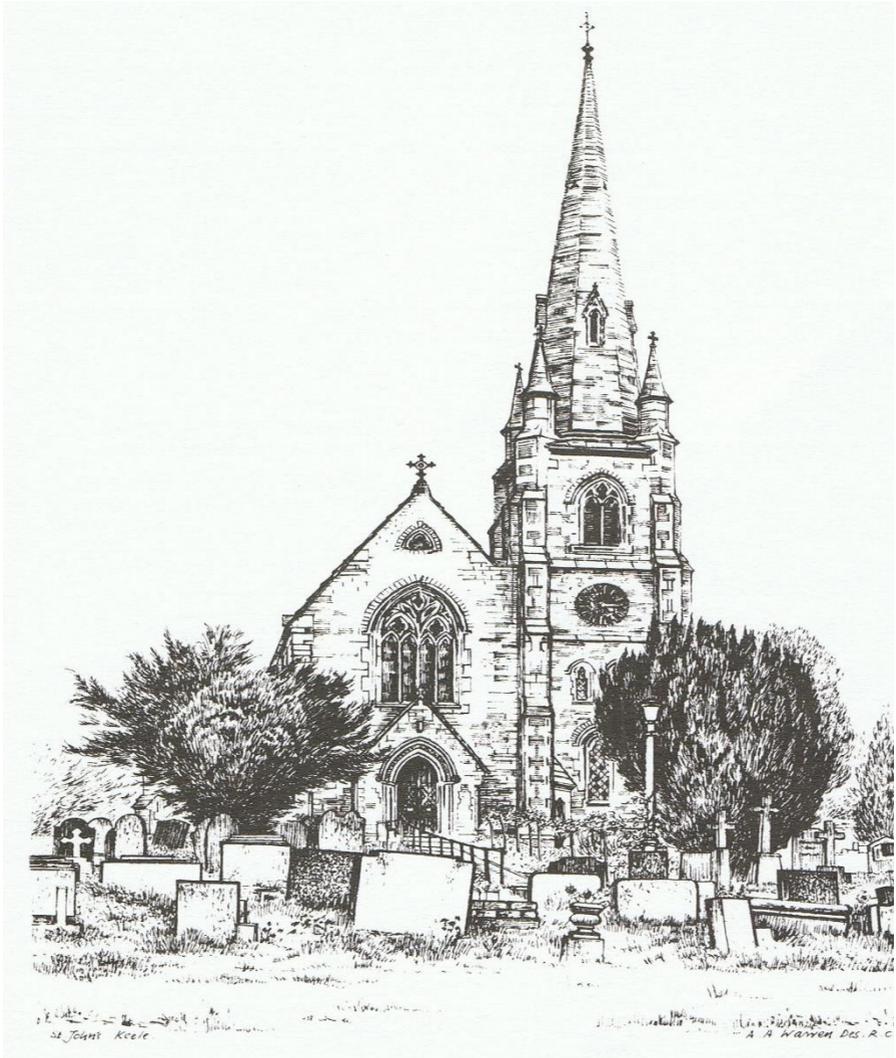


# PARISH MAGAZINE



## St. John the Baptist Church Keele

April 2020

50p

# **Worship at St John's April - May**

## **April**

Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Palm Sunday	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Good Friday – Stations of the Cross	2.00pm
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Day	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Second Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Third Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist

## **May**

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Fourth Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Fifth Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Sixth Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Seventh Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup>	Pentecost	11.15am Sung Eucharist

**The Eucharist is celebrated at St Luke's Church, Silverdale  
Sundays at 9.45am**

# From the Vicar's Desk

Dear Friends

As I write this, we in Keele appear to have been spared the worst of the storms that engulfed so much of our country. Together with the outbreak of Coronavirus, which has now reached Newcastle under Lyme, the fragility of life strikes us all of a sudden. Our hearts go out to those whose lives and livelihoods have been battered by storm and flood, and who now face an uncertain future.

