

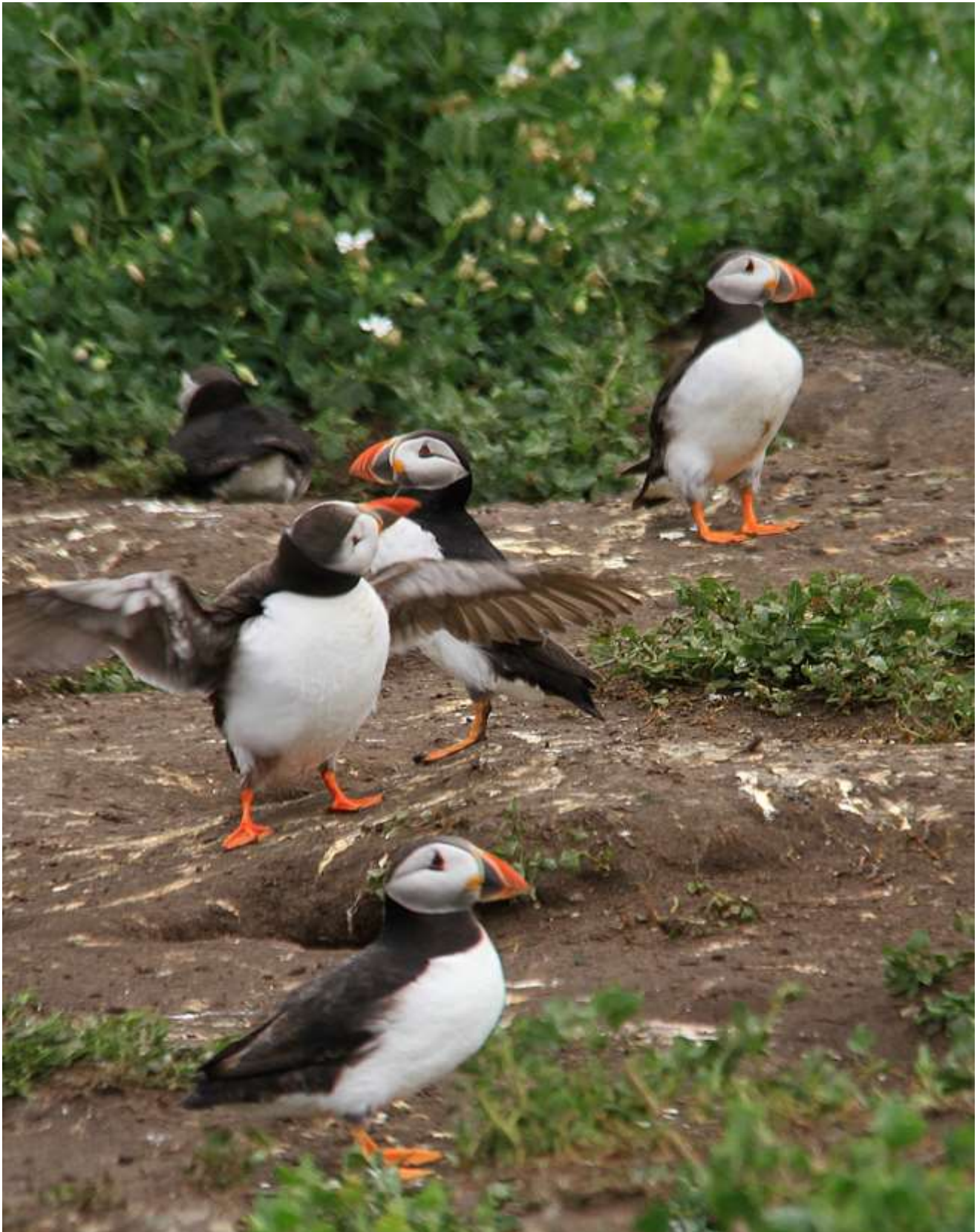
Crosstalk 60p

The Parish Magazine of St Bartholomew with St Chad
www.thurstaston.org.uk



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester

July 2024



Welcome Gaynor

Gaynor Kydd is being ordained deacon on 30th June at Chester Cathedral. Gaynor will be a part time non stipendiary minister in our parish, do say hello if you see her around.



