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CHURCH NEWS

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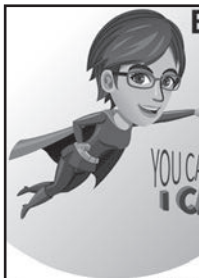

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Associate Priest: The Rev'd Joy BISHOP, 21 Farmdown Road **603074**
Curate: The Rev'd David CLARK **07999 596590**

Parish Office: Holy Trinity Church, Baswich Lane, ST17 0BY **253111**

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	Mr. P. PARK, 11 Holly Drive	664547
Congregational Wardens:	Holy Trinity – Mrs. B. FOSTER	246433
	St. Thomas' – Mr. C. JONES	663883
	All Saints – Mr. B. GILSON	660010
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	Secretary –	
	Treasurer – Mr. A. MORRISON	223228
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The Three Decker

Berkswich Parish Magazine

www.berkswich.org.uk

APRIL

A Letter from Patrick Park, our Churchwarden

The schools are back and shops open as we all move along on life's journey with our eyes fixed firmly ahead in the hope of some sort of a new normality without Covid. This normality we hope for is not only in our own personal lives but also in our own Church Community.

However, it is worth looking back over the many Services that have been part of our participation in the story of Easter. For me, part of that participation has been to be a member of the Church Choir where one expects to sing a wide range of Hymns and Anthems reflecting the sorrow of Christ's death, and as I write this, with the anticipation of the celebration of His Ascension to come.

This year of course was no exception, despite the strange circumstances that have been our daily lives. For the Church Choir, this particular Easter saw us singing together in an experience like no other. No one could have imagined and certainly not agreed to in pre-COVID-19 times, to carry out the preparations and skills needed for a performance in Church during Lent and Easter Day. Our Organist and Choirmaster, along with Fr. Graham, chose the music which included everything from four-part Anthems to solo voice(s). With help from other members of the congregation each line of music for each individual part was recorded, then separately, the organ accompaniment part was recorded. There were 16 pieces of music prepared by each member of the choir who then recorded themselves. Each finished individual recorded part was then emailed to a special email address especially set up to prepare the finished - now ten recordings - pieces of music. Of course, we weren't singing together as a choir even then. For that to happen we had to have a member of the Choir with the musical expertise, the IT software and the skills to put it all together. Each part then had to be balanced against each other to achieve a finished level of performance ready for each Service. In past times to prepare such a recording of the whole choir, the process would have been a major exercise for just one special piece of music. The choir would have had to travel to and be recorded in a professional Studio. This recording would have taken the time and expertise with all the costs that would go with that before the finished performance. How times have changed and how the power of music has again brought people together.

As we say our prayers at the end of each day let us remember all those who have worked hard to keep our spiritual lives together.

Finally, once we are back in church buildings again, you are very welcome to join our Church Choir each Friday evening or, if you wish, contact us for more information.

Patrick Park

PARISH OFFICE: For Baptisms, Marriages and other enquiries, please telephone the Parish Office on 01785 253111 (Weekdays 10 am to 12 pm except Bank Holidays) or email: parishoffice@berkswich.org.uk Berkswich Parish Website: www.berkswich.org.uk **(Closed at the present time.)**

SERVICES May 2021

2nd May	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist	Holy Trinity	Acts 8. 26 - end
5th Sunday	6.30 pm		and On Line	1.John 4. 7 - end
of Easter	6.30 pm	Evening Prayer	On Line	John 15. 1 - 8
5th May	8.00 pm	Compline	On Line	
9th May	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist	Holy Trinity	Acts 10. 44-end
6th Sunday			and On Line	Ps. 98, 1.John 5. 1 - 6
of Easter	6.30 pm	Evening Prayer	On Line	John 15. 9 - 17
12th May	8.00 pm	Compline	On Line	
13th May	8.00 pm	Eucharist	On Line	
Ascension Day				
16th May	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist	Holy Trinity	Acts 1. 15- 17, 21-end
7th Sunday				Ps. 1, 1.John 5. 9 - 13
of Easter	6.30 pm	Evening Prayer	On Line	John 17. 6 - 19
19th May	8.00 pm	Compline	On Line	
23rd May	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist	Holy Trinity	Acts 2. 1 - 21
Pentecost			and On Line	Ps. 104 26 - 36, 37
	6.30 pm	Evening Prayer	On Line	Romans 8. 22- 27
25th May	8.00 pm	Compline	On Line	
30th May	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist	Holy Trinity	Isiah 6. 1 - 8, Ps. 29 Ps. 29
Trinity Sunday			and On Line	Romans 8. 12 - 17
	6.30 pm	Evening Prayer	On Line	John 3. 1 - 17
2nd June	8.00 pm	Compline	On Line	

