

THE PARISH MAGAZINE

November 2020



*William Temple,
archbishop, teacher of the faith, 1944*

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

85p

Rector: The Revd. Preb. Simon Baker, 10 Mawgan Drive, Lichfield, Staffs, WS14 9SD. Tel: 01543 253010 Email: simonbaker57@outlook.com Day Off: Friday	Curate: The Revd. Melanie Clark Tel: 07751 072332 Email: revdr.melclark@gmail.com
Associate Minister (NSM Part-time): The Revd. Ruth Bull 36 Broadlands Rise, LICHFIELD, Staffs, WS14 9SF Tel: 01543 252123 Email: dkbrlcb@hotmail.com	Assistant Minister (PTO) The Revd. Jeyan Anketell 7 Wissage Lane, LICHFIELD, Staffs, WS13 6DQ Tel: 01543 268897 Email: jeyan.anketell@ntlworld.com
Assistant Minister (PTO) The Revd Chris Baker 15 Saddlers Close, Lichfield, Staffs. WS14 9ZW Tel: 01543 256320 Email: C.J.Baker@bham.ac.uk	Assistant Minister (PTO) The Revd. Stephen Barton The Master's House, St John's Hospital, St John Street, LICHFIELD WS13 6PB Email: stephen@the-bartons.com
Assistant Minister (PTO) The Revd Christine Polhill Little Hayes, Beaudesert, Cannock Wood, Staffs WS15 4JJ Tel: 01543 674474	Reader: Lesley Allen 21 Boley Close, LICHFIELD, Staffs, WS14 9AR Tel: 01543 251654 Email: lesley.allen21@gmail.com
Reader: Phil Clayton 23 Follows End, Burntwood, Staffs, WS7 3QZ Tel: 01543 682141 E-mail: phil@phil-clayton.uk	Reader: Trevor James 36 Heritage Court, LICHFIELD, Staffs, WS14 9ST Tel: 01543 258434
Reader: Peter Salt 7 Redlock Field, Lichfield WS14 OAB Tel: 01543 250723 E-mail: peter.salt@btinternet.com	Reader: Alan Toplis Streethay Lodge, Streethay, LICHFIELD, Staffs, WS13 8LR Tel: 01543 414651 E-mail: alan.toplis@toplis.co.uk
SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR FOR ST MICHAEL & ST JOHN Maureen Brand 01543 264880 For advice about safeguarding or to raise a concern please contact Maureen.	United Benefice Office St Michael's Church, Church St, LICHFIELD, Staffs, WS13 6ED Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri CLOSED Thursdays 9.00 am to 12.00 noon. Tel: 01543 262211 E-mail: office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk
St Michael's Church Church Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 6ED	St John's Church Green Lane, Wall, Staffordshire, WS14 0AS

Reflection for November...

The Reverend Gilbert White (1720-1793), the Archetypal Parson-Naturalist

"Gilbert White's book, more than any other, has shaped our everyday view of the relations between humans and nature." Richard Mabey, Naturalist & biographer of Gilbert White



Our Benefice is lucky enough to enjoy a strong connection with the natural world through our beautiful church yards at St Michael's and St John's. I think this stewardship has influenced the enthusiasm and passion for environmental action as part of mission, which is so evident in our discussions and study groups on this important issue. I've recently been working with the Environmental Church Group on ways that I can help us achieve Eco Church status and move us forward with making choices that are better for the environment. This got me thinking about the history of the ancient relationship between churches and the natural world, and how there has long been a synthesis between nature and seeking God. Our need for nature, and its ability to draw us closer to God, has been so evident as over recent months, when people have found even greater solace in nature during lockdown.

The Reverend Gilbert White, an eighteenth-century 'parson-naturalist' is an example of this long-held connection between churches, the natural world and seeking God. Considered by many as Britain's first ecologist, White is famous for three reasons: as author of one of the most published and popular books in the English language, as a pioneering naturalist who hugely influenced the development of the science of natural history, and as a gardener. However, I think he should be remembered for a fourth reason: as a clergyman whose ground-breaking observation of the natural world was potentially shaped by his theology, and his stewardship of God's creation.

White was born on 18 July 1720 in his grandfather's vicarage at Selborne in Hampshire. His grandfather, also Gilbert White, was at that time vicar of Selborne. Gilbert White's parents were John White (1688- 1758) a trained barrister and Anne Holt (d. 1740), and he was the eldest of eight surviving siblings. Gilbert's family lived briefly at Compton, Surrey, before moving into 'The Wakes', Selborne in 1728, which was to be his home for the rest of his long life. Gilbert White started his education in Basingstoke before going to Oriel College, Oxford, after which he followed his grandfather and uncle into the Church. In 1746 he was ordained a deacon and became curate for his Uncle Charles who was vicar in the neighbouring Hampshire village of Farrington, before his full ordination on 1749. Later he became curate of the Selborne parish, as well as taking up other similar posts, some local, some not. Although he did not become the Vicar of Selborne until he was 64 years old, he had ministered for decades in neighbouring parishes, and his last public duty was at the burial of a 16-year-old villager only a few weeks before his own death at the then advanced age of 73.

White's book, 'The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne' was published in 1789, just four years before his death, by his brother Benjamin. Since that time it has never been out of print, is reported to be one of the most published books in the English language as well as being translated into several other languages. It was very commonly the book that soldiers took to the trenches during WW1, to remind them of home. This again emphasises the importance of nature as a source of comfort during difficult times, but also the power of White's gentle and soothing prose. The book began as correspondence between himself and other like-minded gentlemen of the time, The Hon. Daines Barrington, an English barrister and Thomas Pennant, the leading British Zoologist of the day, through which they discussed their observations and theories about local flora, fauna and wildlife.

