

# Saints ALIVE

*The magazine of:*  
*All Saints, Leighton Buzzard*  
*St. Nicholas, Hockliffe*  
*St. Michael's, Eggington*  
*St. Michael and All Angels,*  
*Billington*  
*The Good Shepherd, Sandhills*

*June 2022*

*70p*

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bedded in the  
community

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in June

Church Year Trail  
experienced by  
over 700 children

A report from the  
Stewardship  
Campaign

Plus  
CGS & Village News



# All Saints Leighton Buzzard

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## ***Lives of Service come in many guises*** ***by Rev'd Cate Irvine***



There is so much going on this June! We begin the month with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee as we celebrate 70 years since her majesty came to the throne. The Queen is well loved by so many for her dedication to public service and the Christian charity HOPE Together is encouraging churches across the country to honour her dedication with 70 Acts of Service to our local communities. The idea is to encourage people to celebrate the Jubilee by serving others and making a difference wherever you live.

Ideas include giving a card to a hidden hero to let them know you appreciate them, clearing an hour in your diary to help someone, and getting involved with local projects to clear up your area. You can find the full list by visiting [theplatinumjubilee.com](http://theplatinumjubilee.com) and clicking on the button that says "serve".

Everything that we do in church revolves around giving glory to God and serving the world for his sake, so don't underestimate what all our wonderful volunteers do to keep our churches open and support our local communities.

As Christians we are called to pattern our lives on the loving service of Jesus. This will look different for each one of us because we will all have different gifts and abilities. Some people will love getting stuck in to practical tasks, others may do things behind the scenes or simply commit to pray regularly for our community. If you haven't volunteered in Church before and think it's something you would like to find out about, do talk to someone at your church. They'll be delighted to hear from you.

At All Saints we'll be holding our second "Inspire" weekend from 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> of June with some wonderful speakers and performers to help us celebrate faith and creativity. *[See page 11 for more information. Ed.]* It's a good reminder that providing something wonderful for our community can be great fun for us too.

The month draws to a close with the feast of St Peter and St Paul, men who were so crucial in the life of the early church. This makes this one of the traditional times to hold ordinations. Mthr Kirsty will be ordained priest on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July and Dave Heather will be ordained as Deacon on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July. As you pray for them, and all who will be ordained as priest and deacons, perhaps take a moment to pray for God's call on your life.

Ministry takes so many forms and ordained ministry is just one vocation among so many. God calls each one of us and asks us to live our lives in love and service for his sake. If there's something that you have always wondered about doing in church maybe this is your moment?

This June let's rededicate ourselves to love and service in God's name. "Let your light shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Matt 5:16

***Mother Cate.***

## *Our present pattern of services across the Ouzel Valley Team*

### **All Saints**

#### **Sundays:**

**Please note new times which allow for cleaning between services**

8am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Eucharist

11.30am

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays: All Age Service

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Holy Baptism

6pm Said Evening Prayer

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: followed by Benediction

#### **Weekdays:**

#### **Holy Communion**

7.30pm Tuesday

(Service of Healing on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)

10.00am Thursday

9.00am Saturday

**Morning Prayer:** St. Hugh's Chapel

9.00am Tuesday – Friday

### **St. Barnabas, Linslade**

#### **Sundays:**

8am Said Eucharist

10am Parish Eucharist

6pm Evensong

[www.linslade-parish.org.uk](http://www.linslade-parish.org.uk)

### **St. Leonard's, Heath & Reach**

#### **Sundays:**

8am: Holy Communion

11am Holy Communion (in church & via Zoom)

1<sup>st</sup> Sundays: Family Service

**Tuesdays:** 7pm Holy Communion

#### **Morning Prayer via Zoom:**

9.00am Monday - Saturday

[www.saintleonardschurch.com](http://www.saintleonardschurch.com)

### **St. Michael's, Eggington**

9.30am 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays: Holy Communion

### **St. Nicholas', Hockliffe**

9.30am 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays: Family Communion

