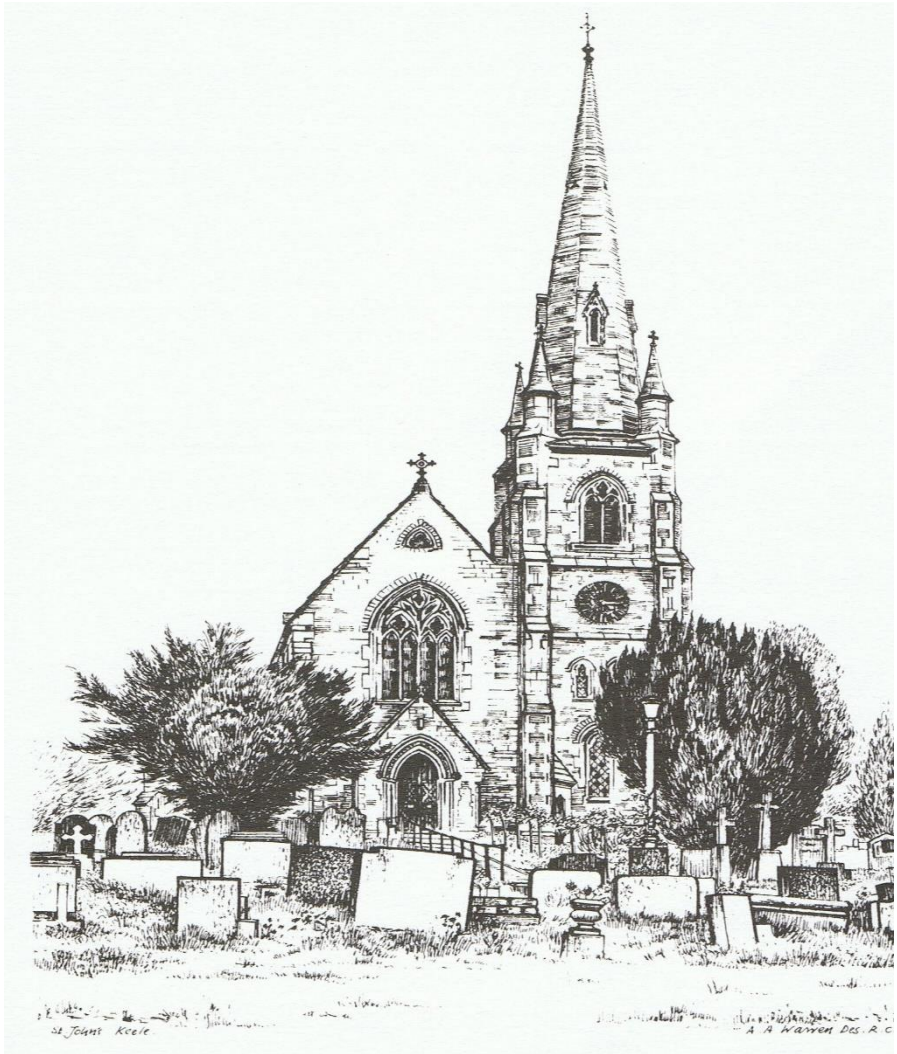


# PARISH MAGAZINE



## St. John the Baptist Church Keele

June 2019

50p

# Worship at St John's June - July

## June

Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Seventh Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Pentecost	8.00am Said Eucharist 11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Trinity Sunday	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	First Sunday after Trinity <b>St John's Patronal Festival</b> <b>(Joint service for both churches)</b>	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup>	Second Sunday after Trinity	11.15am Sung Eucharist

## July

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Third Sunday after Trinity	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	Fourth Sunday after Trinity	8.00am Said Eucharist 11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Fifth Sunday after Trinity	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Sixth Sunday after Trinity	11.15am 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 ...

A few months ago I shared with you Aristotle's impatience with those who delight in 'theorising' about what it means to be ethical. He tells us (at the beginning of his *Nicomachean Ethics*) that ethical living doesn't arise from ethical theory; indeed, if you want to think clearly about what the ethical life is, then you must ... you must do it. You must do virtuous things. If you start out with theorising, you get nowhere, ethically speaking.

A second century Christian called Clement of Alexandria said much the same thing about being Christian – about the importance of action, and how reasoning springs from actions. Clement was no knuckle-dragging bruiser: he'd travelled much of the then-known world, and under the best teachers he'd become a skilled logician. His conversion to Christ did nothing to bring these dispositions to a halt nor to dampen his love of logic. In a rather delightful booklet (*An Exhortation to the Greeks*) he sets out for his friends his reasons for becoming a Christian. He advises that it is not necessary to know and understand every theological detail before commitment to Christ; what is necessary is a conversion of disposition: attach yourself to the local Christian community; worship with that community as far as is permissible; behave as a Christian ought to behave: worship and action are following Christ. Philosophical reasoning comes later, if it comes at all. Clement would be appalled at irrationality and his discipleship of Christ was such that he saw philosophical reasoning as one of the important ways of expressing that discipleship. What he is saying is that reasoning as detached thinking is impoverished. For reasoning to 'work' it must be generated by action. And crucial to all this is trust.