The following biopic has been taken from the Ordination Service Booklet:-

I grew up in a ministry family my father being a methodist minister and a hospital chaplain and as a family we moved many times. As a teenager we moved to the Lake District where I met my future husband Malcolm. I became more involved in Church life and became a Christian aged eighteen. I had always wanted to be a nurse and moved to Blackpool to train as a Registered Nurse . I married Malcolm in 1989 , shortly afterwards we moved to Carlisle as Malcolm started his first job as a Christian youth Worker. We have three children, Anna, Sam and Beth and one Granddaughter Lottie. We moved to The Wirral in 1998 for my husband to take up the role of youth worker at St Mary's Upton. I first felt called to ministry in 2007, first completing pastoral worker training then commencing ordination training in 2022. I continue to work part-time as a nurse in a fracture and orthopaedic clinic.

St Bartholomew and St Chad takes its duty and obligation to protect all extremely seriously. We have adopted the national Church of England's robust procedures and guidelines. You can find out more about the national policies and procedures at www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding

**Safeguarding is
Everyone's
Responsibility**

* "Your magazine needs you" *

* Please send your contributions *

* (eg. Poems. Prayers, interesting *

* articles etc.,) *

* to office@thurstaston.org.uk *

The views and opinions expressed in the articles in this magazine are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the editor, the Rector or the PCC.

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Baptisms

26th May - Tabitha Davies

Weddings

25th May
Callum McDougall and Hollie Jarvis

Funerals

20th May - Brian Jones
29th May - Mike Paddon

From Your Rector

This month sees the start of the Olympic Games in Paris. In describing the Christian life as a marathon race, the writer of Hebrews (12:1-2) challenges us to finish well.

'throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles' (1)

As in a normal race, we have to get rid of any burdens that weigh us down (eg possessions, worries, what others think of us) and besetting sins (wrong habits or attitudes). We can cast our burdens on the Lord (Ps 55:22) and be assured of His forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

'run with perseverance the race marked out for us' (1)

The Christian life is like a marathon not a sprint race, which calls for endurance. The course is *marked out* for us, as we all have a unique race to run, with its opportunities and difficulties. God knows our path and will provide all that we need to complete the race.

'fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith' (2)

The runner keeps their focus on the finishing line and avoids all distractions. Our focus is on Jesus, who has run the race before us ('author'), but is the one who can show us how to finish well ('perfecter').

We are also surrounded by a ***'great cloud of witnesses' (1)***. These are God's people, both past and present, who are cheering us on!

During the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, the British athlete Derek Redmond was running in the 400 metres semi-finals. About 250 metres from the finish his hamstring tore and he fell to the ground in pain. However, his father ran on to the track to support him in completing the race. Let's not forget that whatever we face, God is there beside to enable us to finish the race!

Revd Jane



Massive Thank you for your love and care as I grieve for Lily. Revd Jane



Lily Tribute for Labrador Rescue written with tears streaming down my face!

Dearest Lily was adopted (aged approx 2) on 14th October 2011. She had been passed from pillar to post - original owner gave her to a friend, who then passed her on again, before she landed at Lab Rescue with Auntie Glenys. The day after arrival she was taken to the satellite kennels in Wales with Auntie Ky. The following day she went to the vet and was spayed. The following day she was collected by a foster carer, so that fresh from operation she didn't have to go back to kennels. And the following day, she came to her forever home. Lily had chronic separation anxiety when she arrived with me, hardly surprising after what she had been through. For the first six to nine months, Gina and Glenys fielded multiple phone calls from me and I am sure at times they thought I would give up and this poor scared dog would end up back with them. I will be forever grateful for their love and support during those challenging days and nights (including me sleeping in my parents caravan on my drive for three weeks whilst Lily howled all night in the house). Lily turned into the most amazing loving companion who is so desperately missed.

Lily had a variety of health issues in addition to the separation anxiety. She took medication her whole life for allergies meaning I had to learn to do her monthly injections. We had all of the usual doggy illnesses and scares along the way. Just under a year ago she was diagnosed with kidney failure and we transitioned to a renal diet which put a spring back in her step. And more recently, she had a subungual keratoacanthoma (a growth!) on her toe - which would frequently burst and nurse mummy bathed and kept it clean and even learned at one point to bandage it for her.

