybe it's the case that we've learnt to *suppress* our emotions, including our anger, to the end that we've become passive, lost our personal agency and neglected our responsibilities! However uncomfortable anger makes us feel, might anger not be a more honest response to what's really going on? When

it's all said and done, is church about being 'nice,' or is it about seeking and doing the truth in love, following the example of Jesus?

But if the church has played a part in suppressing difficult emotions like anger, so has the wider society. I note, for example, a euphemism that's become common when people want to signal disapproval. What we say is, 'I'm *not comfortable* with that'—as if it's a matter of sitting in a lumpy old armchair! What we should be saying, faced with evidence of dishonesty or fraud or complicity in malpractice, is, 'That makes me angry! It's not right! What can we do about it?!'

So the morality of anger is more complex than we first thought! On the one hand, anger can destroy relationships, and it can destroy church life: and that is what Ephesians is mainly concerned about. On the other hand, anger can be a necessary protest against a perceived wrong or injustice. What, then should we say about anger from a Christian point of view?

First, I think we should say that anger is an aspect of our emotional repertoire as human beings and, as such, is neither good nor bad. We could even say that anger is *a sign that someone is alive*—and to affirm it as *a sign of vitality*! Notice that Ephesians says, 'Be angry, but do not sin' (4.26). Now, this is not a command to get angry! What Ephesians means here is, 'If you get angry, do not sin.' The implication is that anger of itself—although it may be difficult to handle well—is not the problem. The problem is how the emotion is expressed, for what reason, and to what end. If it's kept under control and expressed appropriately, and if it's intended to right a wrong, and if it's for the greater good, then anger is a vital part of what it means to be fully human. So some kinds of anger are *good*.

Second, anger as a kind of *energy* provoked by a sense of hurt or danger or wrong has to be expressed in a way that does not contradict *the law of love*. The passion that is anger has to spring from and be shaped by the *greater* passion that is love. This is what we mean when we talk of 'righteous anger.' It's the energy of protest for the sake of

what is true and good. It's the energy of protest against injustice and oppression.

That's the kind of anger God displays. God is like a parent who gets angry with us, his children, when we do wicked things—*because God loves us and wants us to grow up!* Or again, it's the kind of anger shown by Jesus when he witnessed the sickness and poverty of his people and met resistance when he did something about it (cf. Mk 3.5). And of course, it should be the kind of anger shown by the church when we witness child abuse or the oppression of minorities or the cutting back on social services for the vulnerable.

Third, there's real wisdom in the injunction to *put a time limit* on anger: 'Don't let the sun go down on your anger, otherwise you'll make room for the devil!' In other words, don't let it fester and grow, like a malignant cancer. Let it propel you towards seeing and doing the truth, but don't let it dominate your life and become a breeding ground for violence. And *don't rush into it*. Remember how God describes God's *own* emotions to Moses on Mount Sinai: 'The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, *slow to anger*, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation' (Ex 34.6). Being 'slow to anger' is important. It implies that anger is part of a *process of discernment* about the right way to act.

Fourth, we have to learn to discriminate between *types of anger*. There is a difference between anger and *rage*. The ancient philosophers were well aware of this. In fact, they thought of rage as a kind of *insanity*. The great Stoic philosopher Seneca wrote a whole treatise called 'On Anger', and he gives this graphic, wonderfully over-the-top description:

'But you have only to behold the aspect of those possessed by anger to know that they are insane. For as the marks of a madman are unmistakable—a bold and threatening mien, a gloomy brow, a fierce expression, a hurried step, restless hands,

an altered colour, a quick and more violent breathing—so likewise are the marks of the angry man; his eyes blaze and sparkle, his whole face is crimson with the blood that surges from the lowest depths of the heart, his lips quiver, his teeth are clenched, his hair bristles and stands on end, his breathing is forced and harsh, his joints crack from writhing, he groans and bellows, bursts out into speech with scarcely intelligible words, strikes his hands together continually, and stamps the ground with his feet ... it is an ugly and horrible picture of distorted and swollen frenzy ...' (*De Ira* 1.3-5)

It's not a pleasant picture, is it! And what the passage registers is that rage is *anger that has lost control*. And we know the truth of this in our own time. We don't talk about 'road *anger*,' do we? We talk about 'road *rage*,' where car drivers behave towards others in ways that are totally insane.

But if we can distinguish between anger and rage, we can also distinguish between anger and *resentment*. Resentment is a kind of passive aggression. We tend to keep it to ourselves or let it out indirectly through sarcasm or malicious gossip or repeatedly letting people down. Resentment happens when anger is allowed to smoulder from one day to the next. It happens when people feel powerless in the face of inequality, or when a contribution they're making goes unacknowledged. The trouble with resentment is that it tends to become part of a person's character or demeanour. For this not to happen, it has to be *let go*.