About 200 years later, the North African Bishop, Augustine of Hippo, took a similar line. Everything, he says, ultimately rests upon a bedrock of trust. In his *The Advantage of Believing*. He says that it's simply wrong that we start off by scepticism and theory before moving through to understanding. We start with trust and move on, correcting and being corrected, as we go. Augustine had great confidence in the rightness of logical reasoning; but, he urges, that reasoning has to be grounded in something, and that something is trust

I write this, partly to affirm the primacy of trust in our everyday common or garden living, and to flag up that this is a perfectly legitimate way to approach our relationship with God: start with belonging and trusting, and develop on this footing.

Fr Peter Jones



# The Bishop's Pastoral Letter

## **Let the Rebellion begin!**

Last September the Secretary-General of the United Nations made an impassioned plea to the UN General Assembly on the need to act to combat the threat of climate change. His speech is necessary reading for us all and can be found [here](#)<sup>1</sup>;

A key quote is as follows;

*“Climate change is the defining issue of our time – and we are at a defining moment. We face a direct existential threat. Climate change is moving faster than we are – and its speed has provoked a sonic boom SOS across our world. If we do not change course by 2020, we risk missing the point where we can avoid runaway climate change, with disastrous consequences for people and all the natural systems that sustain us.”*

Reading Antonio Guterres' speech in the light of the recent Extinction Rebellion protests in London and the widespread strikes by schoolchildren, I am struck by the synchronicity between the Secretary General's call to action and these examples of direct action in response.

Incredibly, there are still pockets of climate change deniers, but just as dangerous are those (well represented in the national media) who are keener to portray protestors as misguided and even members of an 'eco mob', than to salute them for prioritising the future of our planet over the comfort of their armchairs.

What is our Christian response to this climate emergency, which threatens the very sustainability of God's good creation?

It is good to see former Archbishop, Rowan Williams, lending his active support to Extinction Rebellion. Each of us should be reviewing our own capacity to voice our own care and concern for God's world, alongside making the lifestyle changes that enact that concern, whether it be giving up meat and/or flying (the two biggest single contributions we can make to planetary sustainability), cutting back on car use, switching to green energy, or reducing our consumption of consumer goods.

At the last Diocesan Synod, our commitment to pursuing this agenda was demonstrated by the unanimous passing of the Diocesan Environmental Policy and Action Plan. One specific initiative within this is '[Eco Church](#)',<sup>2</sup> which is a highly commended way of heightening environmental awareness in every parish.

Another positive means of engaging is through worship, especially by utilising the national church [resources available](#)<sup>3</sup> for Creationtide (September 1<sup>st</sup> to October 4<sup>th</sup>). Given the lead young people are giving on this issue, obvious opportunities arise for intergenerational activities and worship.

Let the Rebellion begin!

**+Clive Wulfrun**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2018-09-10/secretary-generals-remarks-climate-change-delivered>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/church-england-commends-creationtide-resources>



Wednesday June 5<sup>th</sup>

# From the Church Wardens

Dear Friends,

In a break from the normal narrative regarding the state of the church I thought I would go for something different this month. 2019 is going to see the 75th anniversaries of a lot of momentous events, D-Day, the battle for Normandy, Operation Market Garden to name but a few. I was uniquely privileged in March to be at the 75th anniversary of the Great Escape from Stalag Luft III, now in Sagan, Poland. 76 Officers from the British and Commonwealth Air Forces escaped from the camp on the night of 24 March 1944, only three Officers returned home successfully. Out of the 73 airman who were re-captured, 50 were executed on the orders of Hitler. The Hollywood version of events as retold in "The Great Escape" film does not do justice to the dedication, skill, bravery and sacrifice of all those who strove to return. Amongst the commemoration events we found time to clean the memorial to the murdered airmen, built to house their ashes when they were returned to the camp. Whilst we were in Poland, we were joined by Air Commodore (Retd) Charles Clarke who had been a new prisoner in Stalag Luft III at the time of the escape. He later went on to survive the "long march" as the PoWs were moved away from the advancing Red Army. His recollections of camp life and the hardships endured and the struggle for survival as the war drew to a close were obviously still vivid to him and recounted without histrionics. It was both moving and thought provoking. It was with sadness that I found out that Charles passed away on 08 May, he had served in the RAF from 1941 to 1978 and he will be sadly missed.

"Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me." John 12:26

On a more prosaic note our commitment to Open Churches has begun again and so the church will be open on a Wednesday and a Saturday from 1400 - 1700, so if you would like to drop in you would be most welcome. Alternatively, if you had time to mind the church over one of these periods that would be great, as we have to have at least two people looking after the church whilst it is open.

Kindest Regards

Diane & Nigel

# Belfry Bat

We had seven at the practice on Wednesday April 10<sup>th</sup>, so we paced ourselves and had plenty of rests.