Lily gave me many new friends. To harness her youthful energy we did Agility together - she learned quickly as food was involved - yes she was a typical labrador! Lily's gentle nature led to her becoming a Read 2 Dog with Pets as Therapy in a primary school, the stand out memory being of the staff telling me that one of the pupils was selective mute and very probably wouldn't say anything - on first meeting, this pupil had a five minute conversation with Lily!

Most of all, Lily will be remembered for her unique and mischievous ways. Comments received from friends, that have known and loved Lily, in the first twenty fours of my grieving have summed her up beautifully:-

- Lily was a very special life companion, a unique character with a sweet nature.
- Lovely memories of Lily: remembering holidays with a "steam train" coming up behind, walks on the beach, and times when Lily's nose got the better of her obedience!
- Lily was a very special and beautiful dog and had a wonderful life with you.
- We will always treasure the memories of that walk with Lily just two weeks ago as she showed her zest for life.
- Lily was such a lovely character: warm and friendly. So glad I saw her enjoying herself on the park last week. It made me smile.
- A grand old lady.
- I shall miss her licking my toes!!
- Beautiful memories of Lily this afternoon - of her sunbathing and always getting tooooo hot!

Lily was full of life, she was fourteen going on four. She was a typical stoic labrador who never showed she was in pain. She caught a gastroenteritis bug, which sadly turned into hemorrhagic diarrhoea and she wasn't strong enough to fight it. She deteriorated within a matter of hours. My brave beautiful soldier died in my arms in doggy hospital surrounded by the most loving vets and nurses at 2am on Wednesday 19th June 2024 aged approx fourteen and a half.

Licky Lily, Loopy Loo, Gorgeous Girl, Lilybags, Reverse Panda, thank you for everything - you trusted me to keep you safe, you listened when I was having a bad day, you learned to pose for photographs so I have very special memories which I can keep, you gave the sloppiest kisses and beautiful cuddles. I miss everything about you, except maybe your stealing strawberries (and any other fruit you had learned to pick for yourself) and your love of rolling in fox poo or anything else that smelled disgusting!



WEDNESDAYS

12th, 19th, 26th June,

**3rd, 10th, 17th
July**

TABLE TALK

**11.30am - 12.30pm at St Chad's
OR 7.45-9.00pm in the extension**

Table Talk provides an opportunity to take part in meaningful conversations about the things that really matter. Gather around a table to talk, laugh, be understood and get to know another's point of view.

The themes we will explore are:-

Burnout: How can I balance my life?

Friendship: How do we make and keep friends?

Destiny: How do we live a meaningful life?

Beauty: What does it mean to live an attractive life?

Ecology: How do we care for the planet?

Spirituality: How can we experience God?

Summer Saturdays

This was a successful venture last year and enjoyed by all ages and is being repeated as per the dates on the poster.

Please come along for a natter and a cuppa and enjoy the garden, weather permitting, or we will decant indoors.

Please if anyone can volunteer to help the team to make and serve refreshments please get in touch with me thanks

Julie DeBoorder

Jules2121jule@gmail .com

07599186893

Community and Social Events Dates for Diary

July Saturday 20th 2pm

Guide Dogs Demo - in St Chad's garden -weather permitting otherwise in the hall



August/September Saturday mornings 10 am -12noon

Summer Saturdays St Chad's Garden – refreshments and natter in the garden, activities for children
3, 10 17 and 31 **August** and 7 **September**

August Saturday 24th 2pm – 4pm

Ready Teddy Go! St **Bear**tholomew's Day Teddy parachute from St Bartholomew's church spire, stalls and refreshments

September Saturday 21st 2pm -4pm

Coffee and Craft Supplies SALE - St Chad's Hall

October Friday 8pm (date TBA)

Christmas Crafts demo and make for Christmas Bazaar

November Saturday 16th 1pm – 3.30pm

Christmas BAZAAR

Ruth's Reflections

Hello again, it seems a long time since I wrote my last episode! Luckily for me It wasn't needed as I hadn't been well and therefore had nothing of interest to write.