...by faith we might
receive the
promise of the Spirit
Galatians 3:14

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Lockdown Anniversary Project

We have had some stunning flags included in our community art project based on and around the Lychgate at Holy Trinity on Baswich Lane. Please do go and have a look when you are next in the area - and you can still be involved too.

Words of hope and words expressing the pain and loss we have experienced have been hung above the gate, and you are invited to create a prayer flag to be hung alongside (see the photo for an example).

Blank flags are available in a box in the lychgate for you to use to express lament for what the year has given or hope for what we might be facing in the future (obviously you are most welcome to use your own material too). We have found that using a sharpie type felt pen on the fabric works well.

Finished flags can be placed in the box in the lychgate for hanging.

MOTHERS' UNION SUMMER OF HOPE

Hope – something most of us have called on over these last 18 months – more than ever before.

This year Mothers' Union Summer of Hope campaign will be bigger and better than ever. For the first time we are planning a campaign that will run for three months, starting in June with the launch of MU on the Move, to engage members across Britain and Ireland to take part in 145 themed walks, runs or other forms of exercise, raising funds to spread hope around the world. In June and July many of our branches will hold wonderful events to celebrate and raise vital funds. The Summer of Hope campaign will draw to a close with a month of fellowship and praise to mark the centenary of our founder Mary Sumner's passing.

At Berkswich we are optimistically looking forward to resuming our normal activities once lockdown eases and our first meeting will certainly be one of celebration. A celebration of being together once again, catching up with old friends and seeing how we can boost our much depleted funds in support of the Summer of Hope campaign.

Christine Gilson

Matthew Parker was consecrated as the 12th Bishop of Stafford at Lambeth Palace

Bishop Matthew admitted his journey to episcopal ordination had been "a long and winding road" after his initial consecration date in January was postponed due to the pandemic. Wednesday's ceremony was limited to a handful of guests - including the Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave and chief consecrating bishop Anthony Poggo (pictured above).

"It has felt to be something of a long and winding road towards episcopal ordination but I got there in the end and I am grateful for the prayers, support and best wishes that Sarah and I have received since the announcement back in September," said Bishop Matthew.

"On the day of the consecration, whilst necessarily reduced in scale and numbers, I nonetheless had six close family members with me in the chapel at Lambeth Palace and the service was powerful and meaningful.

"It was a particular joy and privilege that Bishop Anthony Poggo was the chief consecrating bishop. Bishop Anthony is the Archbishop of Canterbury's Advisor on Anglican Communion Affairs, having been Bishop of Kajo-Keji in South Sudan. I felt very strongly my connection with sisters and brothers across the world, many of whom minister in deeply challenging situations.

"Whilst it was wonderful to bear the resonant but hard-to-explain title of Episcopal Vicar for the Stafford Episcopal Area for two months, it is a relief now to actually be the Bishop of Stafford! I am excited about where the Spirit is leading the church in these uncertain times. I am daunted by the task ahead, but I am encouraged by the fellowship of God's people and the eternal faithfulness of God.

"At my consecration, the Archbishop of Canterbury preached on Colossians 1.15-29 in which Paul sets out a charge - not just for a bishop but every Christian person. We are made "servants of the gospel" and it is Christ "we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ". Please pray for me, that I will be true to this calling and that we will all be faithful in proclaiming Christ, "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation". To him be the glory."

Pictured below (from left): Bishop of Croydon Jonathan Clarke, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, Bishop Matthew, Bishop Anthony Poggo, Bishop Michael and Bishop of London Sarah Mullaly.

Synods an d saints – could it be you?