And that point about letting go, brings me to a final point. How, as Christians, should we deal with complex emotions like anger? Not, I think, by trying to suppress them, but by allowing them to be given shape in a process of *learning Christ*.

And one of the places where learning Christ takes place is *church*. Church is where we come together and sit side by side. Church is where we study the scriptures. Church is where we share the peace.

Church is where we confess our sins and receive absolution. Church is where we sing together. Church is where we are united with Christ through the one bread and one cup. Church is where we learn (in the words of Ephesians) to ‘be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven [us]’ (Eph. 4.32).

In the end, the Christian way is to *acknowledge* our emotions—unruly as they sometimes are—and *offer them up to God*. If our emotions, including anger, are a precious *energy* given to us by God in the way we are made, then it is to God that we need to offer them. Then God can sanctify them and make them instruments of divine love, working to break down walls of prejudice and injustice to the end that God’s peace may come on earth as it is in heaven.

So, to the One who is slow to anger and of great mercy, keeping steadfast love to the thousandth generation, be all glory and honour, now and forever. Amen.

*Stephen C. Barton*

## **WALL NEWS**

### **Weddings, baptisms, funeral and internment of ashes**

We have been busy at St John's Church, Wall recently. It is good to get back into welcoming families and quests to either celebrate special occasions or assist in the sad occasion when a family member dies.

The payback team who previously helped with some of the extra tasks to keep the church yard tidy are no longer available. The church yard has therefore needed some extra work to give a tidy appearance. Conrad Rubisch and Dick Barker have been busy alongside John Sutton working to clear both the top and bottom church yard.

Also, steps have been installed to make an easier access between upper and lower graveyard. (Photograph of steps will be in the magazine next month).

*Hilary*

# ST JOHN'S CHURCH: 12-HOUR SPONSORED ORGAN PLAYING MARATHON

In common with many churches, fundraising opportunities at St John's have been very limited during the pandemic.

In order to help address this, Paul Wright, one of our organists, has offered to be sponsored to play the organ for a period of twelve hours. This will take place on

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September,**

**from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.**

(short comfort breaks will be included). All proceeds will go towards church funds.

Given that lockdown restrictions have been lifted, the church will be open throughout the event. Whilst this is not an organ 'recital' (more a very long 'practice session'), visitors are welcome to pop-in for a few minutes. Paul will be happy to play favourite hymns - for a small donation!

At least one church member will be on-hand at all times throughout the session to monitor the event, welcome visitors and ensure that Covid guidelines are followed.

If you wish to sponsor the event (either so much per hour or a fixed amount upon completion), there are sign-up sheets at the back of St John's and St Michael's, or you can contact Paul at [pwrightf2@btinternet.com](mailto:pwrightf2@btinternet.com) or by ringing 01543 483230.

*Please consider gift aiding your donation by placing it in a WALL PCC envelope.*





# Bible Readings

**Sunday 5th September**  
**Fourteenth Sunday after**  
**Trinity**  
**[Green]**  
James 2.1-17  
Mark 7.24—end

**Sunday 12th September**  
**Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity**  
**[Green]**  
James 3.1-12  
Mark 8.27-end

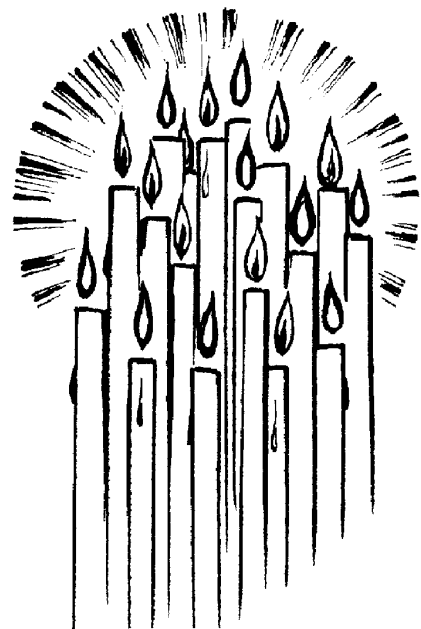
**Sunday 19th September**  
**Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity**  
**[Green]**  
James 3.13-4.3,7-8a  
Mark 9.30-37

**Sunday 26th September**  
**Michaelmas**  
**[White]**  
Revelation 12.7-12  
John 1-47-end

**Sunday 3rd October**  
**Harvest**  
**[Green]**  
1 Timothy 6.6-10  
Matthew 6.25-33

**Sunday 3rd October**  
**EVENSONG**  
**Harvest**  
**[Green]**  
Deut. 26.1-11  
Rev. 14.14-18

**Sunday 10th October**  
**Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity**  
**[Green]**  
Hebrews 4.12—end  
Mark 10.17-31



# PROVERB PRAYERS

## PROVERBS

### 6.6-19



<sup>6</sup> You lazy people, you should watch what the ants do and learn from them. <sup>7</sup> Ants have no ruler, no boss, and no leader. <sup>8</sup> But in the summer, ants gather all of their food and save it. So when winter comes, there is plenty to eat.