4<sup>th</sup> Sundays: Holy Communion

### **St. Michael's and All Angels, Billington**

11.15am Holy Communion

### **Good Shepherd, Astral Park Sports & Community Centre, Johnson Drive, Sandhills, LU7 4AY:**

**Sundays** at 9.45am:

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday: Holy Communion & CGS Juniors

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday: 'In the Community', at Astral Park

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: Family Service

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Bring and share breakfast and Holy Communion

Free pop-up café every Sunday from 9.45am

**Sunday Saints:** for age 3+ year olds, meets during 9.30am Sunday service at All Saints.

**All Saints Toddler Time:** All Saints every Wednesday during term time, at 9.30am & at 1.30pm. £1.50 per parent / carer & child; 50p extra per child; refreshments included.

**ACTIVE:** (Senior Youth Group for age 11+) **not meeting at present because of a lack of leaders. If you could help, please contact the office.**

**Leighton Young Singers Club:** for children in Years 2-6, meets on Fridays at 6.30 - 7.30pm.

**Bereavement Café:** a support group offering friendship and understanding.

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month, 2.30-4pm The Spire Coffee Shop, All Saints

**Choir Practice:** Friday evenings, 6.45 trebles; 7.30 adults.

**Bellringers:** Practice on Monday, 7.30pm-9.30pm.

**Spire Coffee Shop:** Tuesday & Saturday 10am-2pm; Friday 10am-12noon (drinks & cakes only)

*Contact Details on Page 2.*

## News Roundup

All Saints Holiday Club 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> August “Jungle Fever” – application forms are now available from the Parish Office.

\*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*



**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June:**  
**Pentecost**  
**&**  
**The Queen’s**  
**Platinum Jubilee:**  
*See page 10 for details.*



# HOLIDAY CLUB 2022

15<sup>th</sup> August - 19<sup>th</sup> August

## Jungle Fever

Forms available  
after Easter  
or speak to  
Lindsay Bevis  
01525 381418

HAVE YOU HEARD  
ALL SAINTS HOLIDAY  
CLUB IS BACK ...



## Worth a smile

### Miscellaneous observations on life

- One who boasts of being a self-made person relieves the Lord of a lot of responsibility.
- Living on Earth is expensive, but it does include a free trip around the sun every year.
- You know that indestructible black box that is used on airplanes? Why don't they make the whole plane out of that stuff?
- The most effective way to remember your wife's birthday is to forget it once.
- Love is grand; divorce is a hundred grand.
- I had a ploughman's lunch the other day. He wasn't very happy about it.
- A gesticulation is any movement made by a foreigner.
- As long as there are exams, there will be prayer in schools.
- Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it.
- The ability to speak several languages is an asset, but to be able to hold your tongue in one language is priceless.
- Anger is just one letter short of danger.
- Nothing else ruins the truth like stretching it.

# ***Parish Registers***

## **Holy Matrimony, April:**

9: Andrew Cook & Erica Buckley at St. Michael & All Angels; 23: Carl Melton & Jennifer Cummings at All Saints

*'Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate'*

## **R.I.P. April:**

6: Robert Miller at St. Leonard's, Dorothy Germann at Bierton; 7: Doreen Oliver at St. Nicholas; 25: Albert Inwards at All Saints

*'Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die'*

## **Years Mind, June:**

1: Ada Gotzheim; 2: Sheila Aris, Barbara Macdonald; 3: Hedley Thompson, Ira Bowerman; 4: Karl Jones, Rev. David Joynes, Freda Waples; 5: Norman Griffiths; 6: Malcolm Lowe, Shirley Inns; 7: Dorothy Speller, Beryl Jessup, Sidney Westwood; 8: Robert Molloy, Doris Pullin, Shirley Jones; 9: Ann Meredith; 11: Peter Beecroft; 13: Davina Baker, Jasmine Baker; 15: Jean Waudby, Cyril Burchell; 18: Norman Cowley, John Shelley; 20: Margaret Leath, George Willett, Doris Froud; 21: Marie Cooper, Michael Hodder, Violet Beetlestone; 22: Frances Eaton, Ron McCall; 23: Edgar Hart, Minnie Eaton; 24: Norman Dillamore; 26: John Plumridge; 27: Elsie Beauchamp, Eddie Shephard; 28: David Ingledow, Rosemary Plenderleath; 30: Caroline Greco, Paul Bottos