The parliament and councils of the Church of England are up for election this year - Julie Jones explains:

There can be no better time of the year to begin our journey on the government's path out of Covid restrictions. After celebrating the resurrection of Jesus at Easter, the greatest possible sign of hope and purpose for us all, this month we celebrate Pentecost, where the Holy Spirit came to the disciples, God's constant presence with each believer.

As we read the story of Pentecost in the book of Acts, we quickly find those first believers organising themselves for the various tasks that were needed and issues that arose. Questions of donations, preaching, evangelising, social care and decision-making. For me Pentecost is therefore a time to consider God's call on my life and to try and discern what He might be asking of me in the coming year.

This is a pivotal time in the life of the national church as we begin to gather again but also continue to reflect on the new things we have learnt recently. Lichfield Diocese has responded to the challenges facing us by launching **Shaping for Mission**, a complete review of our work and mission, seeking God's guidance for the next phase of our life together.

Just like our civil government by parish, county and national councils, the Church of England is managed through its organisation of parochial church councils, diocesan and general synods. In the diocesan office we have embarked upon the whole process of elections, for both General Synod and Diocesan Synod. Could membership of either of these two bodies be something God might be calling you to? We need people of vision, hope and energy to work with us at this vital time.

Both Diocesan and General Synod are split into Houses of clergy and laity. Any clerk in Holy Orders who is a member of the deanery synod can stand for election to the House of Clergy. Any lay person who is an actual communicant member of the Church of England of 16 years or upwards and whose name is entered on the roll of any parish in the deanery or who is a lay person declared by the dean to be an habitual worshipper at the cathedral church of the diocese, is qualified for election. Candidates must be nominated and seconded by a qualified elector and must indicate their willingness to serve. Please note you do not need to be a member of Deanery Synod to stand as a lay member in either election.

Our diocesan vision prayer says this:

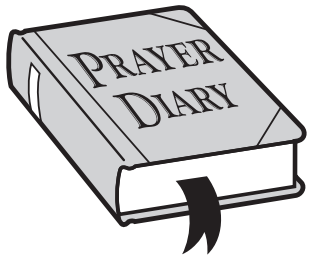
"As we follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad, we pray that the two million people in our diocese encounter a church that is confident in the gospel, knows and loves its communities, and is excited to find God already at work in the world. **We pray for a church that reflects the richness and variety of those communities. We pray for a church that partners with others in seeking the common good, working for justice as a people of hope.**"

In that context please prayerfully consider whether you might stand for election this summer. Do feel free to call us on 01543 306067 or email **julie.jones@lichfield.anglican.org** if you have any questions.

Julie Jones is the Chief Executive Officer for Lichfield Diocese

Read more about the election process and structure of the diocese at **www.lichfield.anglican.org/synod-committee-info.php**

DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD



PRAYER FOR PENTECOST

Loving Father God,
Thank you for sending your Holy Spirit;
Your Spirit who knows no restrictions or barriers;
Your Spirit who can reach us and be with us and in us, wherever we are, whatever our circumstances;
Your Spirit who comforts and heals and empowers us to live with confidence that, ultimately, all shall be well;
Your Spirit who connects us, through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.
Because of Jesus' victory over death we have hope and life forever.
Thank you, loving Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

ASCENSION

To complete Your seamless robe, and so to complete our faith, You ascended through the air into the heavens, before the very eyes of the apostles. In this way You showed that You are Lord of all, and are the fulfilment of all creation. Thus from that moment every human and every living creature should bow at Your name. And, in the eyes of faith, we can see that all creation proclaims Your greatness.

A prayer of Bernard of Clairvaux (1090 – 1153). He was the main inspiration of the Cistercian Order of Monks.

God of all Creation,
We come, together or apart,
Longing to meet with you
To be refreshed and restored,
By the spring of living water,
By the source of all life.
In your mercy, meet with us here.
Amen

Lord God,
Over this last year you have shown us many things:
The fragility of our lives,
Our dependence on others
And how special Christian community is.
Help us to work through these lessons
With humility and grace,
As we rediscover the wonder and the strength
Of belonging to you and to each other.
Amen

Lord, you have committed yourself
To love us to the end.
Help us to respond with
New depths to our loving,
New heights to our praising,
New lengths to our serving,
New breadths to our praying,
As we follow in the footsteps of Christ,
Filled with your Holy Spirit.
Amen

Faithful God,
You offer us the gift of faith
So that we can put our trust in you.
Grant us in our turn
Faithfulness towards others
So that they too may come to trust in you.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen

Poems

ASCENSION DAY THIS YEAR IS ON 13TH MAY

ASCENSION (Luke 24:44-53)

Scriptures fulfilled,
Minds opened,
We followed Him to Bethany.
And there was joy in the blessing
Of our risen Lord,
Jesus, God on earth.

