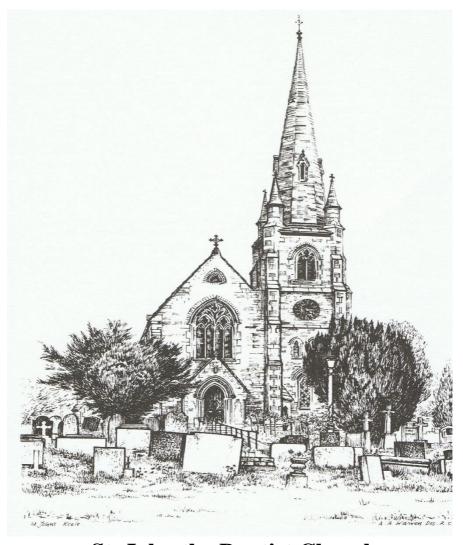
## PARISH MAGAZINE



St. John the Baptist Church Keele

July 2019 50p

### Worship at St John's July - August

#### July

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Third Sunday after Trinity	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday14th	Fourth Sunday after Trinity	8.00am Said Eucharist 11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 21st	Fifth Sunday after Trinity	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Sixth Sunday after Trinity	11.15am Sung Eucharist

August		
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Seventh Sunday after Trinity	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Eighth Sunday after Trinity	8.00am Said Eucharist 11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup>	Ninth Sunday after Trinity	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup>	Tenth Sunday after Trinity	11.15 am Sung Eucharist

# The Eucharist is celebrated at St Luke's Church, Silverdale Sundays at 9.45am and Wednesdays at 4pm

#### From the Vicar's Desk

#### The Vicar writes ...

Quite out of the blue – and many years ago, in a previous Incumbency – I opened the door to a gentleman with a very large book in his hands. The book was interesting enough, locally at least; but what else the gentleman had to say was (to me) much more interesting.

My visitor was the son of a predecessor of mine who'd been the parish priest during the early part of the Second World War and who had died some months before his son's visit to me. (This very elderly priest had been ill for a long time, and upon his recent death, his son had been clearing out his father's possessions. In the course of doing this, came upon this 'scrapbook' of much local interest.) In the course of our conversation, my visitor revealed something quite extraordinary: that he'd discovered that his father had been a senior member of the Security Services – one of a number of clergy in Wales – whose secret job it was to spy upon and sabotage the Nazi occupation in the event of Britain's defeat. More than this, my visitor's father was the regional commander of a network of 'sleeping agents' embedded all over South Wales and the West Country. I was astounded: a priest, a predecessor of mine as Incumbent of my parish, was a secret agent! But there was more.

At the time of my Incumbency in that parish, there were still plenty of people in Church and in the town who well-remembered my Secret Agent predecessor. None of them had the slightest idea of his 'other job', and not one of them had a good word to say about him. If only they had known! But they never did.

This year is the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of what we now call 'The Second World War'. Only a week or so before writing this we celebrated the anniversary of the D-Day Landings and were treated to an excellent selection of informative TV programmes.

A highlight of some of these programmes was surely the many interviews with the veterans – all now in their 90s. Much of the reporters' interviewing of them was banal, and these veterans are very far from having a mindset that can understand what questions such as 'what was it like?'/'what did you feel?' – one such

veteran was especially nonplussed by silly questioning of that sort. Very tellingly, every one of these veterans very firmly refused to accept that they were 'heroes'.

It's this that impresses me most, and it's what impressed me about Fr Richard Sluman (the priest who was Incumbent of Blaenafon from 1942 until the late 1940s). He and they live without needing the fuel of adulation and back-slapping. It was enough for them that what they did was ... right.

Our 90 year old veterans have so many more years behind them than they could possibly have ahead of them; and I have a fearful hunch that their fading away will prompt many of us to 'question' the necessity of our yearly remembrance of those events. I also have a hunch that this is not entirely unlinked to a rise in anti-Semitism and the far-right that we see now and shall see escalate over the next few years. I'm not sure how our culture, so buoyed-up as it is by populism and emotionalism and the cult of the hero will be able to cope with this. But our firm commitment to undeconstructed Remembrance Sunday might prove to be one of the few antidotes available to us.

I write these things to you now, for our July magazine, while the theme of what I write is not topical. I don't apologise for this. Over the months to come we shall have more and more public occasions on which to bring to mind the Second World War. Just remember that we're not celebrating heroes but ordinary men and women whose courage was not built upon reward or satisfaction. We need to grasp *that*.