All Saints Parish Church Leighton Buzzard

# **SUMMER FETE**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July - 11am to 3pm**

**Stall holders are needed as well as general helpers  
If you would like to register your support, then please**

**email or call Richard Parsons  
01525 371159 or 07395 051176  
eparsons77@gmail.com**

# ***Pulford VA Lower School***

***Head Teacher: Mr Dave Heather***

***Office Manager: Mrs Alison Quick***

***Tel: 01525 372188***

***Website: [www.pulfordschool.org](http://www.pulfordschool.org)***

A church school for  
a whole community



It was lovely to be able run the Church Year Trail once again now that the recent restrictions have been removed. This experience is designed for primary school children predominantly although it was also enjoyed by many adult visitors. Created a few years ago by Canon Grant, it takes you on a journey which begins on Advent Sunday taking in the festivals of Christmas and Epiphany, through the baptism of Jesus and His earthly ministry before turning your attention toward Lent, Holy Week and Easter. The trail reaches its finale with the story of the Ascension and the festival of Pentecost.

This learning opportunity is especially valuable for those who have little knowledge of the Christian faith and many local schools brought classes into All Saints to support the religious learning of their pupils.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank so many of you who helped to make this happen. With a project of this size there is a tremendous amount of work to do in setting up, guiding the children around and getting the church back together again for the Sunday Services. To all of you who contributed, you really are appreciated and the feedback received from the town schools is confirmation of just how valuable this facility is to so many people.

I hope that you enjoy looking at a couple of photos which show happy children engaged in learning a little more about Jesus.

***David Heather, Headmaster***





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BSc., AMCST  
Ryecroft, Plantation Road, Leighton  
Buzzard, LU7 3HT  
**01525 377384, or 07774 901293**  
email: [eileennaples50@outlook.com](mailto:eileennaples50@outlook.com)

## St Leonard’s Church Hall Heath and Reach

Refurbished Hall available for hire.  
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Capacity approx 130  
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[stleonardheath@gmail.com](mailto:stleonardheath@gmail.com)



36 High Street, Leighton  
Buzzard, Beds, LU7 1EA  
01525 372 204

## Selections

*Pet, Gift and Garden.  
Kitchen & workshop  
DIY & repairs  
Games & models*



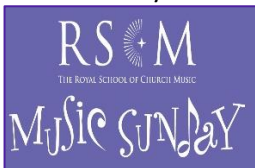
*[selections\\_pet\\_garden](http://selections_pet_garden)  
[www.selections-web.co.uk/petandgarden](http://www.selections-web.co.uk/petandgarden)*



# On a musical note.....

## RSCM Music Sunday – 12<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Here's an extract from the Royal School of Church Music website about the RSCM Music Sunday in 2020:



*“This year our annual event to celebrate the powerful role of music in Christian worship, Music Sunday, is on 14 June 2020. Churches up and down the land, whether RSCM Members or not, were encouraged to take part in this international celebration of the role music plays in the life of Christian worship.*

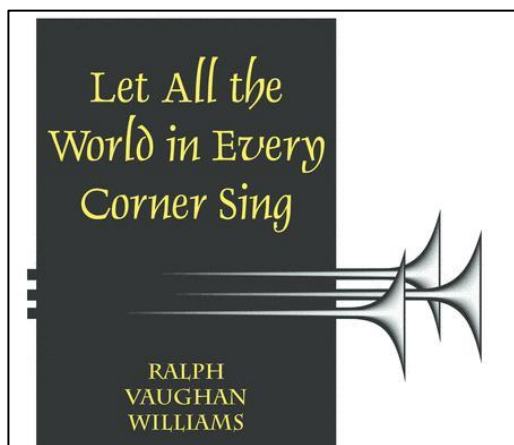
*In the words of composer John Rutter, a fellow of the RSCM and supporter of RSCM Music Sunday: ‘Music spreads joy, something in short supply in our national life at the moment’.*