White believed in studying living birds and animals in their natural

habitat which was an unusual approach at that time, as most naturalists preferred to carry out detailed examinations of dead specimens in the comfort of their homes. His pioneering fieldwork established the importance of close observation and influenced future naturalists such as Charles Darwin. His observations of 'living' nature led him to be the first to distinguish the chiffchaff, willow warbler and wood warbler as three separate species, largely on the basis of their different songs. He was also one of the first to observe the importance of the earthworm in the creation of top soil, writing 'Earthworms, though in appearance a small and despicable link in the chain of nature, yet, if lost, would make a lamentable chasm. [...] worms seem to be the great promoters of vegetation, which would proceed but lamely without them...'

His observations were also unique at the time because of their vivid descriptions. Mabey wrote that he was 'one of the first writers to show that it was possible to write of the natural world with a fresh and intensely personal vision without in any way sacrificing precision'. White often arranged his sentence structure to echo the physical style of a bird's flight. For example 'Woodpeckers fly *volatu undosu* [*in an undulating flight*], opening and closing their wings at every stroke, and so are always rising and falling in curves.' He was a pioneer of the *natural-history writing we enjoy today*.

His close interest in the natural world was also reflected in his gardening. He grew a wide range of traditional and experimental fruit and vegetables, and was the first person in his area to grow potatoes! His keen, enquiring interest in gardening led him to begin his first written work, recording methodically what



he sowed and reaped, the weather, temperature and other details. He later called this his 'Garden Kalendar'



Not much has ever been made of White's role as a clergyman and the significance of his belief in God, but I cannot help but think that his theology and view of the natural world as God's precious gift of creation must have influenced his ground-breaking work. He saw the value and worth of all living creatures, from the birds in the sky to the smallest earthworm, giving

them equally his undivided attention, and chose to observe them in life rather than as dead specimens. Through his gentle and inquisitive observations there was a sense of stewardship and a desire to live life in harmonious coexistence with nature. As we move forward in becoming an Eco Church and making future decisions to help the environment, we can be encouraged by those who have gone before us such as Gilbert White, and be reminded of the long-held connection and partnership between our Christian beliefs and the church's stewardship of the natural world.

Gilbert White's House and Garden in Selborne can be visited today.

www.gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk

Revd Mel Clarke

Deadlines!

For **DECEMBER** Magazine: Deadline is

MONDAY 16th November

Contact David Bull

Pew Sheet:

every Thursday 7:30am

Contact Parish Office

CHOOSE ANOTHER PEW FOR A VIEW

On a recent visit to Stonehaven near Aberdeen the town trail led us to St. James' Episcopal Church.

Social distancing inside the church was demonstrated by a series of cards placed at each end of the pews.

Here are a few examples:

☞ Hymn 293 Lead us heavenly Father lead us- to another vacant pew.

☞ Hymn 94 Come let us join our cheerful songs,
provided you are not singing in this pew.

☞ Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore to get a better view-
this pew was not it.

☞ Hymn 490 The Lord's my Shepherd I'll not want
He makes me move from here
In other pews He wants me to sit
the whole of the service through.

☞ Hymn 457 Stand up, stand up for Jesus
Ye soldiers in this pew
Lift high your royal cushion
and find another view.

Have you been to a church with other interesting ways to dissuade you from sitting too close to your friends?

Stonehaven, by the way , was the birthplace of Robert Thomson who in 1845 invented the world's first pneumatic tyre (later developed by Dunlop), the fountain pen and pioneered the dry dock.

Barbara Homewood



St Michael's Choir News

The Director of Music is an appointment made formally by the Rector and Simon was delighted to announce at the last PCC that he has confirmed Dudley Ray in the post at St Michael's. We all expected it, but it's good to have it made official. Having played for our services since we returned to church Dudley, assisted by Joe Sneddon, was pleased to start choir practices again in September and to have the choir singing twice that month, including the Patronal Service. The choir members have very much enjoyed singing together again and we hope that has been apparent during the services. It certainly shows at Wednesday practices, at 6.30 pm for the younger ones and 7.30 for the adults.

My Choir Secretary emails announcing choir practices and services read rather like Army operation orders but we have to meet all the changing rules, including the more recent 'Rule of Six'. More importantly we need to keep the singers safe and to reassure parents. It doesn't make Dudley's job any easier but he and Joe have coped admirably.

Simon and Dudley have now put together a programme of services that the choir will sing during November and December (subject to

any changes in rules). It will usually be six but we will be able to accommodate 12 choristers for some of the services. As the congregation is still not allowed to sing, and we don't want to give you all false encouragement, the choir will mostly sing before services and an anthem at the distribution of Holy Communion. The planned Choir Services are all on Sunday at 10 am unless otherwise specified.

1 Nov – All Saints

Wed 4 Nov at 6.30 pm – All Souls Candles of Remembrance

8 Nov – Remembrance

22 Nov – Christ the King

29 Nov - Advent Sunday

Thursday 24 Dec – Christingle (Church open with music and possibly a choir singing for part of the time) 3 – 6 pm

Thursday 24 Dec at 11.15 pm – Midnight Communion

Friday 25 Dec at 10 am – Christmas Communion

27 Dec – First Sunday of Christmas

And on 3 January 2021 – Epiphany

We very much look forward to enhancing your worship with music again. *Ted Green*

LARGE COPIES of the magazine are available on request

DIOCESE NEWS

Survivors must be heard

The Bishop of Lichfield says survivors of sexual abuse need to be “absolutely at the centre of our attention and action” following a national independent inquiry investigation report.

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, IICSA, yesterday published its overarching investigation report into the Anglican Church in England and Wales. The 154 page report (<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/document/anglican-church-safeguarding-church-england-and-church-wales-investigation-report>) makes eight principal recommendations about a range of issues including the Church’s response to victims and survivors.