I have been getting out a bit more now, weather permitting, isn't it awful. when it has brightened up I have felt compelled to do some gardening. I went with the WI to a beautiful garden in Puddington, unfortunately the weather was dreadful, but even so the gardens are beautiful and very interesting. The WI have been knitting poppies, with which we decorated the notice board at the entrance to the Village Hall. This was to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day. This brought back memories of 20 year ago when my husband and I were travelling to France by ferry on the 60th anniversary, the interaction between the present day soldiers and the veterans was beautiful to see.

Talking of boats I went with my daughter and son-in law and some of his family to see the naming of the "Queen Anne" we saw it on the big screen although we could see part of the stage. Listening to Andrea Bocelli singing live was quite spine tingling! Following this we went to a restaurant in the Albert Dock, of which my grandson is assistant manager, and as usual we had a superb meal and as usual I ate too much!

I haven't being doing much photography, I am definitely a fair weather photographer, also my laptop had been playing up so I couldn't do any photo editing. It has been in for repair and seems to be behaving itself.

There are quite a few outings to look forward to, both with the WI and the Photographic society, as well as my holiday. I am going with the same friends as last year. We are going to Finland, Estonia and Latvia. It should be very interesting, but somewhat tiring!

Well I think that is all my news for now so i will say goodbye.

Take care and stay safe everyone.

Ruth.

A warm welcome at the **Warm Hub**

Every Tuesday 9.30am - 12.30pm

Open to everyone, so please drop in!

**St. Chad's Church, Roslin Road, Irby CH61 3UH
0151 648 8169**

**Guest speaker
on 4th Tuesday of the month
Talks start at 10.30a.m.**

Tuesday 23rd July

Bethan Conway
Harp Music for a summer morning
***Bethan will talk about the harp as well
as playing some music***



**The Warm Hub
belongs to a
growing national
network of
Places of Welcome**



Jigsaw Library

Over the time that Warm Hub has been operating, we have been gifted many jigsaws. While we always have a jigsaw in progress at Warm Hub, there are many waiting for us to use in the future. Rather than these jigsaws just piling up, with the winter nights ahead we would like to make these jigsaws available for individuals to borrow and then return to us. We can't vouch that all the jigsaws are complete as they are donated to us but if you would like to borrow one then we can make them available on a Tuesday morning when the Warm Hub is open – 9.30 to 12.30 at St Chad's

Susan Smale



You can make donations to Foodbank by placing items (non perishable food and toiletries) in the box by the office door at St Chad's.

Thankyou to everyone who supported
the coffee morning in March
a total of **£800** was raised

Be careful of the sun this summer – melanoma is on the rise

Skin cancer cases are expected to top 20,000 for the first time this year, according to a recent study by Cancer Research UK.

While the increase in skin cancers has occurred across all the ages, it is highest in the elderly, who enjoyed cheap package holidays to sunny countries during the 60s and 70s. They were exposed to higher ultraviolet radiation without realising the dangers.

The numbers of people aged 80 and over who develop skin cancers has soared by 57 per cent in 10 years. And while younger people are more likely to take precautions against the sun, those aged 25 to 49 are still predicted to see a seven per cent rise in skin cancers this year. Anyone who notices any unusual changes to their skin should contact their GP.

Cancer Research UK has partnered with Nivea Sun to advise the public to stay in the shade between 11am to 3pm, cover up with clothes, a hat and UV-protected sunglasses, and use sunscreen with protection levels of at least factor 30.

Finding safety in shade goes right back to biblical times. The book of Jonah even tells us that: 'the LORD God prepared a vine, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to deliver him from his discomfort. So, Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the vine.' (Jonah 4:6)



St. Chad's Tots and Tinies

St Chad's Church (Roslin Road, Irby)

Every Thursday 9.30-11.30am
(Term Time Only)



£1.50 for one Adult and one child - All Welcome

Additional children £1.00
Additional Adults £0.50



Parents/Carers will be
responsible for their child(ren)
during the sessions

For further information
please contact **Allison**
via the Parish Office 648 8169

14th July brings us Sea Sunday, the day when Christian churches remember, pray and give thanks for the more than 1.5 million merchant seafarers worldwide. If seafarers seem irrelevant to your daily life, think again: 90 per cent of everything you buy in the shops comes to you by sea. Merchant seafarers quite literally keep our global economy afloat. Yet it is a tough life, far from loved ones. Merchant ships are harsh working environments, never mind the threat of piracy or even shipwreck.