And in the blessing
Was the leaving,
And in the leaving
Was the blessing –
His Spirit of life and power
To witness to the world
Of our ascended Lord,
Jesus, man in heaven.

By Daphne Kitching

THE TRAVELLERS

They travelled together sad and forlorn
With all of their dreams shattered and torn,
It started so well, their hopes were high
Never to guess that He would die.

The Man joined the two as they walked along,
He asked why their faces were sad and long,
'Have you not heard' disbelieving they cried
'How the One we followed was crucified?'

Opening the scriptures He began to unfold
How the Christ should suffer as written of old,
It was not a disaster, but all of God's plan
That one should come as Redeemer of man.

They listened enraptured as slowly they saw
The purpose of God revealed in the Law
The Prophets and Psalms, it's all about Him
The One who should come and rescue from sin.

O that eyes should be opened and scripture made plain,
To see Christ in its pages again and again,
That just like the travellers I too should see
The Master, the Saviour dying for me.

By Megan Carter

Nigel Beeton writes: "A few weeks ago, the UK paused to remember the devastation that Covid-19 has caused. Who could imagine that in just a year such a thing could happen. What a tribute to those who laboured long and hard to achieve that.

I realise that some of us still await the first dose of the vaccine, and I hope that they will soon get it. I also realise that some vaccinators are men; it was just that, for me, on both occasions I met A Lady with the Shot.

So, begging pardon for the awful pun, and to Alfred, Lord Tennyson for crimes against his masterpiece, here is my poem:"

A LADY WITH THE SHOT

On either side the dangers lie
We may sicken, we may die;
We cannot drive, we cannot fly,
We must wear masks, but some ask, "why?"
"It's just a massive plot!"
Though some may protest loud and shrilly
We have to tell them, "don't be silly,"
There's just one route from fear so chilly:
The covid vaccine shot!

Through long and anxious toilsome days
They sought for virus-killing ways,
It's hard to find the words of praise –
Their skill and knowledge just amaze!
They loosed a Gordian Knot!
For months the news had gone so badly
How nice to turn from thinking sadly
And go and meet so very gladly
A lady with the shot!

And now must all folk gladly share
The vaccine which, with equal care
Protects all people, everywhere
If its use is wise and fair.
We must share what we've got.
And then at last this virus stealthy
Will threaten no-one – poor or wealthy
No more masks to keep us healthy
This clever vaccine shot!

A sermon preached by Fr. Graham following the death of the Duke of Edinburgh

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end".

What do you say to words like that after the 12 months we've just had? After the news of the loss of someone who lived such an extraordinary life of dedicated service. Someone who, as Bishop Michael put it, "lived a life of service, commitment and courage;…[Someone who] has been constantly loyal in his support of the Queen and tireless in his engagement with people of all communities across our country… [someone whose] advocacy for young people, for conservation and for a wide range of charitable activities has been remarkable, and is an inspiration to us all".

Well, perhaps we need look no further than the Book of Lamentations, which is our Old Testament reading today.

If, after the service is over, you were to go to your bookshelves, or wherever in your house you keep your bibles, and were to read from the beginning of this book, read the three chapters preceding this, it's fair to say you'll probably feel pretty bleak - probably feel quite a serious drought of hope. Jerusalem is lonely and empty of people. Like a widow she cries all night long. God in (justifiable) anger has laughed at the soldiers of Zion and withdrawn every source of light. The old men sit in dust and ashes, the young women walk around as if lost. Babies are crying and children are starving. The nations are in despair, and this book bears witness to the voices of unrelenting lament rising from the rubble of a Jerusalem devastated by the Babylonians; from those closed off from the temple, the centre of their worshipping life; from a people who had been separated and distanced by the events of the time (the poems probably originated from Judeans who remained in the land during the time of exile).