#### Fr Peter Jones

# The Bishop's Pastoral Letter

#### Brave and ambitious

# The new Bishop of Shrewsbury, Sarah Bullock looks forward to discovering Lichfield Diocese.

When I read the Bible, I hear the voices of God's people and their stories of faith. These are not always straightforward or easy, but God is faithful and his heart is for all people to come to know him. In the New Testament we encounter God in his son, Jesus, and the Good News he brings is a message of love and justice for all people.

As Christians we are called to live out this message of love and justice in our relationships as we share in God's transformational work among his people and build communities of hope. Together we need to be open to the transforming message of God's love for us.

As Bishop of Shrewsbury I will be taking every opportunity to connect with people as we journey together as 'pilgrims on the road', discovering this message of hope for ourselves, our families, friends and communities, through conversation, relationship, worship, prayer and encounter. I believe that God has gifted me with a loving heart and a passion to walk with others as together we discover our place in God's story and our home in God's heart.

The gospel message is also a call to dynamic living - stimulating progress, hopeful in attitude and encouraging of others as we live the Good News.

We need to be brave and ambitious, creative and entrepreneurial if we are to be truly outward-facing believers, engaged with the world.

I am really looking forward to our journey together!

Sarah Bullock

### From the Church Wardens

#### Dear Friends,

I can safely say that I am glad that we have had the gutters and downpipes recently cleared, given the amount of rain that we are having as I write, maybe the sun will return at some stage. Hopefully the unseasonable rain will not cause us any problems. I am praying that it doesn't! You will be pleased to hear that the old oil tank has been removed and I am advised that there was absolutely no evidence of leakage into the ground, so that is good news. We have also been lucky enough to secure the services of a drone (and its pilot) who flew a survey of the roof for us, especially the finials. I had a look at the footage as the drone was flying and although I am no surveyor or architect everything was looking well. When we get the video of the flight I will try to find someone who is better qualified than me to have a look at it and give me their thoughts. Fortunately whilst the weather was better the opportunity was taken to carry out the mandatory check of the gravestones to make sure none of them are likely to fall imminently. I was glad that the brambles had been cut back to allow full and unhindered access, or more accurately my son was as he didn't get badly scratched whilst he undertook the check on my behalf!

"but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint." Isaiah 40:31

Kindest Regards,

Nigel

# The Belfry Bat

The belfry windows are almost ready to be re-instated, and on Sunday May 12<sup>th</sup> I checked some measurements before morning ringing. There were eight of us, so I didn't need to ring very much on my last visit to the belfry for a while.

My hip operation took longer than expected, and I finally returned home on Tuesday May 28<sup>th</sup> after three operations in two hospitals. Thank you all for your prayers. I am happy to report good progress with my rehabilitation.

My stitches (actually twenty-five metal staples) were removed on June 4<sup>th</sup>, and the following day I had my first outing, to the pub with our Wednesday ringing group., followed by a trip to the Hand and Trumpet for lunch on Friday with my sister and her husband.

In spite of several regulars not being available, there were enough to practise on June 5<sup>th</sup>, and the same applied on Sunday June 9<sup>th</sup>, when I had another slightly more ambitious outing. Ruth Eagle passes our house on the way to ringing, and she has been giving lifts to Rowena., so I went along as well. I was able to walk from the car park to the church, but I didn't attempt to go up the tower. Instead I sat on one of the seats, and was able to have a chat with several members of the congregation as they arrived for church.

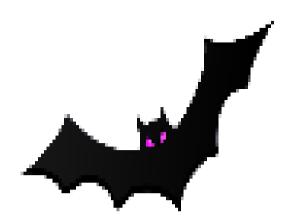
Two days later the physiotherapist declared herself pleased with my progress and suggested I try walking with only one crutch. It worked! Only five at practice on Wednesday, so a bit of a struggle, with plenty of talking. Keele ringer Roland has a pond with too many water lilies, so he brought a bucket-full for our pond. I'm thinking I might be at the practice next week – watch this space!

Buying presents for old people who have everything they need is not easy, but my son and daughter have, with practice, become very good at it, achieving a very good balance between predictable and unexpected. At Christmas I usually receive at least one bottle of single malt, but always a different one, and for my birthday they usually send books, taking advantage of Amazon's deliver to someone else facility. For my birthday

last month Simon and his family sent Henry Blofeld's latest book, *Over and Out*, an account of his years with Test Match Special. Sally and her family sent a book entitled *Ships of Heaven, The Private Lives of Britain's Cathedrals*, by Christopher Somerville, who some of you may recognise as the walking correspondent of *The Times*.