*This year we have commissioned Thomas Hewitt Jones to compose an anthem especially for the event. He has set to music ‘Hymns and Psalms and Sacred Songs’, words written by Timothy Dudley-Smith, the leading hymn writer. It is based on passages from Ephesians and Colossians, and refers to singing in the early church, and to Paul’s commendation that these local fellowships should sing when they met for worship.*

*Hugh Morris, Director of the RSCM, explains the thinking behind RSCM Music Sunday 2020: ‘Music Sunday is an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the way music is used in worship, and to celebrate the contribution of the many who lead and perform it. Whilst that of course includes choirs, and our choral heritage is something we celebrate, music in worship encompasses a diverse range of styles and forms, and we want to support these, too’.*

This year, RSCM Music Sunday falls on 12<sup>th</sup> June. I had a listen to the Hewitt Jones piece and, it’s only my opinion, but I found it just a little tedious. So to celebrate Music Sunday this year, I have decided to resurrect one of the pieces which the choir learned from scratch during lockdown. It’s the last movement from Ralph Vaughan-Williams’s 5 Mystical songs named “Antiphon” – “Let all the world in every corner sing.”

If you are in church to hear it, I hope you will listen carefully to the organ part, which is not at all easy to play. Good job Sam (our Organ Scholar) enjoys a challenge!



*Paul Dickens*

# Calendar of Events

## 5<sup>th</sup> June: Pentecost

Services as usual including Messy Mass All Saints 11.30am

**Bereavement Support Café** Coffee Shop, All Saints 2.30pm – 4pm



## 12<sup>th</sup> June

Services as usual including Confirmation Service All Saints 3pm



Confirmation

## 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> June: *Inspire Weekend* All Saints

*Speakers, poetry, prayer, art, music, craft, conversation & worship*

With a Plant Sale Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>: 10am -12.30pm

**Please note: Special service times:**

**Parish Eucharist 10am & Songs of Praise 6pm.**

**There will be NO services at 8am or 11.30am.**



## The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022 at All Saints Church

### *Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June*

10am Holy Communion with 'Jubilee Cake'

### *Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June*

'May Day' Town Event with  
All Saints Preservation Trust Stall  
10am – 3pm Coffee Shop Open

### *Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June - Pentecost*

8am Holy Communion  
9.30am Parish Eucharist  
11.30am Messy Mass  
5.30pm Jubilee Evensong

*We would encourage you to represent All Saints  
at your local 'Big Lunch' event.*



# INSPIRE: A FESTIVAL OF FAITH AND HOPE

June 17, 18 19.



Last year as we began to emerge from lockdown in July I wanted to offer something to start rebuilding a sense of community and hope for the future. I normally spend the August bank holiday weekend with clergy and other friends at Greenbelt festival and so I asked my friends to help me offer a slice of that festival experience at All Saints instead.

This year we are repeating the event, but we wanted to hold it within term time so we chose a weekend in June and set about planning. I am delighted that we have a wide range of events and activities again. There will be trails and activities running for children on Saturday and Sunday and lots for people of all ages to join in with. Admission is free and refreshments at the café & the BBQ on Sunday will be available to purchase. I also hope that those who attend will give generously to support the event.

Saturday will include talks and panel discussions exploring themes such as music, poetry and craft and an interactive session on prayer. On Sunday we will have one service at 10am, a BBQ lunch and music from some of our talented local children, a Conversation Café at 4pm and at 6pm our own Songs of Praise evensong.

The highlights this year will be on Saturday morning at 11am when Rev'd Dr. Mark Oakley, Dean of St John's College Cambridge and author of several books including "A Splash of Words: Believing in Poetry", will talk to us about poetry, faith and language.



Then on Sunday at 2pm we have The Underground Clown Club performing "Love and Rabbits". Two fools take to the stage to lead you on a poetic journey through the most surreal, silly and forgotten parts of your imagination. I love this show that will delight and entertain all ages. Last year some of you will remember Katie Overstall giving us a one woman version of the show.