Speaking to Radio Stoke , the Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave, said: “The report is very difficult reading indeed. It highlights where we have fallen short and there is a deep sense of shame in that. It also underlines the need for us to change. We take that challenge very seriously and have started working on that over the last few years.

“It underlines the need for a complete change in our culture and a change our focus. Our priority needs to be not our reputation but to attend seriously to every complaint that is brought to us and, in particular, to listen to the voices and experiences of victims and survivors. They need to be absolutely at the centre of our attention, our prayers, our concern and our practical action.”

Bishop Michael added: “It takes time to rebuild trust. We are absolutely committed to changing our way of doing things...by listening to victims and survivors, by increasing our safeguarding capacity and professionalising it. This report is a pretty stark picture of who we have been but it is not who we are called to be and we are determined to focus on that.

“We are determined to make our churches, and all the spaces associated with them, as safe places as we can for children and for vulnerable adults as well.

“We have massively expanded our safeguarding training, both for those being recruited as new priests or as lay ministers or lay volunteers and also our ongoing updating of training. We take that really seriously and monitor people’s participation in training. That is now an absolute prerequisite for being in ministry or continuing in ministry.

“It is painful but very helpful to have the mirror held up to us from outside. The report does have very clear recommendations for increased independence for our safeguarding capacity, about the way in which we listen to survivors, about redress and about safe spaces. We need to act on those recommendations now and are committed to doing that.”

If you or anyone you are in contact with are affected by the publication of the report and want to talk to someone independently please call the Safe Spaces (<https://www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk/>) helpline on 0300 303 1056 or email safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk.

Lichfield Diocese is currently taking part in a thorough Past Cases Review regarding the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Survivors or anyone else who wants to speak to someone in relation to the review can contact our Diocesan Safeguarding Team on 01543 306030, the dedicated independent NSPCC helpline on 0800 80 20 20, or the Safe Spaces helpline.

Published: 7th October 2020

Archbishop William Temple

William Temple (1881-1944) was a leading thinker, writer, clergyman and social activist...

... who sought to link Christian theological concerns to everyday life, whilst connecting the Church to wider society. His radical, pioneering thinking played a foundational role in the formation of the British Welfare State.

Archbishop of Canterbury from 1942-44, William Temple was a leader in the ecumenical movement and in educational, labour and social reform. He lectured in philosophy at Queen's College, Oxford (1904-10) and was ordained to the priesthood in 1909. He became headmaster of Repton School (1910-14) and rector of St James's Piccadilly in London (1914-17). Later he became leader of the 'Life and Liberty movement' which hugely influenced the shift towards synodical and democratic government in the Church of England. He was successively a Canon of Westminster (1919-21), Bishop of Manchester (1921-29), Archbishop of York (1929-42) and Archbishop of Canterbury (1942-4).

Perhaps Temple's most iconic publication is *Christianity and Social Order* (1942). A single page in this book outlines the contours of the Welfare State with its call for the provision of universal access to healthcare, education, decent housing, proper working conditions, and democratic representation. William Temple's vision of a post-war society that reflected the innate dignity of each person created in the image of God (*imago Dei*), was hugely influential on William Beveridge, impacting on the 1942 Beveridge Report which led to the establishment of the Welfare State in 1945.



One of the most perceptive comments on William Temple's ability to speak across both political and secular/religious divides came from former Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath who wrote the preface to the 1976 edition of Christianity and Social Order. Heath remarked in his biography,

'My Christian faith ... provided foundations for my political beliefs. In this, I was influenced by the teaching of William Temple. Temple's impact on my generation was immense. He believed that a fairer society could be built only on moral foundations, with all individuals recognising their duty to help others. He was ... the first Anglican leader for decades to set out the Church's teachings in modern terms. He propounded a view of morality which was not preoccupied with sexuality, but which was relevant to the myriad problems besetting the individual in the personal, professional and social spheres our own moderate Conservatism, [was]... similarly predicated upon the view that the individual can be truly fulfilled only as part of a social unit.'

Temple's major publications include works of philosophy, theology and political economy including: Mens Creatrix (1917; "The Creative Mind"); a volume of Gifford Lectures, Nature, Man, and God (1934); a commentary on St John's Gospel (Readings in St John's Gospel - 1939/40); Christianity and Social Order (1942), and The Church Looks Forward (1944).

William Temple's work continues to have a profound influence in both theological and political circles, expressing as it does, radical ideas on justice and equality within mainstream discourses.

To find out more about Archbishop Temple's continuing influence today, head over to our [news](https://williamtemplefoundation.org.uk/news/) page (<https://williamtemplefoundation.org.uk/news/>), or follow us on Twitter [@WTempleFdn](https://twitter.com/WTempleFdn).

You can read [Temple's obituary in the Church Times](https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2017/10-november/news/uk/from-the-archive-william-temple-archbishop-of-canterbury).
www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2017/10-november/news/uk/from-the-archive-william-temple-archbishop-of-canterbury

Study Week 17-21 August 2020

by Ted Green

Mel Clarke put together a wonderful Zoom study week in August, with the general title: “The Church of England, where have we come from and where are we going”. Key themes covered were: Biblical Interpretation, Interfaith Relations, Social Justice, Church in Schools, and Liturgy. Unfortunately, the dates didn’t suit everyone and the numbers taking part from the United Benefice were less than anticipated. However, we were glad to welcome a number of clergy from across the diocese, including several curates. Mel received some great feedback, including thanks for the opportunity to study and reflect together on issues facing the church in the past, present and future.