Our response – the response of the Christian people – must be, before all else, that of compassion and generosity – and, of course, one of questioning: why is it that we are experiencing such devastation? What can we do to lessen it?

There can surely now be no doubt that our understanding of ourselves in relation to the rest of our world must undergo radical change: we can't go on for ever thinking that we can get away with such neglect, abuse, and exploitation!

Whatever else Lent might be to you, the Biblical themes to which it points, compel us to return to our being *part* of this natural world. So, one Lenten resolution might be that we stop talking and thinking about and behaving towards *the environment* as a way of representing our image of ourselves and the world. The world, its rhythms and seasons, does not revolve around *us*. We do not exist *alongside it*, and certainly we're not *outside it*. The natural world IS NOT our environment such that there's US and then 'the environment'. In an important sense, there is no 'environment'; for what we talk

of as ‘the environment’ isn’t something that we’re not. We are *part of it*: inescapably, essentially, properly, and totally.

Let the ramifications of that wonderful Hebrew word in The Book of Genesis describing the mythical first earthling be a constant part of our Lenten renewal – that word (which isn’t a name, but a description) is rendered in English as ‘adam’, and it means ‘from the earth’, ‘from the soil’, ‘from the ground’. We need to return to that, not run from it. And the work of God is not to liberate us from it, but to bring us back to it – to the very condition which we deny and from which we want to escape: our earthiness, our animal-humanity. That’s what’s behind St Paul’s talking about Christ as ‘the Second Adam’. So much to think about! So much to repent of! So much to enjoy, wonderfully and fully!

Have a good Lent and look forward to a glorious Resurrection!

Fr Peter.



# The Bishop's Pastoral Letter

## They stayed together

At the time of writing, it is not clear how far the Coronavirus will spread, nor how seriously it will impact upon our lives. Undoubtedly, it presents us with a serious challenge, in terms both of public health and of the ways in which we relate to one another. However, it is much less deadly than the plagues which affected our country in past centuries, most famously the Great Plague of 1655.

At that time, Eyam in Derbyshire lay within the Diocese of Lichfield. That beautiful village played a famously heroic part in combatting the spread of the plague, which had been unwittingly introduced to the community through infested samples of cloth brought from London by a travelling tailor. Led by their vicar William Mompesson, the villagers took the selfless decision to 'self isolate' for more than a year, avoiding all contact with neighbouring villages, their food supplies left at and collected from the parish boundaries. The cost in human lives was heavy, but the result of containment was entirely successful.

Mompesson worked in close collaboration with one of his predecessors and potential rivals, the Nonconformist minister Thomas Stanley, who had been ejected from his living for his Puritan beliefs. In a display of ecumenical unity utterly remarkable for its time, the two clergy sustained the morale, strengthened the will, and re-established the unity of the community through their ministry, gathering their people together in open air services.

Eyam today is a very moving place, with no sites more evocative than its burying places, including the graveyard with the table tomb of William Mompesson's wife Catherine, who

died towards the end of the outbreak. It is deservedly a place popular with visitors, and forms the far end of the Peak Pilgrimage Trail which begins in Ilam, still in our diocese in the Staffordshire Peak.

But this is not a site of historical interest only. Eyam is a striking example of the church's calling to bring unity in a society faced with forces which could pull it apart. Faced with the mortal peril of the plague, it would have been easy for the villagers of Eyam to divide and scatter; but thanks to the Christian message of faith, hope and love at the heart of their community, they stayed together. We in our time face challenges which could pull us apart - whether those be the threat of pandemic, the political divisions created and exposed in the long arguments over Brexit, the growing contrasts in wealth and health in our society, or whatever. But as then, so now, our churches are at the heart of our local communities with a message of hope grounded in the reality of what God has done in raising Jesus Christ from the dead. This Easter, it is my hope and prayer that, like the Christians of Eyam, we can do our part in bringing together a divided society.