The language and despair from the five poems of Lamentations is almost suffocating – but then we get this. The voice which up to this point had been delivering an unrelenting litany of lament, sounds out a voice of hope…

Yes, things are difficult. Yes, things have been hard. But… in spite of everything I have just said, in spite of all the experiences I have listed down here to you today; in spite of all that, even with the wound and scars and pangs of all that; in spite of all that, even in the midst of all that there is this – this thing I call to mind and, therefore can have hope – this thing – this one thing which anchors me amidst all the storms of the world :- **"the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases"…**

Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh
June 10, 1921 ~ April 9, 2021

Memory is a powerful thing – as I'm sure we can all attest to, it can haunt or heal, lead to despair or celebration.

Memory is of critical importance to Jewish worship and life – just as it is ours. The people of Israel lived between memory and hope – the memory of what God had done, and the hope that God would do it again.

They would tell and retell the stories of God's mighty acts in their history; they would celebrate multi-media feasts and festivals recalling those mighty acts; they remembered. Remember, God said to them, when I took you out of slavery. Remember, God said to them, when I liberated you. Remember, God said to them, when I took you to the promised land. And so they did, and in that remembering, even in the darkest times, would find hope.

Our faith is the same – the cycle of the liturgical seasons, of feasts and festivals telling and retelling constantly the narrative of our faith – do this as often as you drink this, in remembrance of me – remember. Remember God incarnate, born in a stable. Remember, God's arms stretched out on the cross.

Remember, God bursting from the tomb, defeating death.

Remember, God's Spirit falling on the disciples.

Remember God calling us to go out into our world to make disciples of all people.

Remember - God has been faithful; remember, God will be faithful…

We have hope – even in the darkest times of our lives. We have hope – even in the midst of our pain. We have hope – even when all seems lost. And the reason for that hope? The steadfast love of God - the love of a God who saves us; the love of the resurrection; the love of a God who defeated death for us; the love of a God who redeems us; the love of a God whose mercies never end, and whose faithfulness is great.

Lamentation proclaims Israel's incredible faith in a God who will not let her go. That's the hope that sits amidst the smouldering rubble of a Jerusalem devastated by the Babylonians, and it's the hope which we can cling onto in our lives. The poet here doesn't remain within his immediate, personal situation, but instead lifts his gaze upwards to the infinite horizon of God's rule – even as he senses the most extreme darkness, even as the situation seems hopeless to him, he remembers. The brightness of God's light shines on him, inspiring a magnificent vision of 'God's benevolence and mercy'.

Remember. This Eastertide, as we remember once again Christ bursting from the tomb, have hope. God has been faithful; God will be faithful.

Remember. This time as we begin to open up again after the horrors of last year, have hope. God has been faithful; God will be faithful.

Remember. This week as, as a nation and people, we mourn the death of Prince Philip, who, from the moment HMS Calypso carried him in a makeshift crib made out of an old orange crate, seeking refuge from conflict, gave so much in both his military service and as a member of the Royal Family. This week, as we remember and give thanks for his steadfast love and service to The Queen and the Commonwealth, remember - Rejoice and give thanks in hope - God has been faithful; God will be faithful.

Remember, the 'Lord is good to those who wait for him.' It is good to wait quietly for the Lord – it won't be easy (there'll be times when we need to lament); it will take discipline (it will, at times, be so easy to seek the simpler paths). But, even in that waiting, even in that discipline, we still have faith; still have hope – after all, as we remember – God has been faithful; God will be faithful. His steadfast love never ceases…

Amen

Ascension Day: 40 Days with the Risen Christ

40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.)

The Gospels give us little of Christ's teachings and deeds during those 40 days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving 'farewell' in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: 'When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them.'

As Christmas began the story of Jesus' life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection!

Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: 'While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.' (Luke 24:50-1) He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: 'I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...' (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: 'they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.' (Luke 24:52,53)

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! 'I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.' (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

Trinity Sunday: Celebrating our God who is Three Persons

Trying to explain the doctrine of the Trinity has kept many a theologian busy down the centuries. One helpful picture is to imagine the sun shining in the sky. The sun itself – way out there in space, and unapproachable in its fiery majesty – is the Father. The light that flows from it, which gives us life and illuminates all our lives, is the Son. The heat that flows from it, and which gives us all the energy to move and grow, is the Holy Spirit. You cannot have the sun without its light and its heat. The light and the heat are from the sun, are of the sun, and yet are also distinct in themselves, with their own roles to play.