To help the seafarers, a worldwide network of port chaplains has sprung up. They offer hospitality and friendship, as well as practical, emotional and spiritual support, providing **almost a 'home from home' in hundreds of ports, in more than 50 countries.** You might wish to support one of these three well-known societies: The Mission to Seafarers (Anglican), The Apostolate of the Sea (Roman Catholic), and **The Sailors' Society** (inter-denominational).

July
Sea
Sunday
Remember
Pray
Give
Thanks
Merchant
Seafarers
Daily
Shops
Economy
Afloat
Harsh
Working
Environ-
ments
Piracy
Shipwreck
Hundreds
global
Port
Chaplains
Hospitality
Friendship
practical



Reflecting Faith: The Church and politics (with a small 'p')

When you drive in the English countryside you should be able to see at least one church spire or tower from pretty much anywhere. Just about every village has its own church building.

The size and grandeur of these village churches varies greatly, and was usually dependent on who paid for them in the first place!

In the main they were built with money from the local 'Lord of the Manor' – not necessarily a 'Lord' in the titled sense, but the person who owned the majority of the land and properties. Most people would work for him and live in a house provided by him. The two went together. Often, in order to keep their job and home, they were expected to attend 'the Lord's' church.

Many such churches were constructed at a time when people assumed that the more money you gave to the church, the greater would be your place in heaven. Hence the ostentatiousness in many a small village church!

By the early 1800s society had begun to change shape rapidly. The Napoleonic Wars which had been raging in Europe for many years were concluded at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. There were new processes being discovered and invented which meant changes in working practices: the 'Industrial Revolution' was well under-way.

'Society' itself began to change with industrialisation bringing working folk into towns and away from the places, people, family members and authority figures to whom they had deferred all their lives. Politicians and Society leaders were becoming concerned that the political unrest still taking place on the continent might catch on here.

This month: Have a look at a town church or a city church this month. See if you can find out anything about its history. Was there any reason for it being built where it is that reflects faith?



Reflecting Faith: Commissioner Churches

When you look carefully at churches in towns, you may notice there are many similarities in their designs.

That's because Parliament in 1818 and later in 1824 brought about an Act to enable new churches to be built particularly in towns where the population had grown exponentially due to the industrial revolution and general movement away from the countryside and into town-based work and homes.

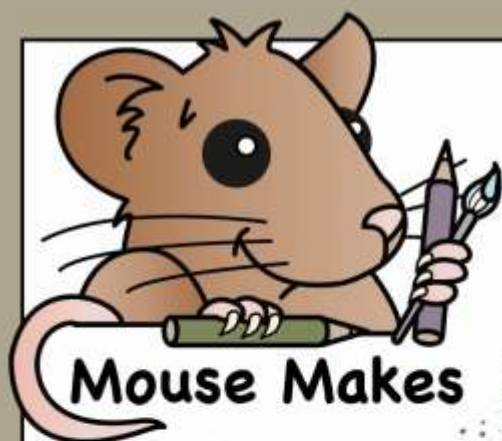
These are known as Commissioners, Waterloo or even Million Act churches. The body overseeing the work was the Church Building Commission; the Act followed the end of the Battle of Waterloo and guess how much money was voted to be used by the first Act? The second amount in 1824 was only half a million. All the money was to be used for the Church of England as the 'established' church in Great Britain.

In some cases the Commissioners provided the full cost of the new church; in other cases they provided a partial grant and the balance was raised locally. In total 612 new churches were provided.

One can imagine the significance in those days for country folk to find a local church when they moved away from everything they had known. Not only would it have been spiritually uplifting but they would have been social hubs where connections and friendships were made as well as points of support and practical help; especially for those away from their extended families.

This month: Have a look at your own church and consider what it stands for in your community. What is it that those attending most seek and appreciate? Perhaps ask someone who does not regularly attend church services what they think.





How many days did the Lord
tell Joshua to march around
the city of Jerico?

Joshua 6:3



What did the priests
carry that were made
from rams' horns?



What was carried
along behind the priests?

The _____
Joshua 6:4

Joshua 6:4



On the seventh day
how many times did
they march around Jerico?

Joshua 6:6



Who was saved from
Jerico along with
her family?