*+Michael Ipgrave  
Bishop of Shrewsbury*



# From the Church Wardens

Dear friends,

After the wettest February on record, including 3 named storms, we are still having to wait for repairs to the roof of the Lady Chapel. The good news is that even with all that rain and wind the roof has only leaked a little bit. However the really violent wind and rain of Storm Jorge, which came from a completely different direction, has meant we have suffered water ingress around the stained glass window above the west door, something we have not seen before. We will discuss getting someone in to have a look at the window to see if there are any issues we need to be concerned about.

Whilst the Templar window is away getting repaired, we have arranged to have the roof removed from the toilet. This means that once it is returned people will be able to see the whole window without the ceiling getting in the way. That said it will still be from the toilet, we will have to see what the future holds in respect to that.

Due to the Easter services, the return of the Templar window and the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the church there is a lot going on over the next few months and we both are looking forward to seeing many of you at Church.

"I am with you always, to the very end of the age" Matthew 28:20

Kindest regards

Diane & Nigel

# Belfry Bat

In spite of several absences there were eight in the belfry on Sunday February 16<sup>th</sup>, including Mike from Codsall who rings with us when visiting friends. On the following Wednesday we again didn't have enough to practise, but our strength in depth was in evidence on Sunday February 23<sup>rd</sup> when we rang six in spite of four regulars being away. On the following Wednesday we had a good practice with seven of our own band. In spite of Roland, Steve and Pauline all being away, we had seven at ringing on March 1<sup>st</sup>. On March 3<sup>rd</sup> we went to Ingestre for the funeral of Marion Owen, who, was a ringer at Stafford and Ingestre. She was also actively involved in building and running the mobile belfry for many years. Ingestre is one of my favourite Staffordshire churches, for reasons which I expect you are all familiar with.

There were six of our own band and two regular visitors at the practice on March 4<sup>th</sup>, and we had a useful practice. At the practice at Checkley on Friday I had a look at their parish magazine, and suggested to the ringers that they start writing a Belfry Bat. The North Staffs Association monthly meeting on March 7<sup>th</sup> was due to be held at Butterton, but on the previous Monday we were told that the tower had been flooded, and the meeting moved to Leek.

All ten of our regulars were in the tower on Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup> and the ringing was good. One of our ringers, Ruth Eagle, has started a tree-planting group at Madeley U3A, and we have joined it. One of our first planting outings last month was to Woore Fruit Farm, where in addition to planting trees we were given a talk by a representative of the group which has built a cottage and cafe of straw bales on the site. I was familiar with the use of straw bales as infill in a timber-framed structure, but this building used the bales structurally, which is much less common. On March 7<sup>th</sup> Ro helped plant trees at Balterley, and on March 9<sup>th</sup> I went with Ruth to look at a site in Baldwins Gate. If any of our readers know of a site where trees could be planted, we will be pleased to hear from you..

There were only seven, all from our own band, at the practice on March 11<sup>th</sup>, but we made good use of the time. We also discussed how we should respond to the Corona epidemic, and agreed for the time being to follow the advice given by a doctor in last week's *Ringing World* – continue to ring but be sure to wash hands before and after.

Phil Gay





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## Cowslip or Cow Slop?

The name cowslip is believed to be a mispronunciation of cow slop, so named because the flowers are traditionally found near cow pats in pastures! A widespread plant of grassland, not to be confused with primrose which is more of a woodland plant. Cowslip can grow in many soils but really thrives in limestone and chalk grassland. It is an important nectar source for insects including bees, beetles and butterflies as it flowers early and can carpet an area where conditions are suitable. Look out for the yellow brimstone butterfly, which is on the wing early in the year, this may be feeding on cowslip flowers.

Like many wildflowers, cowslip has been part of the herbalists' collection for centuries. It has a sedative quality so is used to treat sleep problems whilst the citrusy flavoured flowers can help with coughs. Cowslip flowers were also used to flavour wine and can be found in traditional Spanish recipes.