Most books on cathedrals concentrate on the architecture, but this one is much more wide-ranging, an account of his visits to twenty-two cathedrals in the British Isles. Architecture does get a mention, usually in the context of people responsible for it, both in the past and in the present, and in addition the cathedrals are placed firmly in their communities. The twenty-two include some one would expect in any book on cathedrals, such as Wells, a favourite both of the author and me, Salisbury, York, Ely and Durham, but also some which are less predictable. Both Liverpool cathedrals are there, and so are both in Armagh, St Magnus in Orkney and another Scottish one, Inverness. This is a good book for dipping into – you don't have to read it all at once in the right order, and I can recommend it. What's more, by the time you read this I will have read all of it, and will be happy to lend it to anyone who is interested.

#### Phil Gay





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# A Special Birthday Celebration for a Very Special Lady



Janet would like to thank all her dear friends for the 'Birthday Buffet' and all the lovely cards and presents she received.

It made her birthday a very special day!

# W.I. Report

The World of Wedgwood was the destination for Keele WI's summer outing in early June. Eleven members and guests met in the splendid Reception area at the Barlaston site. After admiring the imposing statue of Josiah Wedgwood, colourful floral displays and the RHS award winning courtyard garden, the morning was spent exploring different parts of the visitor site.

The World of Wedgwood experience is very far removed from the experience that many of us recall from the 1970's and 80's when visitors walked into a bustling, vibrant and dusty factory, felt the intense heat of the kilns and could watch an array of skilled potters and painters at their everyday work. Now the factory is like an enormous warehouse which can firstly be viewed from a high walkway, on which are displayed, rather forlornly, some of the manufacturing equipment from the earlier factories, before moving to the ground-floor level to see just a small handful of operatives, many empty workbenches and consequently very little noise. It certainly seemed that the recent large number of redundancies - some 290 in April - had had very considerable impact.

We met up for an excellent lunch in the Dining Hall and then many of our group spent some time in the Museum which celebrates the work and heritage of Josiah Wedgwood, not only as a pottery manufacturer but also his influence on society. It displays a comprehensive record of the history and development of the Wedgwood name from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries and deserves a very much longer visit than we were able to make.

Needless to say, there were several retail outlets which seemed very much aimed at international visitors, so it was a case of 'look, admire and move on'!

Our next meeting is on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July at 7.15pm when we shall hear about the delights of 'Gymslips and Chalkboards'. You are very welcome to join us.

Angela Studd

### The Garden Guild

The Garden Guild descended on the Pintles on the wettest day in recent times. To quote from the National Open Gardens Scheme booklet (which our host Peter Longstaff co-ordinates), "This traditional semidetached house has a medium sized wildlife friendly garden designed to appeal to many interests. There are two greenhouses, over 500 cacti and succulents, orchids, vegetable and fruit plots, wildlife pond, weather station, and a "hidden woodland shady garden."

The recent rain has certainly given my vegetables a boost, but why were Peter's twice as big? One reason - he planted his onions on Boxing Day! Leslie's secret garden was imaginatively decorated with wooden arrangements and carvings of birds and a colour scheme of varied white flowering shrubs (eg philadelphus), and a hedgehog house. The wildlife lily pond had goldfish, frogs and newts and was netted to keep off the predatory heron. Many shrubs abounded; cosmos, roses, rhododendrons, pieris, hydrangeas, sempervivums (for sale), hebe, iris, and many more. The garden was beautifully laid out and immaculate,

We were treated to tea or coffee and delicious homemade cake. Our hosts were very welcoming, accompanying us and only too happy to answer questions. Peter showed us photos of wildlife seen in the garden, including a mouse in a bird feeder, a hedgehog, a blackcap, a redwing and a fox.

The National Open Gardens Scheme (gardens open for charity) is to be highly commended, raising over three million pounds a year for good causes. Half a million pounds each to Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Hospice UK. Peter and Leslie have worked strenuously for many years, not only in their own garden but also in co-ordinating the yellow NOGS booklet. If you are looking for local heroes, here's a couple!

A very enjoyable visit, in spite of the appalling weather.

with so many different features to enjoy and explore.

Our next meeting is on July 8<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm Speaker - Phil Colclough. Subject - Beautiful Britain.