I was able to attend all five talks and this article is partly to share something of the spirit of the occasion, when we listened to talks of 30-45 minutes and then had plenty of opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues under Mel’s gentle chairing; but it is also a plea for another study week sometime in the future. Mel had put together a programme of speakers of national renown, four of them from Liverpool, London and Oxford, who had all kindly agreed to come to Lichfield to talk to us. The fact that the week was so successful on Zoom means that we have that option in the future and it may help us to invite speakers who can’t make it to Lichfield.

I’ll run through the week in outline, including the information that’s on the United Benefice website under ‘Study Week’. More information from the talks may be added and you’ll see details of that in the weekly pew sheets.

Revd Dr Stephen Barton on Biblical Interpretation.

Stephen’s was probably the most academic of the five talks but, like his sermons, he took us through things gently and very clearly. He

chose to examine *1 Corinthians* from two points of view. Paul was obviously writing directly to the church in Corinth, to answer their questions and to address concerns of his own about their behaviour, but we need to understand more about how it was written if it is to hang together as a coherent text for us today.

The two approaches reflect Paul's upbringing. As an educated Roman citizen he would have learnt the Greek and Roman art of Rhetoric and this would have been important as his letters were read out to the church congregations. But he was also trained as a Pharisee and another approach is to examine his writing in the tradition of, Jewish biblical history, emphasising the *Glory of God* and concentrating on idolatry and sexual behaviour. I found myself favouring the rhetorical approach but Stephen showed us how the two methods complement each other and produce the coherence that is so helpful to us today. The whole of Stephen's talk is on our website and I strongly recommend it, as there are many nuances that I don't have space to comment on here.

Mary Hawes and Murray Wilkinson on Education and Youth.

Mary is the National Children and Youth Adviser for the Church of England (CE); she took us at a canter through over 200 years of history of CE schools and then explained the complexities of the present national education system and how CE schools fit into it. Mary's slides are on the Study Week webpage and just one of them shows the sheer size of the CE commitment to education: approximately one million children attend CE schools, about 15 million of those alive today in England attended Church schools, a quarter of primary schools and 200 secondary schools are CE, and the Church is the biggest sponsor of Academies in the country. She went on to talk about the new policy documents being produced and the *Foundation of Educational Leadership* launched by the Church in 2017. If you click onto that slide it takes you to a whole range of inspirational talks.

Murray is the Growing Faith Enabler at the CE Education Office. He

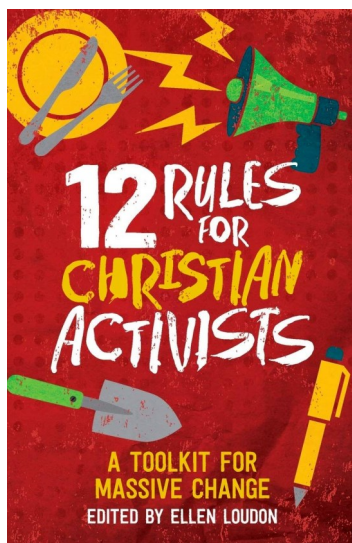
talked about his passion for involving children and young people in the worship life of the church and his slides include details of the 2016 *CE Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good* and the very recently launched (Feb 2020) *Growing Faith Adventure*, which aims to make it second nature to include children, young people and households in every aspect of church life. Because Mary and Murray's slides connect to the internet you can find a wealth of extra information on all these subjects through our United Benefice website.

The Bishop of Lichfield (Michael Ipgrave) on Inter Faith Relations. If the other speakers have a national influence on their subjects, then Bishop Michael's is international and he combines it with his work as our Diocesan Bishop. He began by telling us about his time as a missionary in Japan. His job description required three things: to minister to the 20,000 Anglicans in the Japanese population of 120 million; to learn more about the local religions, mainly Shinto and Buddhism, and to enjoy himself. He knows that he did the third and hoped that he had been successful at the first two! Bishop Michael also told us also about his work in Leicester and London before he came to Lichfield.

He guided us to a RC document called *People of Other Faiths*, which gives a helpful approach to inter-faith relations. He summed it up as getting to know each other as friends before trying to talk about issues such as theology, prayer and social justice. He gave an example in the brutal murder of Private Lee Rigby when he was Bishop of Woolwich and the media was prowling around looking for evidence that the community would break down into religious violence, but that "relationships built up over many years survived intact". He reminded us of Jesus' call to love our neighbours and advised us to get to know our neighbours of other faiths. During questions and discussion Bishop Michael gave us guidance on worship with those of other faiths. We should have respect for other

faiths and traditions but we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that "it matters what we believe". He suggested *'coming together to pray'* while keeping our own integrity, rather than *'coming to pray together'*. But if I took one message away from this talk, it was the establishment of friendship and respect.

Rev Canon Dr Ellen Loudon on Social Justice and Activism. Before writing more about this talk I have to tell you about Ellen Loudon. She's unlike the other speakers in that her first degree is in Drama, second in Pop Music and her Doctorate is in Music Hall. There's a BA in Theology there too! She arrived in Liverpool, aged 18, to study drama, became a senior university lecturer and is now Canon Chancellor of Liverpool Cathedral and Director of Social Justice for the Diocese of Liverpool. She's also enormous fun and made her serious subject accessible to us all. Much of her talk is illustrated in her book



12 Rules for Christian Activists: A Toolkit for Massive Change, published during Lockdown, and I've shown the cover and Contents page here.

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Ellen said that she just asked her friends to write chapters, but it was clearly a more serious undertaking than that. On our Study Week webpage you'll see that Ellen has written, "I have called it a 'Toolkit for Massive Change' because it is my contention that our small deliberate, purposeful acts of social justice, done in the name of Jesus, will transform God's world." For those, like me, who are fans of Pete Wilcox, formerly at Lichfield Cathedral, then Dean of Liverpool and now Bishop of Sheffield, you'll be impressed that he has given the book his ringing endorsement, "This book is a treasure trove read it and you won't be disappointed."