The Bible makes clear that God is One God, who is disclosed in three persons: Father, Son (Jesus Christ) and Holy Spirit. For example:

Deuteronomy 6:4: 'Hear O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is one.'

Isaiah 45:22: 'Turn to me and be saved… for I am God, and there is no other.'

Genesis 1:1-2: 'In the beginning God created…. and the Spirit of God was hovering…'

Judges 14:6: 'The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power…'

John 1:1-3: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.'

Luke 24:49 actually manages to squeeze the whole Trinity into one sentence. Jesus tells His disciples: 'I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power (the Holy Spirit) from on high.'

In other words, the sun eternally gives off light and heat, and whenever we turn to its brilliant light, we find that the warmth and life there as well.

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Parish Poets

THE TENDER SHADES OF GREEN IN MAY

Sunshine lighting, new leaves forming,
Nature's fine display,
Heralds in the start of summer,
The tender shades of green in May.
Bluebells and primrose in the woodlands,
Curled ferns begin to peep.
Reflections mirrored in the water;
How still the pool and deep.

Amongst the trees no sound is heard,
Except the song of happy birds.
Stay quiet for a little while,
You may glimpse a squirrel's style
As he flits from tree to tree,
So glad to be alive and free.

The sun breaks through, its golden beams
Light up the woodland path and stream.
What a joy to be alive today
In tender shades of green in May.
It only takes an hour at best
To ease the mind and feel refreshed.
These lovely woods are free to share for all
who wish to wander there.

Poet: Cynthia Shum

Another delightful ditty for our resident poet Caroline Evans

A WALK IN LOCKDOWN (3)

It is the merry month of May
Where shall I go my walk today?
Off the Milford Road I follow
A little path to Bluebell Hollow

Turn right along a pretty road
The houses all in different mode
I had to see the old Oak tree
Its spreading wings for all to see.

Admired the clever use of space
It really is a lovely place
Further up the path I strode
And then re-joined the Milford Road

To Bright Horizons made my way
On this bright and sunny day
Little children full of chatter
What to them does really matter?

Further up School Lane I went
Past the Church so Heaven sent
I paused awhile, went on my way
And down The Rise to end the day.

The Value of Listening

This little true story reflects modern life, and how we forget to listen.

On a winter's morning a few years ago, a musician picked up his violin outside the Metro railway station in Washington DC and began to play. For 45 minutes, the man wearing jeans and a long-sleeved T-shirt played six classical pieces of music. As he performed, many people hurried past, oblivious to the music and the man playing.

You can imagine them thinking he was just another busker hoping to pick up a few coins to help him through the day. Some did stop for a moment, but most continued on their way busy with their own concerns. When the man stopped playing, he'd earned a little over $32.

As you might have guessed, this was no ordinary musician, and his violin was no common violin. He was the world-renowned Joshua Bell, one of the greatest musicians of our time playing on a priceless hand-crafted violin by Stradivari from way back in 1713! Three days later Joshua Bell played to a sold-out concert in Boston's Symphony Hall where the best you could expect from $100 was a back row seat!

Sadly, this is how many people see Jesus. Many people do not take the time to stop and consider him. Perhaps they have a quick look, but they move on, preoccupied with the concerns of life, not aware of who Jesus is, what he has done and the difference he can and will make to your life.

Peter Joyce

100 YEARS of The British Legion

One hundred years ago, on 15th May 1921, the British Legion was founded in the aftermath of the First World War, to provide support to veterans of the British Armed Forces, their families and dependants.

It was created at a time when two million people were unemployed. More than six million had served in the war: of those who came back, 1.75 million had suffered some kind of disability, and half of those were disabled permanently.

Four organisations came together at the instigation of Lancastrian Lance Bombardier Tom Lister, who was angered at the Government's unwillingness to help, and Field Marshal Earl Haig, who had been Commander in Chief of the British Forces. The Legion campaigned for fair treatment of those who given everything for their country, and it continues this work today.