Subject - Beautiful Bill

Peter Hough

#### DISCOVER LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL

Now is a great time to come and visit your Cathedral at Lichfield. There is so much going on that there is not enough space in this short article to tell you all. Cathedrals in Britain are booming. The latest Church of England statistics for 2018 confirms that cathedral services are continuing a trend begun 20 years ago and attracting greater numbers of people every year. Cathedral congregations are larger than at any time since the millennium. But this is only part of the success story. Many more visitors come to Lichfield and other cathedrals attracted by an ever-widening range of liturgies, exhibitions, theological presentations and attractions. The national statistics of Cathedral visitors show that they number 10-11 million averaged over the last 5 years. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has commented very favourably on the Cathedral's programme of events and exhibitions and called them imaginative. Add to this the recent announcement that Lichfield Cathedral volunteers have been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service and you will see that your Cathedral is a thriving and vibrant place attracting 155,000 visitors annually.

2018 was a year of commemoration marking the centenary of the ending of World War I. The central theme in the Cathedral was therefore "Imagine Peace". It encompassed a full programme of events, exhibitions and special services culminating in a packed Remembrance Day service with more people in the Cathedral than ever seen before. Exhibitions included a "Consequence of War" Exhibition from April to June visited by more than 20,000 people, "The Great Exhibition 2018: Imagine Peace" in August visited by some 16,500 people and "The Cathedral Illuminated 2018: Peace on Earth" featuring 22,000 paper doves suspended in the nave, attracting over 20,000 visitors. highlight of this commemorative year was the **installation of a cruciform icon** of Christ Crucified, Risen and Lord of All suspended above the nave. Written by the Bethlehem School of Iconography in a special studio in the Cathedral, the cross was blessed and dedicated by the Bishop of Lichfield on Holy Cross Day in September. It testifies to the main purpose of the Cathedral as a Cathedral in Mission. A place of prayer, worship and pilgrimage welcoming all.

This year 2019 is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Moon Landing and so the theme in the Cathedral is "Journeys: Through Space, Light and Time" with services, concerts and special events. The first Moon Landing captured the world's attention and imagination, opening up new perspectives on space and how we see Earth in the vast expanse of the universe. This summer from July to September "One Small Step" created by Peter Walker, the Cathedral's Artist-in-Residence will transform the Cathedral floor into a lunar landscape, giving you the opportunity to walk on the Moon and watch the galaxies emerge

above you while standing there. The theme of The Great Exhibition 2019 in August is "Space: God, the Universe and Everything". This will take you on a journey through stunning sound, light and art installations revealing the Universe, Space and Creation. It is an experience not to be missed. Tickets are available at www.lichfield-cathedral.org/space

Throughout the year, **tours** of all descriptions are available at the Cathedral for groups and individuals to enjoy led by the Cathedral's team of trained, enthusiastic and committed volunteer guides. They will take you on a journey through 1,300 years of history including seeing the Cathedral's two great 8th Century treasures, the St Chad Gospels and the Lichfield Angel. The tours include twice-daily free Highlight Tours, pre-booked tours both general and themed, the very popular Library Tours, a new Hidden Heights Tour as an alternative to our popular tower tour while conservation work is taking place on the central spire, and Candlelit Tours in the winter months. Specialised tour topics available include the Anglo Saxons, The Life of St Chad, Stained Glass, Architecture, The Close and The Civil War. To book a group tour contact visitorservices@lichfield-cathedral.org or call 01543 306150.

Finally, to mark 1,350 years since the Cathedral's patron saint St Chad arrived in Lichfield in 669 AD, the Cathedral has commissioned its Artist-in-Residence, Peter Walker, to create a **new statue of St Chad**. The public sculpture will be cast in bronze and stand 3 m tall in the Cathedral Close facing Dam Street to welcome pilgrims and visitors to the Cathedral. If you would like to make a donation to help create a lasting monument to this great central figure in the history of the Cathedral and the Diocese contact the Cathedral

Anne Parkhill, Trustee & Guide, Lichfield Cathedral

### **Dates for your Diary**

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July – 'Tea in the Garden'** Angela and Robin Studd invite you to afternoon tea at 3 Keele Farmhouse from 2.30 to 5pm.

# $\begin{tabular}{ll} Monday $8^{th}$ July - Potteries Theological Society - Keele University Chapel at 7pm \end{tabular}$

The Revd Ruth Maxey, former Chaplain at Keele University, is speaking about Pioneer Ministry.

Ruth needs little introduction, as she was the Free Church Chaplain at Keele. She left to go into Pioneer Ministry at Milton Keynes, and will be bringing us the fruits of her experiences there.

**Open Church** The Church continues to be open to visitors on every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon from 2pm to 5pm.

### **Church Officers**

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NB Articles for the magazine should be sent to the editor by the 12th of the preceding month.