Ellen also shared with us her recent experience of being co-chair of the group set up by Liverpool City Council during Lockdown to ensure that no-one was missed in the massive volunteer effort to support the disadvantaged. It was a new experience for her to be part of an operation on that scale and she said that she found it daunting and inspiring at the same time, that so many people from different backgrounds, of all faiths and none, could work together to a common purpose. Although I'm using it here as a summary, early on in her talk Ellen shared her philosophy for Social Justice in these lines from Micah 6: v8 *'And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'*

Revd Dr Sarah Brush on Worship and Liturgy. Sarah taught Mel at theological college and they are both historians by training, so there was clearly a good rapport. In looking at our uncertainty over worship during the pandemic, Sarah gave us a historical parallel. King John refused to install Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1208 and the Pope issued the *Easter Interdict* that closed churches for five years. The people felt the same concerns then that we have had over the past seven months: a great feeling of loss at lack of services and the inability to fully partake in the Lord's Supper; ever changing guidelines; and the need for an innovative approach to worship. Some worship was allowed in 1208 but the Mass was not.

One order of monks thought that the rules didn't apply to them and went on regardless, only to be reprimanded by the Pope and not allowed to enjoy a later loosening of the rules for other orders. At least we are able to bury our dead in consecrated ground, which was banned in 1208, but funerals and weddings have been severely curtailed. Baptism was allowed then and is allowed now, with constraints. In 1208 religious teaching was allowed and became more prevalent, and pilgrimages became very popular. People adapted and their new ways continued after the Interdict ended.

This year churches used all kinds of technology to ensure that contact was maintained during Lockdown and we are at least able to partake in Holy Communion now. But Zoom worship is continuing on two Sunday evenings a month in the United Benefice because it has been a lifeline to those who cannot attend at St John's and St Michael's. We have a very successful Bible Study now on Zoom and daily Morning Prayer has been taking place that way. At a Zoom Deanery Synod meeting recently those churches putting their services on Facebook and YouTube reported that people all over the world were logging on and they intend to continue offering worship online when things return to something approaching normality. Sarah used her own examples of innovation in 2020, inviting us to do as was done in 1208, by looking at boundaries and finding ways to step over them. She advised us to use this time of pandemic to examine our liturgy and worship and to examine its core purpose, concentrating on 'Why?' and not 'What?'. That was a very fitting summary, not only for her talk but also for the whole Study Week.



Reshaping the future

Worldwide President Sheran Harper reflects on the enormous challenges and opportunities of the pandemic, while also looking to the future.

Dear Friends,

It's Harvest time again! A tradition of sowing and reaping joyfully as fruit and grain are gathered, then placed before the altar for God's blessing. This is much like our Mothers' Union activities that are blessed to flourish, giving members much needed hope.

Although we celebrate the Harvest season as a Church annually, we experience the essence of harvest each day in our lives. This gives us good reason to pause and give thanks to God for the abundance of his unending provision and for the overflowing baskets that gives us enough to share and bless others.

The impact of the pandemic

This year has been different in so many ways, manly due to the impact of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. Members' prayer lists have extended to include loneliness and a different kind of bereavement in lockdown, patience for parents home-schooling, and the escalating cases of gender-based violence now categorised as the second pandemic. Centrally, Mary Sumner House (MSH) has been severely affected and has been closed since March.

As a Board we have prayed and asked God for his guidance and direction, and we continue to pray without ceasing. In response to the financial situation, we implemented and planned for significant cost

savings as well as income-generating activities, but it is with a heavy heart that we concluded we need to take the unavoidable step of reducing the overall staff headcount at MSH by one third. This is very difficult, as our staff love working with MU and have always been committed. We are doing all we can to support them and ask that you join us in keeping them in your prayers.

Challenges like these have stretched our faith to trust God in every situation and at the same time grasp new opportunities that reflect his love in the midst of it all; opportunities that give hope and courage when there seems to be no way, and the confidence to trust God and his plan. Because of the many challenges faced over the years, MU is resilient and has the ability to thrive in periods of uncertainty; this year is no exception.

Giving to others

Our MU harvest has been a true reflection of God's abundance overflowing in many ways. So many branches, dioceses and provinces gave willingly and generously to the Urgent Appeal, making the bucket over three-quarters full now, full enough to be a blessing to others. We pray that the contents of the bucket will rise and overflow so that MU can stay on the road to a sustainable future following COVID-19.

Through numerous acts of kindness, members have proven that nothing can stop the work of members' hands – not even this pandemic. Buildings closed but not the branches, because the branches are the members. Members have been busy in every nook and cranny, passionately using their gifts and talents in many ways including: knitting hearts to keep loved ones connected, donating cans to keep food banks well stocked, and compiling a collection of prayers, poems and reflections written by members and available to all members free of cost in an *ebook of Comfort*.

MU is the heart of God wherever it exists. Providing for the vulnerable comes naturally, as members make the sacrifice to provide warm beds and meals for the homeless, resources to strengthen the capacity of

women to lead, and progressive programmes that secure a future for families and communities. I am humbled by this outpouring of love, which reminds me of the words of William Braithwaite, 'We too are seeds of harvest sown by God in the fields of time.'

Engaged with technology

The crisis has created a great opportunity to build the MU profile through social media and it has been a great way for members to keep in touch with each other during the lockdown too. Recently a diocesan president shared the story of a 94-year old member who is eagerly looking forward to being trained to use the internet before winter comes. Isn't that amazing!