Joshua 6:17

READ

the story
in Joshua
5:13-6:27



JERICO • LORD • JOSHUA • ISRAEL • KING • PRIESTS • GUARD

CAMP • MARCH • AROUND • DAYS • WALK • ONCE • BLOW • HORN • SOUND

DAWN • SHOUT • CITY • WALL • FELL • FLAT • FIRE • BURN • DESTRUCTION

Find the question answers in the word search too!

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We're here to help
people with sight loss
live the life they choose.

guidedogs.org.uk



Guide Dogs

Talk and Demonstration

Sat. 20th July 2pm –4pm

St Chad's Garden or Hall (depending on weather)

Dawpool WI - Remembrance Poppies

Dawpool WI are planning a “cargo net” display of Poppies for Irby Village for November. If you would like to support them by knitting poppies or supplying red (poppy colour) wool, please speak to Elizabeth Barton. The knitting pattern is available at the back of church.



Gardening Help

A very small number of people are presently looking after St Chad's and St Bartholomew's borders, raised beds and remembrance garden.

If this is something you enjoy and have a little time to spare, please let me know.

Your help would be welcomed and it is said gardening is good for your health and mind. I find it very therapeutic to be outside emersed in nature and feel close to God.

Julie



What's the Big Idea?

An Introduction to the Old Testament : Ruth

The book of Ruth is a story of God's grace operating in difficult circumstances, during the period of the Judges. It unfolds as a four-act drama, telling the story of how Naomi, her husband and two sons left Judah for Moab, where her sons married. When Naomi's husband and sons died, she returns to Bethlehem in Judah.

In the first act, Naomi tells her Moabite daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, to stay in Moab. However, Ruth refuses to leave Naomi and accompanies her to Bethlehem (chapter 1). In the next act Ruth meets Boaz, a relative of Naomi, while gathering barley in his fields (chapter 2).

The third act takes place at the threshing floor where Boaz is asleep and Ruth lies at his feet. She expresses her desire to marry him, as her kinsman-redeemer. But Boaz tells her of another prior claim (chapter 3). Finally, at the city gate, the other relative renounces his claim, and Boaz marries Ruth (chapter 4).

In Ruth's story we see God's unseen hand directing the lives of the characters to accomplish his purpose e.g. *'Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning'* (1:22). He transforms Naomi's sorrow into joy, rewarding Ruth with a place of honour in Israel's history. In Boaz, we see a foreshadowing of the work of Jesus Christ, as he pays the price to secure Ruth's future.

'In its artful telling of this 'outsider' widow, uprooted and obscure, who turns out to be the great-grandmother of David and the ancestor of Jesus, the book of Ruth makes it possible for each of us to understand ourselves, however ordinary, as irreplaceable in the full telling of God's story'. (Eugene Peterson).

What's the Big Idea?

An Introduction to the Old Testament : 1 & 2 Samuel

1 & 2 Samuel was originally a single work, which focuses on Samuel, Saul and David, around 1,000 BC, mid-way between Abraham and Jesus. It was Samuel who established the monarchy in Israel after the period of the judges. He was commanded by God to give the people a king, although their request is seen as a rejection of God's rule over Israel (8:7). The people simply wanted to be like other nations, however their king was still subject to God's law and the word of the prophet. Although Samuel anointed Saul, he soon showed an unwillingness to submit to these requirements, leading to his rejection as king (15:23). God chose David as Saul's successor, and 1 Samuel depicts David's years of waiting until the right time arrived to claim the throne.

2 Samuel depicts David's rule, in which the nation prospers and its enemies are defeated. The promise of the perfect king is fulfilled in Jesus Himself, as David's descendant. The second half of the book depicts the darker side of David's reign, describing his weaknesses and failures, including his adultery with Bathsheba and the rebellion of his son Absalom.

Nevertheless, David remained a man after God's own heart: *'The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.'* (1 Samuel 16:7). The characters in this book are not always great examples of faith, however, *'They do not show us how we should live but how in fact we do live, authenticating the reality of our daily experience as the stuff that God uses to work his purposes of salvation in us and in the world.'* (Eugene Peterson).