In 1922, the Legion's poppy factory opened in the Old Kent Road, London, with 40 disabled men manufacturing 1000 poppies a week. The first Poppy Day was held that same year. The Festival of Remembrance began in 1927, and the Legion became 'Royal' in 1971 – 50 years ago – on its golden anniversary.

At first membership of the Legion was confined to ex-Service personnel, but it was expanded to include serving members of the Forces in 1981.

Colin Hammacott praises the wonderful everyday blessing that anyone of us can give.

BE KIND TO EACH OTHER

'And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.' (Matthew 10:42)

During the Covid-19 pandemic, there have been thousands of shining examples up and down the country of people going the extra mile to help the elderly, vulnerable and those at risk. The helpers have been shopping, cooking meals, making regular telephone calls, and checking that needs are being met. We must sincerely hope that these acts of kindness will continue well beyond the coronavirus outbreak.

Simple acts of kindness are so important in cementing the fabric of our society.

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More Jokes from Mark Dudek
Guaranteed to put a smile on your face

My wife was angry with me for having no sense of direction. So I packed up my things and right.

My insomnia is severe but on the plus side there's only 6 more sleeps until Christmas.

What do you call a magician who loses his magic?
Ian.

I had to close my dating agency for chickens.
I was struggling to make hens meet.

When you pull the pin from a grenade, how do you put it back in?
Quick answers please!

I went to the doctor and said "Do you have anything for wind?"
He gave me a kite.

I went to the jewellers for a new watch. He said "Analogue?" I replied "No, just a watch."

I would like to be a millionaire just like my dad.
He always wanted to be a millionaire too.

People think being a waiter isn't a respectable job.
But it puts food on the table.

I went to the barbers. He asked me if I wanted a crew cut. I said "No, just me".

Did you hear about the king who was only 12 inches tall? He was a terrible king but he made a great ruler!

I went to my doctor and told him I was having problems hearing. He said "Can you describe the symptoms?"
I replied "Homer's yellow and fat, and Marge has tall blue hair."

The CEO of IKEA has just been made president of Sweden. He should have his cabinet together by the end of the week.

Editor: With apologies to Mark Dudek! We all laugh at his jokes!

HAVE YOU EVER LAUGHED AT A JOKE YOU DID NOT UNDERSTAND?

Then you are not alone. It seems that two thirds of us have laughed at jokes we did not 'get', simply because we wanted to fit in with our friends at the time.

And more than half of us have actually gone on to repeat jokes with punchlines which we don't ourselves understand. More than half of us have even researched a joke in order to try and figure out what was supposed to be so funny about it.

In research done by a British neuroscientist, it was found that humour that relies on puns or more obscure concepts is the most likely to confuse audiences. While laughter is universal, humour is very subjective. People all over the world laugh, but what they find to be funny varies widely, depending on culture, context and language.

During the research, it was found that two of the most misunderstood jokes are:

Some Omega-3 vitamins fell on my head when I opened the cupboard. I got super fish oil injuries.

What does a dyslexic, agnostic insomniac do at night? He stays up wondering if there really is a dog.

SUMMER FETE – 2021

1.30pm Sunday 12th September at Milford Hall Cricket Ground

Only 19½ weeks to go! It seems a long way off but it will be on us before we know it!!

As you can see from the above heading, this year's Fete has been deferred by nearly 3 months as we do not consider that its usual date of the 3rd Sunday in June(20th) is achievable due to Coronavirus restrictions. Fortunately, Milford Hall Cricket Club has been able to offer us a later date so our Fete this year will take place on–

SUNDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER

Hopefully with all our usual 'ingredients'.

The main purpose of this article is to advise you in good time of the revised date in the hope that you will highlight it on your calendar and make every effort to be with us for a long-awaited opportunity to share some good, traditional fellowship. Perhaps you could also spread the news among your friends and neighbours.

The cajoling, nagging, begging and details will, of course, follow in subsequent monthly articles. For now, please pray for a fine day and that the pandemic situation does not prevent our staging this much needed event.

Please ring me if you have any queries.

Bye for now. ***Bob Moore (664302)***

Leaving a Legacy

A way of leaving a lasting gift to the parish is to consider leaving a legacy in your will.