Members are celebrating the exciting resources available on the website and expressing the thanks for being able to connect with other members around the world through midday prayers and services. Also, non-members who would not normally feel comfortable joining MJU are peeping at MU Facebook posts and liking them.

Prayers for more workers

If only we had many hands to do much more! This continues to be our song as we focus on increasing our membership, which is necessary if we are able to survive as a movement. As we give thanks today, would you join me in raising your voices in prayers, asking the Lord of the Harvest to send more workers into the fields? I am sure he would answer the prayers so we could reap a harvest of new members, all excited to work for his glory.

'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up' (Galatians 6:9)

Article taken from Autumn edition of Families First. If you would like to know more about becoming a member, or supporting the work of the Mothers' Union visit the website or speak to Elizabeth Allen

THANK YOU!

A huge thank-you to everyone who donated to the Macmillan Cake Stall, held outside St Michael's Church on Sunday, 27th September. We had lots of gifts of lovely cakes and some generous financial donations, resulting in a tremendous total of **£417.30**, which when Gift Aid is added will be over **£450**.



Macmillan, along with many other charities, has been struggling to keep their services going during the Coronavirus pandemic and this has been a time when their services, supporting people with cancer, has been needed more than ever.



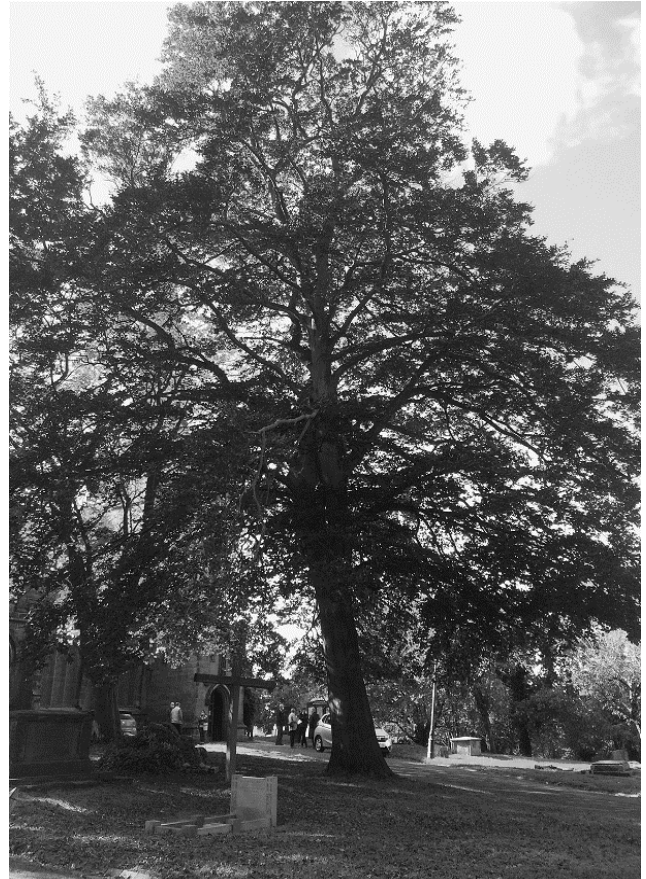
As we held the sale on our Patronal Festival of Michaelmas, we had some specially themed St Michael cakes, using one of Ron Plimmer's beautiful photos of the church.

Thank you again!

Ruth

St. Michael's Churchyard

Of the many fantastic trees we have in our Churchyard the beech is probably the most monumental and majestic. This native tree is an enchanting species known as the queen of British trees. To stand beneath the leaf canopy, its Cathedral-like branches spreading upwards is an awe-inspiring experience.



Tree 1: The huge Copper Beech tree provides a great welcome to the Church and Churchyard.

Mature beech trees grow to a height of more than 40 metres and develop a huge domed crown. The bark is smooth, thin and grey. The reddish-brown torpedo-shaped leaf buds form on short stalks and have a distinctive criss-cross pattern.

The young leaves are lime green with silky hairs becoming darker green and losing their hairs as they get older. They are 4-9 centimetres long, stalked, oval and pointed at the tip, with a wavy edge.

Male and female flowers grow on the same tree. In April and May the tassel-like male catkins hang from long stalks at the end of twigs while female flowers grow in pairs surrounded by a cup.

The cup becomes woody once it is pollinated and contains one or two beech nuts. Beech trees are pollinated by the wind.

Look for the beautiful Copper Beech Tree in the Churchyard. It is easy to find as it grows not far from the Church door. It can be seen next to the Easter Garden cross.

Another fabulous beech can also be found. Starting at the outside tap, follow the long path that eventually leads to the New Churchyard. Just before the new Churchyard entrance, turn on to the path immediately to your left and after a few yards, on the right side of the path you will see a massive trunk with carved letters on the trunk. This superb tree is the Common Beech.

Do look for our magnificent Beech Trees when you are walking in the Churchyard. Here are photographs of the 2 trees I have described.

Ray Allen 01543 251654

Tree 2: This beech tree is harder to find but well worth searching out.