I'm delighted that this year she will be joined by Andrew Skipper.

Do come and join us - a full programme of events will be available from June in Church or on the All Saints webpage, [allsaintslb.org.uk](http://allsaintslb.org.uk).

*Mother Cate*

# *Around the Ouzel Valley Team*

*Eight churches, each special in their own way, but all being Christian witness to the whole community of Leighton Linlade & the villages of the Ouzel Valley*

Our aim as members of this small church has been to bring out the beauty of this lovely building for the benefit of passers-by, whether villagers or visitors to the area. Its simple design makes it easy to maintain. The grounds on the other hand are rather more challenging. Hedges overgrown with ivy, starved of nutrients by the giant Leylandii and needing a good trim are slowly taking shape with new hedging and regular care.



Our gardener Phil is keeping the grass in check with a weekly mow in the summer, keeping it to a minimum to allow native plants to flourish and the wildflowers sowed last year are beginning to appear. We have regular visitors to the garden at the back which include those with four legs as well as the two legged variety, and a resident robin called Robin who sings whenever the sun shines. *Left:* Father Noel holds our Tuesday evening service outside in the long summer evenings and somehow it holds its solemnity and adds a large helping of joy.

The large iron gate has been removed and a bower of passion flower is being established to welcome people in rather than keeping them out.

*Right:* Our dedicated team of artists is creating some colour to bring our shed in as part of the nature in the garden

We were delighted to accommodate the Pilgrims to the COP meeting held in Glasgow in October last year. They were foot-weary and tired but happy, we had an enjoyable evening of song and debate before bidding them goodnight. Some slept in the hall, some slept in the Church and being clement weather some even slept in the Hope Garden and commented on how they had experienced peace there. Being of all faiths and no faiths, they all believed in caring for one another.



## *This month, St. Leonard's, Heath & Reach bedded in the community*



*Above left:* The animal service was a big success and the picture shows how much Sidney the dog enjoyed being the centre of attention.

*Above right:* Christmas wouldn't be the same without Santa and he and Noel look as if they had perhaps met before.

*Below:* The school children always enjoy a visit to St Leonard's and the Scout parents have requested a visit after their children had passed on their experience.

I hope you can see, our Church is all about people and the things that they love, and we leave our sadness in the Churchyard and bring our joy to the Church. We welcome all with open arms.

***Richard Page***





## ***St. Nicholas, Hockliffe***

***Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney***

***Tel: 01525 237633***

***Churchwardens:***

***Brian Speller: 210565;***

***Roger Spalding: 07451 877501***



With the summer months here we are now holding our PCC meetings in the church. We will be welcoming Bishop Richard to this month's meeting, and look forward to receiving his wisdom and encouragement as he understands the challenges our small community of faith faces. We seek the power of prayer for a rightful discernment in numerical and spiritual growth, for funding the vital fabric repairs required to make our church more welcoming, comfortable and attractive. Recently we agreed our revised Mission Action Plan. It was good to get this uploaded on the Diocesan website in April.

There is a double celebration on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022. As part of the Jubilee weekend, we will be holding a celebratory Songs of Praise with refreshments to follow. It is also the Feast of Pentecost and what better way, as Christians empowered by the Holy Spirit, to celebrate the Church's birthday along with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

By the time you read this, many of us will have had the privilege of celebrating with Carol and Brian Speller, on the occasion of their Golden Wedding Anniversary. They have been stalwarts of the church and village community for a lifetime. During morning worship on the 29<sup>th</sup> May, Father Noel will bless their marriage and they will renew their marriage vows surrounded by family and parishioners. In the afternoon several of us will have joined Carol, Brian and their family for afternoon tea at their home. We all wish them both good health and happiness for many more years to come.