Information about why and how you can do that can be found at https://www.churchlegacy.org.uk

National Garden Scheme

2021 OPEN GARDEN DATES AT THE GARTH, MILFORD

Subject to Coronovirus restrictions, David and Anita Wright are hoping to open our garden to visitors again this year as part of the National Garden Scheme when we would love to see you all.

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and

SUNDAY 27TH JUNE

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EASTER DUCKLINGS

Sue Hodgens wishes to thank all those people who purchased Easter Ducklings from her – the total amount raised for church funds was £175.

BERKSWICH WI

The Annual meeting held in April on Zoom went off very smoothly. Ann Lee was voted in as President for a fourth year. Special thanks were given to retiring Committee member Sheila Fenna for her valuable input, especially for the time she has spent as being the Resolutions representative.

After the business Ann introduced the speaker "Barmy Bella", who kept everyone interested and amused at her stories of spending years being a children's entertainer. It turned out to be a very enjoyable evening.

Now that lockdown has been slightly lifted we are able to venture out at last and enjoy some of the things which came so naturally to us before Covid, such as treating ourselves to a session at the hairdressers. I think that is the first item on most of our lists. The committee are hoping to arrange meetings in gardens and hold local walks during better weather. Perhaps we may be able to meet in Walton Village Hall again soon.

The next meeting is on Zoom on May 5th at 7.0p.m. The speaker, who will be talking to us about sign language, is Glynnis Miles. The talk is entitled "One sign at a time". If anyone is interested in joining or visiting Berkswich WI please ring the Secretary Diane Hinton on 01785 620938 for more details. You will be made very welcome.

Olive Preston.

christian aid week 12–18 MAY

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JANET KEMP RIP

It is with great sadness that I have to write of the death of Janet, a much- valued member of the Three Decker Team, on April 30th.

Janet joined the team in 2006, following an appeal for people to become involved. She agreed to take on the responsibility for Advertising in 2007 when Zena Palmer gave up. This is a time-consuming job which requires great attention to detail which Janet excelled at. She worked tirelessly in this role for 10 years, until it became more difficult to do the renewals and organise visits to the family in Australia at the same time of the year.

I was enormously grateful that Janet wanted to stay on the team and her proof reading of copy at meetings was a huge help as was her support and encouragement when there were difficult decisions to make. We will miss you Janet, but we thank God for the time you offered in support of this parish's mission and outreach work.

We hold John, Deborah and Edwin and his family in our prayers.

MJ

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK PRAYERS 12 - 18 MAY 2021

Let us harness the power of our prayers and stand with communities who are seeking renewable solutions that don't damage the earth.

We pray:

That the voices of indigenous communities may be heard and heeded as we learn how tom live in harmony with nature.

For a rapid and just transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

For a radical change pf heart for politicians. We pray that as a global community we will care for people living in poverty.

Spirit of God
Who hovered over the waters,
Harness your power in us
To live faithfully and in harmony
With the rhythms of righteousness,
For the restoration of creation
And the glory of your name.

Amen

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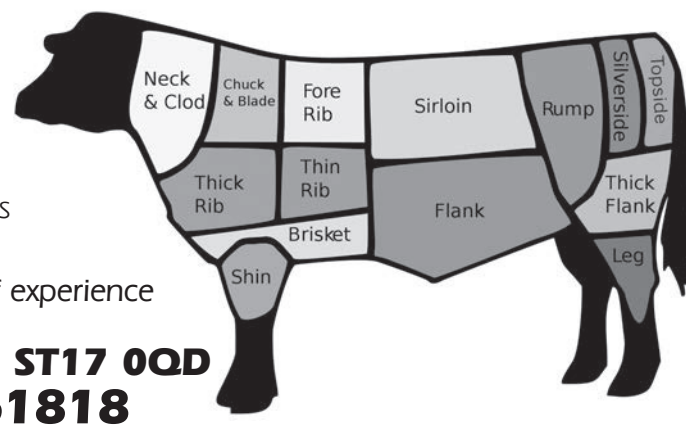

The Benhill Press Ltd., Brook Square, Rugeley, Staffs. WS15 2DU.
Tel: (01889) 583240 Email: info@benhillpress.co.uk