<sup>9</sup> You lazy people, how long are you going to lie there? When will you get up? <sup>10</sup> You say, “I need a rest. I think I’ll take a short nap.” <sup>11</sup> But then you sleep and sleep and become poorer and poorer. Soon you will have nothing. It will be as if a thief came and stole everything you owned.

<sup>12</sup> Some people are just troublemakers. They are always thinking up some crooked plan and telling lies. <sup>13</sup> They use secret signals to cheat people; they wink their eyes, shuffle their feet, and point a finger. <sup>14</sup> They are always planning to do something bad. <sup>15</sup> But they will be punished. Disaster will strike, and they will be destroyed. There will be no one to help them.

<sup>16</sup> The LORD hates these seven things:

- <sup>17</sup> eyes that show pride,  
tongues that tell lies,  
hands that kill innocent people,
- <sup>18</sup> hearts that plan evil things to do,  
feet that run to do evil,
- <sup>19</sup> witnesses in court who tell lies,  
and anyone who causes family members to fight.

*Creator God, thank you for the wonderfully complex and diverse community of flora and fauna that you have created. Thank you for reminding me to closely observe the natural world around me so that I can learn from it and follow the examples it sets in my everyday life.*

*The ants work together in their community for the common good. Each has their role and their tasks to complete. If one falters the others turn quickly to their aid. They are forever diligent, industrious and busy, actively working together for the benefit of all.*

*Lord, be with the world's scientists who are working hard to solve a wide variety of problems by using Biomimicry, applying the lessons learned from your creation.*

*Paul tells me to earn money to feed myself and to give to the poor and James tells me that my faith achieves nothing unless I help others. Help me to follow the examples set by Jesus and his disciples.*

*The ants don't waste time, prevaricating or by working selfishly. Father, send your Spirit to remind me to be more like the ants, working for the benefit of others, focused on the benefit of my various communities, family and friends, local, national and worldwide. Help me to remember that my community is not just people but includes all of your creation.*

*I ask this in Jesus' name.*



*Angie King*



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

# Memorial Book

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

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

## Memorial Book

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

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# *From the Registers*

| <b>Baptisms</b> |             |               |         |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------|---------|
| St Michael's    | 1st August  | Nela Franczak | 11 mths |
| St John's       | 15th August | Poppy Yardley | 2 yrs   |
| St Michael's    | 22nd August | Lucy Miller   | 1 yr    |

| <b>Weddings</b> |            |                                  |
|-----------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| St Michael's    | 24th July  | James Brown and Emma Hinsley     |
| St John's       | 31st July  | Thomas Staunton & Aimee Morgan   |
| St Michael's    | 7th August | Callum Roxburgh & Jessica Strike |

| <b>Funerals</b> |             |  |    |
|-----------------|-------------|--|----|
| St Michael's    | 26th July   | Peter Young<br>(interment of ashes)      | 73 |
| St Michael's    | 26th July   | Sarah Young<br>(interment of ashes)      | 52 |
| St Michael's    | 12th August | Valerie Cracknell                        | 81 |
| St Michael's    | 12th August | Gordon Cracknell<br>(interment of ashes) | 83 |
| St Michael's    | 13th August | Leonard Brazier                          | 89 |
| St Michael's    | 13th August | Geraldine Brazier                        | 87 |

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**SEPT 18<sup>TH</sup>** 12-hour Sponsored Organ Playing Marathon @ St John's

**SEPT 26<sup>th</sup>** – Patronal @ St Michael's

**SEPTEMBER 26<sup>TH</sup> – OCTOBER 3<sup>RD</sup>**. The Angels keep their ancient places – worship, family activities, church and churchyard tours; and evening talks at St Michael's

**OCT 3<sup>rd</sup>** Harvest @ St Michael's and St John's

**NOV 9<sup>th</sup>** Tuesday Club - **The Korean War**, speaker Ted Green





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## ..... And FINALLY!