On the Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July we will be serving cream teas from 2pm with music arranged by Roger, one of our churchwardens. This is one of our key fund-raising events of the year. We welcome as many of those from our sister churches in the Team Ministry who can come along that afternoon. We hope that the weather will be kind so you can appreciate the beauty of the church, the churchyard and the surrounding countryside from the hilltop setting. I particularly enjoy the peaceful atmosphere in the cool of the church building that is so characteristic of our village church on a summer's day. There is a lot to think and pray about at the moment and we hope some of you will take the opportunity for reflection as we socialise away from the normal routines around our homes and gardens.

As I was thinking about writing this article, I was reminded by one of my fellow Readers in the Team, Linda Morris, that on 9<sup>th</sup> June we would both have been licensed as Readers in the Diocese for 10 years. It really doesn't seem that long that I have been sharing my ministry between St Nicholas' and All Saint's Churches. I have found it rewarding to share in worship and fellowship with this village community in the knowledge we are a Team called as God's people.

***Geoff Marchant***

# **St. Michael & All Angels, Billington**

**Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh**

**Tel: 01525 838450**

**Churchwardens:**

**Sandra Brewin 373644;**

**Julia Haviland 850380**



Jesus encouraged us to make ourselves ready for his return to the world. Many have predicted that this return will be soon as some of the portents are coming to pass at the present time; wars, famines, natural disasters and people losing love for one another. Nobody knows when he will return and those who have predicted specific dates have been made to look rather foolish. Preparation for big events is important. It encourages communities to work together and it brings a sense of excitement, purpose and joy.

The Queen is the representative of our faith in this country and she has made it abundantly clear that her position as head of the Church is an honour which she takes very seriously. She is never shy to declare her belief in Jesus Christ. This from somebody who could have said: "Why are all these unhappy things going wrong in my family?"

And so as the country is making preparations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Billington village is joining in the celebrations for 70 years of faithful service.

The most menial of tasks have to be done, so on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 27 village people set out from the Village Hall and picked up litter from the surrounding verges and ditches. The black bags crammed with rubbish filled an entire bus shelter. One litter picker was asked what he thought he was doing dumping his rubbish at the bus stop!



We have some wonderful hard working volunteers in the village and their major contribution has been to rejuvenate the seats on the village green and restore the picnic tables on the allotment field. They all now look like new and any visiting queen would be pleased to rest on them. The village is grateful to Geoff and Julia Haviland, Mike Lennard, Dave Edwards, Lorraine Mawer, Jon and Patti Daniels, Peter Davies and Phil Rickard.

A Jubilee Committee, including members from the church, the Village Hall Committee and the Parish Council have put together an enjoyable programme for the Jubilee weekend. Details can be seen on the photo of the flyer which has gone to every household in the village. All are welcome to these events to coming together in the warm sunny days of June.



## **St. Michael's, Eggington**

**Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney**

**Tel: 01525 237633**

**Church Officers:**

**Carol Hart 384634**

**Paul Brown 751861**



Liberation - I wonder, does it hold any specific significance for you? The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'liberated' as '*being freed, released, including being released from occupation or subjugation by a foreign power*'. My, there seems to be a constant need for liberation of some sort or other.

Recently I was aboard a pristine, open-top, vintage, military vehicle during the Liberation Day cavalcade on the island of Guernsey. You know what they say: 'it's not what you know.....'

I was dressed in overalls and very pleased no-one asked me to fix their truck. However my driver and co-passengers were dressed in original service uniforms, complete with the uniform provenance tucked in the top pockets. One wonders what was going through the original owner's mind on May 9th, 1945. I doubt it was 'I hope someone is wearing this uniform in 77 years' time'!

The cavalcade of around 100 military and vintage vehicles passed through all 10 parishes covering over 30 miles. The streets were lined with residents and visitors. There was a lot of flag waving and good cheer and the day culminated with fireworks over Castle Cornet in St Peter Port. May 9th is a public holiday in Guernsey - whatever day it falls on. Next year it is a Tuesday.

Needless to say this unique experience got me thinking about liberation. Guernsey's annual celebrations of its liberation from German occupation in 1945 are huge. I hope we can all reflect on our own moments of liberation - it comes in all shapes and sizes. As for celebrating, well, you are free to choose.