News from the Hawksworth Family in Hong Kong

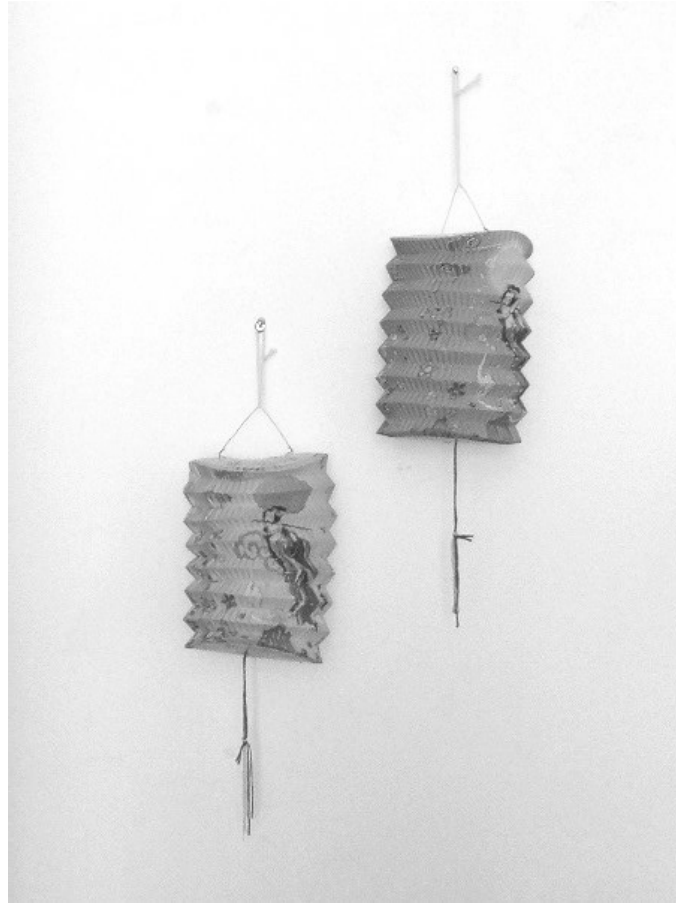
October started off with Mid-autumn festival celebrations. This is the second largest celebration in the Chinese calendar after Chinese New Year. It's a time for family and friends to gather and share traditional foods; roast duck, gourds and mooncakes!

Traditional mooncakes are made from lotus paste and are filled with either pork, seeds and nuts or red bean paste and egg yoke. They're extremely popular and can be hard to find! We were gifted some red bean paste mooncakes by a student at Peter's school. They were very soft and had a nutty taste.



During the festival we put up lanterns and read the story of Hoo-yi (Hoe ee) and Cheng-e (Chen er) It's a traditional Chinese folk tale about a couple who end up being separated and she goes to live on the moon with a jade rabbit.

The lanterns represent the 9 suns that Hoo-yi extinguished with his bow and arrows and the mooncakes symbolise where cheng-e is now. Lots of children still believe that a lady lives on the moon with a jade rabbit.



As well as enjoying the festival we have been lucky enough to enjoy a day at the beach. Government run beaches are not open but you can take a boat trip to one of the surrounding islands and have a swim. We took a junk boat from Sai Kung pier to Sharp Island. It's a fairly sandy beach but you have to be careful of the sharp rocks in the water. The island has been designated a UNESCO world heritage site and it's easy to see why. There are fossils and coral everywhere. You're encouraged to take pictures not souvenirs.



We continue to enjoy the hiking trails that are close by. We've been to High Junk Peak a couple of times. The hike starts at the top of our road and finishes by the Clearwater Bay golf and country club. There are some wonderful views down into Clearwater Bay from the top. The children enjoyed this walk as we saw lots of brightly coloured butterflies, birds and caterpillars!

The following weekend saw us catch the local 16 seater bus to the country club where we got off and walked up to Clearwater Bay country park. The bus fare is \$9.30 about £1. It doesn't matter if you go one stop or 16, the price stays the same!



The country park was wonderful and popular with families. There's an area to the right of the park where you can fly a kite which was very popular.

We walked along the tree trail. It's a gentle walk that takes you through bamboo avenues and elephant trees. Again, we were treated to some beautiful displays of butterflies. They varied greatly in size with some very small yellow ones that look like falling leaves, to the much bigger Common Mormon butterfly that is roughly the size of a Robin in flight. We thought they were birds when we first saw them.

The trail was interspersed with views across the ocean to Steep Island and the Ninepin Islands. At the end of the trail we were rewarded with an ice-cream! A welcome sight for adults and children alike.

Rowan



Rotary Press Briefing

September 22nd 2020

Today Lichfield St Chad Rotary Club made a presentation of £250-00 to Lichfield Food Bank. This took place at their warehouse at Saxon Hill Academy. The funding for this donation came from the Rotary Foundation, the international Rotary Charity which is supported by our local Lichfield St Chad Rotary Club.

The Chairman of the Lichfield Food Bank, David Clarke, provided us with some very revealing data. The demand for food at its distribution points in Lichfield has basically doubled since last year, with the balance now being roughly evenly split between adults and children, which means that more families are now receiving support than ever before. We heard that the Lichfield Food Bank is planning to distribute Christmas food bags again this year, with the target being 500 bags, so our donation will be well-invested in this very supportive intention for later in the year.



Commonwealth War Graves Commission memorial in Hints Churchyard.

As we carry out our remembrances in November, reminders of the effects of conflict on individuals and families are all around us. Sometimes they contain surprises.

The single Commonwealth War Graves Commission memorial in the rural Staffordshire village setting of St Bartholomew's churchyard at Hints remembers **Edward George Keeling** who died there on 23 March 1919, aged 30, a victim of the cataclysmic international flu epidemic. Born at Market Drayton in Shropshire in 1888, where he still lived with his parents, George and Mary [nee Wainscott] at the 1891 Census. The 1901 Census reveals that he lived at Newcastle-under-Lyme, with his widowed mother. The fact that he does not appear on the 1911 Census is explained by the fact that he had become a professional soldier in the Yorkshire Regiment, serving in India. When the Great War began he was transferred to the 407th Agricultural Company, Labour Corps, which may explain why he came to be living in Hints when he died. We know that in early 1916 he married Ada Rawlins at Tamworth, with an indication that she came from Mile Oak.