For the Highflyers and Adrenaline junkies amongst our readers, St Giles Hospice in Whittington is offering the chance to fulfil their dream alongside the **AeroSuperBaticsTeam** with their brand-new **WINGWALK** event, take to the skies for St. GILES, where you'll stand on top of the spectacular Boeing Stearman bi-plane for the flying experience of a lifetime.

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All monies raised will support the Hospice's excellent work supporting patients and their loved ones living with serious and life-limiting illnesses

For full details and more information about the **Wing Walk event**, or to sign up, visit [www.stgileshospice.com/wingwalk](http://www.stgileshospice.com/wingwalk).

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|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>St Michaels PCC</b></p> <p><b>Churchwardens:</b> <i>Lyn Shiel 320437</i><br/><i>Sue Jones 415242</i></p> <p><b>Assistant Wardens:</b> <i>June Frayn 264920</i><br/><i>Liz Clarke 268862</i><br/><i>David Easton 255308</i><br/><i>Brenda Liptrot 251863</i></p> <p><b>Treasurer:</b> <i>Viv Oliver 258054</i></p> <p><b>PCC Secretary:</b> <i>Phil Clayton 682141</i></p> <p><b>Stewardship Recorder:</b> <i>Sandy Baker 256320</i></p> <p><b>Electoral Roll Officer:</b> <i>Mike Godfrey 264255</i></p>  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>St John's PCC</b></p> <p><b>Churchwardens:</b><br/>Christine Higgs 410351<br/>John Alsop 480240</p> <p><b>Assistant Churchwarden:</b><br/>Linda Rubisch 481294</p> <p><b>Treasurer:</b> Paul Wright 01543 483230</p> <p><b>PCC Secretary:</b> Christine Higgs 410351</p> <p><b>Assistant Treasurer</b><br/>Linda Rubisch 481294</p> <p><b>PCC Lay Vice Chair:</b> Christine Higgs 410351</p> <p><b>Electoral Roll:</b> Angie King<br/><a href="mailto:office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk">office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk</a></p>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>St Michael's Church</b></p> <p><b>Verger:</b> <i>Lynn Rock 252634 or 07765 312411</i></p> <p><b>Sacristan and Head Server:</b> <i>Maggie Easton 255308</i></p> <p><b>Organist and Choirmaster:</b> <i>Dudley Ray 07847 643373 <a href="mailto:dudleyrayuk@yahoo.co.uk">dudleyrayuk@yahoo.co.uk</a></i></p> <p><b>Music Group:</b> <i>Richard Brooks 07918 906 350</i></p> <p><b>Transport Rota:</b> <i>Brenda Liptrot 251863</i></p> <p><b>Pastoral Care:</b> <i>June Frayn 264920</i></p> <p><b>Flowers:</b> <i>Brenda Liptrot 251863</i></p> <p><b>Safeguarding:</b> <i>Maureen Brand 264880</i></p> <p><b>Junior Praise:</b> <i>Viv Oliver 258054</i></p> <p><b>Bell ringers:</b> <i>Gillian Eastwood 07568134115</i><br/>Thursdays, 7:30pm to 8:55pm. <a href="mailto:gillieastwood@gmail.com">gillieastwood@gmail.com</a></p> <p><b>Mothers Union:</b> <i>Elizabeth Allen 304938</i></p> <p><b>Social Team:</b> <i>Contact via the office 262211</i></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>St John's Church, Wall</b></p> <p><b>Verger:</b> Hilary Barker 01543 482027</p> <p><b>Pastoral Care:</b><br/>Christine Gilbert 07369 245023</p> <p><b>Safeguarding:</b> Maureen Brand 264880</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Other Useful Numbers</b></p> <p><b>St Michael's School:</b> 227425</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parish Magazine</b></p> <p><b>Magazine Distributor:</b><br/><i>Barbara Homewood 255909</i><br/>E-mail <a href="mailto:brian@britcave.co.uk">brian@britcave.co.uk</a></p> <p><b>Magazine Editor:</b> <i>David Shiel 01543320437</i><br/><a href="mailto:shielfamily@gmail.com">shielfamily@gmail.com</a></p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Scouting and Guiding</b></p> <p><b>Group Scout Leader</b> Carl Hall 07988 685378 <a href="mailto:chair@7thlichfield.org.uk">chair@7thlichfield.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Rainbows:</b> <i>Becky Bickley 07703 671568</i><br/><i>Vicki Davies Friend 07970 549284</i><br/><i>Hannah Heath 07854 824443</i></p> <p><b>Brownies:</b> <i>Julie Cragg 301098</i></p> <p><b>Guides:</b> <i>Lisa Webb 07900 164587</i></p>  |   |