God in the Sciences: Wonders of the Living World

What are the best metaphors we could use to describe biological things? You might be used to hearing phrases like ‘your genetic blueprint’ or ‘survival of the fittest’, but are they helpful or even accurate? Some of these words fail to capture the wonder and joy of understanding something new about the nature of living organisms.

I learned that one researcher was using the phrase ‘The Snuggle for Existence’ as a way to convey the idea, familiar to biologists, that cooperation is at the heart of the living world. For example, every cell more complex than a bacterium contains minute energy factories, each one containing their own piece of DNA – which makes them a sort of miniature cell, hidden away inside the larger host cell. These ‘mitochondria’, as biologists call them, turn raw materials from the host into chemical energy. In this way, everyone benefits: the mitochondria now have a safe a place to live, and the host receives the energy it needs. There are many more examples of organisms working together to produce something that is more than the sum of its parts, where often the individual parts could not survive on their own.

‘The Map of Life’ is a way of describing the regularities we see in biological processes. Eyes, legs and wings have emerged in the living world again and again, and why not? If the properties of light and gravity remain constant, we should expect living things to find the same solutions to seeing or getting around. When we look at these organisms’ family trees, we see they share a common ancestor that had no eyes, or no wings. These structures have developed completely independently, or you could say that the paths of the living world have converged on the same solution. That’s not to say they had a conscious goal, but that the world has certain properties, and those properties have channelled biological processes in certain directions.

None of these stories give us definite evidence for God. Science simply provides data, which can often be interpreted in several different ways. Perhaps the world just happens to be full of mathematical regularities, maybe there’s an overarching physical law we don’t yet understand, or perhaps there are multiple universes and ours happens to be the one in which life has arisen. But I believe that the observations scientists make about the living world are compatible with the existence of the God described by Christian faith.

More at wondersofthelivingworld.org.

God in the Sciences:

Exploring the Big Questions: scientists and theologians share their views

It's important to have debates about science and Christian faith and to dig into the hot topics, but we can't exist solely on a diet of controversy. I find it helpful, at times, to simply enjoy the wonders revealed by science and the big questions they raise about meaning and purpose. What's the universe for? What do you do with your feelings of awe and wonder? Where do we get our sense of the value of the living world from? I had the privilege of meeting a group of Christian scientists and theologians who shared thoughts about these big questions, and will share some of their thoughts here.

The Oxford-based theologian Alister McGrath shared that "science is wonderful at asking questions. Some of those questions can be answered, but very often when you do answer them, they simply open up yet more questions. But of course, there are some more fundamental questions I think science simply cannot answer...questions like, 'Why am I here?'"

Rhoda Hawkins, a physicist at Sheffield University, has had a similar experience. "I never cease to be amazed at quite how impressive the world is, and how impressive the mechanisms are for how things work...It really is beautiful in many ways, and it leads me to think about God. I'm not saying that I have any proof, but I'm saying that by looking at the world around me it tells me more about God and it leads me to worship Him."

Another scientist who appreciates beauty is Jeff Hardin, who explained that "studying the wonders of the living world is an exercise in art appreciation. For me, God is the creator of everything... so the joy of discovery is also the joy of appreciating the world that God has made...and leads me to thank God for the amazing world that we have to enjoy and to explore."

I will close with some words from Jeff Schloss, who – like the others quoted above – finds that Christian faith makes science more satisfying for him. "Once I became a Christian...I had the sense that I was studying the marvels of the natural world, which are marvellous in their own right but become more profoundly engaging and enticing when one thinks that you're studying the works of God." Perhaps if we can spend more time listening to people like this, our discussions about science and faith will also be richer and deeper.

Quotes from videos on www.wondersofthelivingworld.org

God in the Arts : **‘Glorious the song when God’s the theme’: Johannes S Bach**

‘Surprised by Joy’ is the title C S Lewis gave to his spiritual autobiography. To him, joy meant not just the name of the woman he eventually married, but also an awareness of God’s glory and goodness. It was something that, like Wordsworth, he experienced in childhood, and later in his thirties when his faith was relit. That experience of joy Jesus shared with His disciples at the Last Supper: it is a word that permeates chapters 16 and 17 of St John’s Gospel.