The recent plant sale and teas held in the beautiful church garden and village hall raised almost £700 for St Michael's. Another well attended event full of good cheer and well-organised. No flags. I am not sure the courgette plant that returned home with me is going to feel hugely liberated when I plant it in my clay soil.

Enjoy your summer, we have much to look forward to.

**Michelle Plummer**

### June dates

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup>: Elevenses in the church

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>: church service, 9.30am

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>: Jubilee BYO picnic in church garden, 1pm

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>: Quiz night, village hall, 7pm

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup>: WI, village hall, 7,30pm

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>: church/ garden working party

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>: church service, 9.30am





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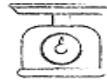


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# 2022 Stewardship Campaign



On the 20th of February this year we launched our 2022 Stewardship Campaign based around The Parable of the Talents. 27 people signed up to take part and use their 'talents' to raise money for the church. Many people pooled their ideas together and we ended up with a total of 20 different fundraising initiatives!

Some people did a bake sale, others arranged raffles. We've had people making and selling greetings cards and people selling items on Leighton Buzzard Market. Musicians raised money by giving a concert whilst others hosted coffee mornings. In the future, I know the choir are planning something special and I've even heard rumours about a karaoke evening!













A full list of all the projects will be published in the future once everything is finally completed. As of Sunday 15th May we had received the income from 11 of the schemes and events and I'm delighted to say that we are well on the way to raising over £1,000... and who knows what the final score will be once everything is finished!

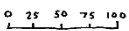
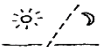


Many, many thanks to everyone who has got behind this initiative in one way or another! **Mark Jeeves (Treasurer)**






## FUNDRAISING




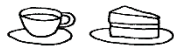
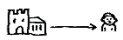
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## ... *Unexpected Places*

by Rev'd Steve Marsh

*A series exploring some of the ways we encounter God in the world and in our lives.*



*Encountering  
God in ...*

I was reading an article recently in which the songwriter Nick Cave was explaining how he used to have a designated sacred space in his home. Whilst this had been a beneficial creative and spiritual space for him, a change in circumstance meant he had to give it up. He felt anxious about doing this, but much to his surprise, he felt freed and liberated by this release. Nick realised that his previous sacred space, whilst a place of many positive encounters in his spirituality and creativity, had become a place where he was locking out the world, a place of hiding and exclusion.

Nick did not create a new sacred space and instead decided that he desired his next spiritual encounters to be had through engagement rather than hiding, inclusion rather than exclusion. Nick explained how his new sacred space became the world around him and the people he engaged with. Nick wrote about how this shift completely blew open his understanding of what is a sacred space. He concluded the article:

*'Perhaps, the sacred space is simply the world itself – a hallowed place where we all exist at this time, where we engage with life in all its many tempers, within the present moment. Perhaps the thing we have spent so much time escaping, or attempting to create, was there all along – the blessed space, the sacred space, the truly creative place – the world around us.'*<sup>(A)</sup>

Our church buildings, our sacred spaces, are great places of encounter with God. If our church building is very old, it is inspiring to think of the generations of Christians worshipping in the same space we inhabit today, connecting us with a rich faith heritage. The beauty of the architecture, artefacts and art in our church buildings can be very conducive to enabling us to encounter God.

However, God does not exclusively reside in our church buildings; God is not solely contained within. An encounter with God is not only available if we visit one of these faith houses. As our creator God, the whole of his creation speaks of his presence and offers an opportunity for encounter with him.

It is very noteworthy that after his resurrection Jesus does not reconnect with his bewildered disciples in the temple or in the synagogues. Instead he goes and meets them where they are: walking alongside the two disciples on the road to Emmaus; cooking fish on the shore for a morning breakfast for the disciples who are returning from fishing. The disciples encounter the risen Jesus where they are in their normal lives.

Then in Jesus' great commission to his disciples, which includes us today, Jesus commands his disciples to *'Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'*. Jesus does not say, *'Stay in and wait for people to come to you'*. He says *'Go. And enable people to encounter God where they are'*.