Also known as St Peter's Keys or Keys of Heaven, cowslips were believed to have grown where St Peter dropped the Key to Earth. You may have cowslips in your churchyard grassland, if so try and leave the areas where it occurs uncut until the flowers have finished and set seed. Cowslip does not grow high so perhaps you could set your mower blade at 10cm so that the leaves are not shredded by subsequent mows.

All the best

Harriet Carty,

*Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor, [harriet@cfga.org.uk](mailto:harriet@cfga.org.uk)*

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# W.I. REPORT

We were very pleased to welcome two new members for our AGM on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February at 7.15pm in the village hall. We were privileged to enjoy a visit from the Staffordshire Federation Treasurer, Beryl Podmore, who gave a brief presentation and encouraged our members to Gift Aid a portion of the member ship fee, £43 this year: we voted to do this. Susie Dean was elected as President for a further year and Angela as Vice President. Jen Wibberly was voted as our branch Treasurer and Judith Deakin as Secretary. Four committee members were re-elected.

The speaker was our own Peggy Chaplin who had been unable to give her presentation in January; it was entitled 'Madame de Maintenon's Petticoat'. Madame de Maintenon [161635-1719] an extremely beautiful woman, although not born to a wealthy family, lead an aristocratic life, becoming mistress to Louis XIV.

Peggy then traced backwards by examining the history of undergarments through the ages, stressing that underwear was originally outerwear. Romans wore togas denoting their status and added layers of tunics to counteract the cold. These garments were not stitched but simply hung as shown in floor mosaics in Chedworth Roman Villa in Gloucestershire. Women and men's clothing was similar; tunics were plain and simple, worn across Europe, made of wode and occasionally linen. The clothing was baggy and edged with braid. Loose pants were worn and blankets in cold weather. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century pictures of Elizabeth the first showed that fashion was developing. Skirts were draped over hoops and whale bone stiffeners used for the bodice and a form of corset was worn to reduce the diameter of the waist. Under-petticoats were developing made of silk or satin and embellished with jewels or stitched with gold thread. The Stuart period introduced a slightly higher waist and wealth denoted by even more extravagant jewels. The bra was a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century invention.

At the time of Louis XIV there were no dresses, just bodices and skirts with layers of petticoats showing through. Ladies at court would wear these and the higher the status the more elaborate the petticoats. Sleeves were slashed to show more of the rich velvet often worn beneath.

Angela brought along a petticoat made in 1939 from parachute silk which had been picked up from a field. It was lace trimmed and extremely

light and could be screwed up into fist size. She also brought along a three-layered hoop petticoat worn under a wedding dress in 1999. Peggy's talk was a fascinating glimpse of the development of the petticoat as part of formal dress. Our next meeting is on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April [no, its not a Bank holiday!] when Graham Dodd will be 'celebrating Salt'. Please do come along at 7.15pm. All are welcome to attend our meetings.

Angela Studd

## The Garden Guild

Grant Donner gave us a lively account of the restoration work he and his team of sixteen gardeners have carried out at Sandon Hall during the last three years.

The present building is the third house to stand on this site; the first was built in 1686, the second was destroyed by fire in 1848. The present hall was built between 1853 and 1866. The builders wore top hats, suits and ties! A picture of the front of the house in 1900 shows the circular drive where the horses and carts came in. The conservatory still looks much as it did in 1905, with Minton tiles and large camellias. The hall has been the home of the Harrowby family since 1766. The gardens were well kept for 200 years till they declined in the 1970s.

Grant then described the various projects carried out since 2016.

1. the amphitheatre was recreated in a symmetrical pattern and re-dug out and filled with topsoil, horse manure and grit. One thousand roses were planted in three days; varieties included Tranquility and Desdemona. The roses are pruned during the first week in March.