And it is a word that lies at the heart of the music of J S Bach. Whenever he set Freude, the German word for joy, his music rises to a new level of movement and excitement. The joy is there, not just as a word set to music, but as the heart and life of all his compositions. Almost a thousand works with many for church worship: two Passions, three oratorios, six motets, a Magnificat, a great mass setting, nearly 200 church cantatas, 143 chorale preludes for organ, and dozens of other works – and that is just the music we have, for much has been lost.

When Bach moved to Leipzig in 1723, he had the task as choirmaster of composing cantatas for each Sunday of the year for five years, as well as looking after the choir, teaching, and tending his own family. And all with a reduced salary and social status, dreary living conditions, and a choir that was ill-fed and badly housed. The miracle is that he produced work of such beauty and wonder and grace. There is a logic and a technical precision behind his music, but also a living pulse. One moment he can reach into the depths of the soul as it faces the realities of sin, death and judgment. The next, it is ecstasy and joy at the birth and resurrection of Christ.

Next month we continue our look at Bach’s music.



God in the Arts :

‘Glorious the song when God’s the theme’: J S Bach’s joy and dance

In 1956 a small novel by a German writer, Johannes Rüber, appeared in an English translation. It was called ‘Bach and the Heavenly Choir’ and tells of Pope Gregory XIX’s desire to elevate Bach to the ranks of the saints. To bring together the Lutheran bishop and his own cardinals, he organises a great Bach festival in Rome. At the festival he announces his plan and the reasoning behind it: that in J S Bach ‘faith has become music.’

In that realisation lies the grace and glory of Bach’s achievement, and why we treasure his works today. The irony is that the bulk of his music was never published in his lifetime. The six Brandenburg Concerti, beautifully copied out and offered, were never performed and the music put in a cupboard. His music in all probability would have been lost for ever had it not been for a young Mendelssohn, who just happened to find a manuscript of the St Matthew Passion in his music teacher’s house. He recognised it for its brilliancy and beauty and ordered a massive search to unearth the decaying manuscripts.

So much of Bach’s music was inspired by his joy in believing. Just consider one of the six motets, ‘Jesu, meine Freude’ (Jesus, my joy). It was probably written for a memorial service in July 1723. In his other works, Freude, or ‘joy’, releases new movement. In this motet, the word is kept within the constraints of the chorale melody that acts as a framework for the motet. The word that brings a joyous release is Geist, Spirit – when it appears, then each voice joins in the chase as notes spill over the page and into our ears, proclaiming the inspiration of God’s Spirit in human life.

This spirit of joy helps us realise that what makes Bach’s music so vital and rewarding is that total sense of movement and dance. Wilfred Mellers wrote a book ‘Bach and the Dance of God,’ showing how so much of Bach’s music is dance-inspired from lively gavottes to more stately sarabandes that can be heard in both the instrumental and choral music. Widor, like Bach a great organist, wrote that ‘For me Bach is the greatest of preachers.’

And what does he preach? That in the end, all is dance and life in the power of God’s Spirit. In ‘Jesu, meine Freude’ as in all his music we hear and relish the movement and pulse of his compositions that open up for us a world where all is joy and dance. That is how Dante ended his vision of Paradise, where everything is movement and dance, and what moves the sun and the other stars is love.

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Associate Minister Revd Ailsa Whorton CF (Chaplain to the Forces, Army). revdailsa@thurstaston.org.uk Ailsa works full time and will reply to emails when she is able around her work commitments 678 4733 (Evenings only and messages will be passed on to Ailsa via her husband Derek)	Bellringing - Tower Captain Dr Peter Robson 648 6691
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Baptisms and Weddings

To arrange a baptism or wedding, please telephone the Rector,
Revd Jane Turner on 0151 648 1816
or the Church office on 0151 648 8169.

JULY 2024 SERVICES

Morning Prayer St Chad's Prayer Room 9.00am MOST Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays
(check with Revd Jane for cancellations due to other meetings or commitments)

EVERY Wednesday 10.30am HC at St Chads

Sun 7th July	9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's 10.30am Holy Communion at St Bartholomew's
Sun 14th July	9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's 10.30am All Age service at St Chad's
Sun 21st July	9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's 10.30am Morning Worship at St Bartholomew's
Sun 28th July	9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's 10.30am Communion at St Chad's
Sun 4th August	9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's 10.30am Holy Communion at St Bartholomew's

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