As you may have read in the articles that Jo [Bellamy] so thoughtfully writes on behalf of the Church of the Good Shepherd (CGS) for Saints Alive, CGS has recently moved. Many parents would say to us we cannot come to your gathering on a Sunday morning because our child is at football training or matches. This led us at CGG to think, well rather than inviting these families to join us, let's 'go' and join them. CGS now meets in Astral Park Sports and Community Centre next to the football pitches. We have a pop-up café outside to serve the football parents refreshments whilst they are watching their children play in the matches. Through this move to 'go' we have encountered many people we previously had no contact with. In chatting with parents over a drink and a pastry we have also had many faith focused conversations that have enabled an encounter with God for the parents and us.

Returning to Nick Cave, he has written a very poignant song called *'God is in the House'*. In the song he questions the supposed security people derive from the comfort that *'God is in the House'*, in their church. Nick Cave writes:

*Our town is very pretty.  
We have a pretty little square.  
We have a woman for a mayor.  
Our policy is firm but fair.  
And no one's left in doubt,  
God is in the house.*

However, he then goes on to question, to make a plea:

*There's no fear about.  
If we all hold hands and very quietly shout,  
'Hallelujah. God is in the house.'  
Oh, I wish He would come out.'*



Nick Cave at the piano

Our churches are great sacred spaces where people can encounter God. However, if people see our churches as places where God is contained and not available for them, and don't feel that God is interested in coming out to encounter them where they are, then maybe we have some work to do.

Like Nick Cave reviewing his sacred space, reflecting on whether it was a place of hiding rather than engagement, exclusion rather than inclusion, maybe we could benefit from reviewing our attitudes to what constitutes a sacred space. Such a review could result in us letting 'God come out', letting ourselves 'come out' and 'go' to enable people, all created in the image of God, to encounter their creator God, wherever they happen to be in his creation.

**Rev Steve Marsh**



## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle A guide for parents

The argument for limiting use of disposables in all areas of life is very strong, even for biodegradable items. Every time you make a choice to avoid using a disposable item you are making a positive difference to our world. So how can parents limit their impact on the environment?

### NAPPIES



Each year, parents throw away around three billion disposable nappies to landfill. Did you know that disposable nappies take up to 500 years to decompose; and by the time a baby is potty-trained you could use between 4,000 and 6,000?

In comparison, a baby only needs around 20 to 30 modern reusable nappies, some of which use recycled materials. Forget the need to learn towel origami, some nappies come as "all in one" ready to velcro in place, just like a disposable. If you have a washing machine and a place to dry laundry, reusable nappies can save between £200 and £500 over the 2.5 years that your baby is likely to use them. Although the cost of reusable nappies is paid upfront, rather than little weekly installments for disposables, this can be reduced by a local authority grant offered by CBC. It is estimated that by using reusable nappies rather than disposables, the average household waste of families with babies can be halved. This waste reduction will have associated cost savings for the local authority. The financial benefit of reusable nappies will be increased if used for more than one baby, or if bought second hand, and then sold on after use.

Let's be realistic about this. There will be times when disposables are used; when on holiday, or just because you have failed to do the laundry. Even if you only ever manage to try one reusable nappy that's one less nappy in a landfill site.



### WIPES - an easy switch to try with little costs to get started.

While wet wipes have become an increasingly commonplace part of our daily lives they present huge problems to the world. Wet wipes being flushed down the toilet is the single biggest cause of sewer blockages (up to 93%). Whilst this can be avoided by binning rather than flushing, 90% of the 11 million wet wipes used in the UK every year contain plastics that turn into microplastics when broken down in landfill. These in turn contaminate water and food supplies. They can be ingested by fish and so enter the food we eat as well as cause damage to ecosystems.

Alternatives are available in the form of reusable, washable cloths, preferably made using soft natural and sustainable materials like cotton and bamboo. These have a long life and avoid the problems associated with disposable wipes and their packaging.

Reusable wipes are incredibly useful for messy jobs as you have a greater ability to scrub than with a disposable wipe. When coupled with reusable nappies they require minimal effort to wash and they come out of the machine damp and ready for use.

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