2. The Friends' garden is a recreation of a memorial garden set up in 1936 when the flags of all the nations involved in the First World War, including Germany, were planted at a celebration attended by enemies now become friends. Ironic that this should happen just three years before the Second World War! The new garden is edged with sandstone rocks and filled with plants representing love, joy and peace. In the wild flower meadow the red poppies came up first. Nature knows best!

3. The Temple Garden has been converted into a potager and planted with lettuce, sweet peas, potatoes, leeks, quince, medlar, greengage, cherry, plum, with white cosmos and love in a mist which self seeds.

4. The wildlife garden has no use for pesticides or slug pellets - this is a conservation area and left untidy and natural, there are log piles and houses for insects and hedgehogs. A nearby wildlife rescue centre releases hedgehogs here. It is also visited by foxes, deer, badgers, newts and many birds including buzzards and kestrels.

5. The Walled garden includes an orchard replanted with fifteen apple trees and pear trees; also, there are eight chickens of different breeds.

Also, on the estate is Oak Tree farm which is a project run for young adults with learning difficulties. This has transformed many lives.

We look forward to seeing all this for ourselves when we visit Sandon Hall on June 16.

Keele Garden Guild's next meeting is on April 13 at 7.30pm when Cas Bailey will speak to the title "If you can't stand the heat get out of the kitchen"

Everyone is welcome to our meetings.

Peter Hough

## **Flowers at Easter**

**Janet would be pleased to receive donations towards flowers this Easter. Her floral displays are always such a delight and with your help she will make our church even more beautiful for this holy season.**

In line with the directive received from the Diocese of Lichfield, wreaths placed on graves for Easter will be removed after 4 weeks.

## **From the Registers**

### **Funeral**

**9th March**

Caroline Davies

### **Interment of Ashes**

**12th March**

Edith **Annie** Swancott

## Dates for your Diary

**Spring Draw** There are some great prizes to be won in this Draw. Included are a Spring Planter, bottle of Whisky, Easter Cake, Shortbread, Free Range Eggs, bottles of wine, Easter Hamper, Chocolates, Easter Egg and a few others! Tickets are £1 each and are available singly or in books of five. The draw will take place after worship on **Sunday 5th April**.

**Anniversary Quilt.** Margaret Summerfield has donated a quilt which she has made to celebrate the anniversary of the building of St John's in 1870 which is embroidered on the reverse. Tickets costing £1 and available singly or in books of five will be available shortly and the draw will take place after the lecture on **Saturday 2nd May**.

**Watercolour** of the 2019 Christmas card. The watercolour by John Dennison will be on display at the Anniversary and we are asking people for sealed bids in order to auction this. Last year the picture raised £250.

### **Celebrations for the 150th Anniversary of the Consecration of St John's Parish Church**

#### *Saturday 2nd May*

Starting at **10.30am** on the car park of the Sneyd Arms, Phil Gay and his team will demonstrate bell ringing on the mobile belfry. Opportunities for hands-on experience available.

**2.30pm** Public Lecture (delivered in Church) by Andrew Dobraszczye entitled 'The Economic and Social history of the Rebuilding of Keele Church in 1870'. (Home-baked cakes and drinks available following the lecture) This is a free lecture and there will be an opportunity to make a donation for the refreshments.

#### *Sunday 3rd May*

#### **The Eucharist**

**11.15am** in St John's Parish Church, Keele (for both parishes) followed by a celebration cake and drink.

# Church Officers

Clergy	Rev. Peter Jones The Vicarage, 21 Pepper Street, Silverdale ST5 6QJ Email tadjones@btinternet.com	01782 624455 (Day off Friday)
Church Wardens	Nigel Bostock Email nbbmjb@hotmail.com Diane Vogler	01782 663035 07702 361646
Asst Church Wardens	Watson Fuller Angela Studd Email astudd@btinternet.com Janet Thornhill	01782 627220 01782 626372 01782 618290
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**NB Articles for the magazine should be sent to the editor by the 12th of the preceding month.**