His death from the flu epidemic, which raged from the middle of 1918 into 1919, is part of an emerging body of evidence that a majority of those buried in England under Commonwealth War Commission memorials in 1918 and 1919 were, in fact, flu victims. This also appears to have been the case on the continent. Having managed to survive the atrocities of the Great War, they died in military service as victims of what was an unseen enemy.

Trevor James

WALL NEWS

Harvest Service

Revd Simon led our Harvest Service this year and although many things are different at the moment, some things remain reassuringly the

same. It was lovely to see our community join together to celebrate the Harvest and to see members from three of Wall's farming families



in church made it extra special.

Unfortunately, many of our usual flower arrangers are shielding at the moment as they prepare for planned hospital procedures to take place but Hilary and Rob did us proud with their floral decorations. Many thanks!



We collected tinned and packet food for the Foodbank this year, so the traditional fresh items were not in church (unless they were

part of a floral display). Everyone was so generous this year that my poor little car had a very full boot when we packed all of the bags and boxes into it after the service. I'm sure the Foodbank will be very grateful and I hope we can keep up the good work by donating all year through, not just at Harvest.

Angie King



From the Registers

Baptisms



--	--	--	--

Marriages



--	--	--

Funerals

30/09/2020	St John	Adrian Phillips	51
09/10/2020	St Michael	Joyce McCormick	90
14/10/2020	St Michael	Michael Burns	57
14/10/2020	St Michael	Peter Forrester	73

Bible Readings

Sunday 1st November

All Saints Day

[White]

1 John 3.1-3

Matthew 5.1-12

Sunday 8th November

3rd Sunday before Advent

Remembrance

[Red/Green]

Romans 8:3-end

John 15:9-17

Sunday 15th November

2nd Sunday before Advent

[Red/Green]

1 Thessalonians 5.1-11

Matthew 25.14-30

Sunday 22nd November

Christ the King

[Red/Green]

Ephesians 1.15-end

Matthew 25.31-end

Sunday 29th November

Advent Sunday

[Purple]

Isaiah 64.1-9

Mark 13.24-end

Sunday 6th December

2nd Sunday of Advent

[Purple]

Isaiah 40.1-11

Mark.1-8

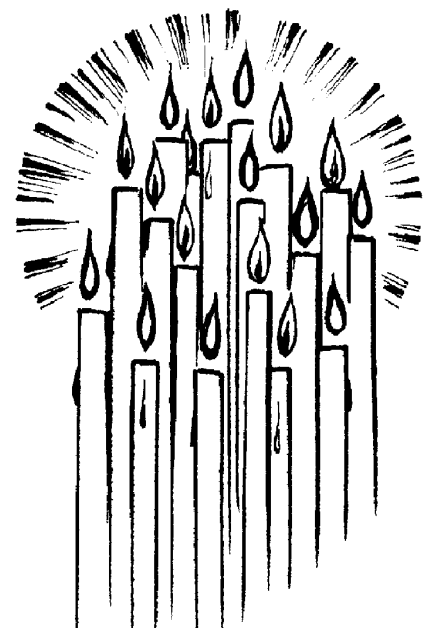
Sunday 13th December

3rd Sunday of Advent

[Purple]

Isaiah 61.1-4,8-end

John 1.6-8, 19-28



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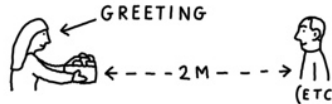


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MONEY



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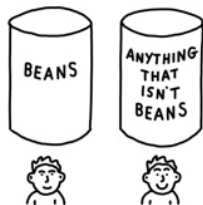
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TO BE
ONLINE
NOW



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AND NOW SELF-ISOLATING)

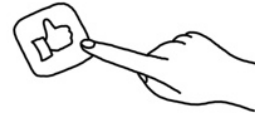
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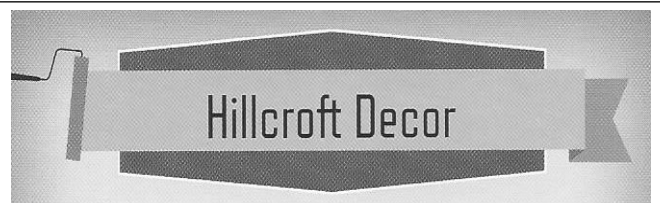
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William Blake

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<p>St Michael's Church</p> <p>Verger: Lynn Rock 252634 or 07765 312411</p> <p>Sacristan and Head Server: Maggie Easton 255308</p> <p>Organist and Choirmaster: Dudley Ray 07847 643373 dudleyrayuk@yahoo.co.uk</p> <p>Music Group: Richard Brooks 07918 906 350</p> <p>Transport Rota: Brenda Liptrot 251863</p> <p>Pastoral Care: Peter Salt 250723</p> <p>Flowers: Diana Baker 01543 416232</p> <p>Safeguarding: Maureen Brand 264880</p> <p>Junior Praise: Viv Oliver 258054</p> <p>Bell ringers: Gillian Eastwood 480017, Thursdays, 7:30pm to 8:55pm. gillieastwood@gmail.com</p> <p>Mothers Union: Elizabeth Allen 304938</p> <p>Social Team: Contact via the office 262211</p>	<p>St John's Church, Wall</p> <p>Verger: Hilary Barker 01543 482027</p> <p>Pastoral Care: Christine Gilbert 07821 987999</p> <p>Safeguarding: Maureen Brand 264880</p> <p>Magazine Distributer: Eileen Carson 254107</p> <p>Other Useful Numbers</p> <p>St Michael's School: 227425</p> <p>Parish Magazine</p> <p>Magazine Distributor: Barbara Homewood 255909 E-mail brian@britcave.co.uk Magazine Editor: David Bull 07525 012272 or email: dkbull053@hotmail.co.uk</p>
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