On Friday I went to pick up the mobile belfry ready for an early start on Saturday, and was relieved to find I could climb into the minibus without difficulty. The event, which was organised by the Yorkshire Association of ringers was called A Grand Day Out, and was exactly that, with a wide range of attractions and activities for ringers and their families, held at the Yorkshire Showground at Harrogate.

There weren't enough to ring on Sunday, the first Sunday we have missed for a long time. But we will be back for Easter. We don't practise in Holy Week, so the next ringing will be on Easter Sunday. We went to the pre-season lunch of the Betley Croquet Club on Tuesday, but I don't think we will be playing this year.

There has been a request from the archbishops and the prime minister for bells to be rung in sympathy with Notre Dame, preferably on Thursday April 18<sup>th</sup>. One suggestion is tolling a single bell at 7pm, which will certainly be easier than organising a band, and also more attention-seeking. Steve Mellor tolled the tenor at St John's at 6.30, other commitments making it impossible to be done at 7. There was a very good response from ringers all over the country and abroad, with over a thousand churches participating.

We were able to ring six quite nicely on Easter morning, and practising got back to normal three days later. On April 26<sup>th</sup> we spent the day in Bakewell with a friend from Ro's student days, and had lunch in a pub overlooking Lathkill Dale, which brought back memories of a camping expedition almost forty years ago. Four of our regular band were away on Sunday, but we rang five very well. On Sunday morning we received an email telling us that Verity Stokes, our former neighbour and Keele ringer, was in the area and would like to visit. It was good to see her again.

Our Madeley croquet group played for the first time on April 29<sup>th</sup>, but I was a spectator due to hip-induced immobility. Sitting watching was rather like sitting outside the tower on practice night. The practice on May 1<sup>st</sup> saw only four of our own band, but four visitors made it viable and we had a good ring. It was good to see Terry French from Betley for the first time for quite a while.

On Thursday I had a hospital appointment to be assessed for my fitness for my hip operation. I am fit! On Sunday we had a postponed-from-Thursday young learner session in the garage, and Kenny was able to ring with his father and grandmother. On May 8<sup>th</sup> several regulars were away, but there were seven at the practice and we had a useful one.

I had a most amazing surprise on Thursday May 9<sup>th</sup> – I received a phone call offering me a hip replacement operation in five days' time, so by the time you read this I will be skipping around with my new hip.

Phil Gay

### **Update 23<sup>rd</sup> May**

My hip operation turned out to be slightly more complicated than expected but I am now making good progress. Thank you for your prayers.

Phil Gay







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# **PLANT AND PRODUCE SALE IN AID OF NEW HOPE LEPROSY TRUST, INDIA**

This year's sale on May 19 enjoyed fine weather and raised £605. Thanks go to everyone who supported the event and in particular those who provided plants, cakes, jams and other produce and helped on the day. The monies raised will go to supporting basic health care in rural areas, rehabilitation of leprosy patients, maternity care and provisions for elderly widows. Currently, the Trust is facing major additional problems as a consequence of damage from the recent cyclone. If you would like to receive a copy of the Annual Report of the Trust please [email: shirleyafuller@icloud.com](mailto:shirleyafuller@icloud.com).

## **THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY**

During the last year the Children's Society worked with over 11,000 vulnerable children and young people bringing life changing support. This includes helping families trapped in poverty and debt, providing support to young carers and combating sexual exploitation. St. John's contributed £1,347.87. Thank you to all supporters. Christingle Collections and the Box Collection are the main methods of giving. St John's School continues to help and their collection of £355 .09 is included in the total. Well done to the children who are being encouraged to think of others. Some church members now prefer to give a cheque, payable to "The Children's Society" instead of collecting in a box. It can be gift aided. Anyone else who would like to do this just speak to me please or call me on 01782 720874. The Children's Society says that these collections "are vital in helping to improve the lives of children who feel scared, unloved and that they simple don't matter. The kindness and compassion shown by your supports in donating, enables us to make it possible for these children to escape from potentially harmful surroundings and lead the happier lives that they deserve," Please continue to give generously.

MANY THANKS from Elizabeth Leslie

# W.I. Report

The arrival of Martin Thomas to address members of Keele W.I. invited us to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Audley Theatre, converted from the former “Palace” Cinema. The restored building, opened in 1969 by a team of enthusiasts, is a compliment to the efforts and commitment of its members, who have given Audley and its neighbours a wealth of entertainment and fellowship. Martin Thomas himself is by profession an electrician, and some 40 years ago was invited, as an apprentice, to assist in the theatre lighting box. Nowadays, he is married to Carol, the actress and costumier who persuaded him to join the team.

And here is where our “Pantomime Tale” begins, in Keele Village Hall, where the “small hall” was firmly closed to the public. Had our speaker arrived? Silence fell, the side door opened, to show a magnificent leg, in glittering cerise tights, eventually followed by a majestic figure in a frilly dress, rather like a pink and purple fuchsia, crowned by a multi-coloured headdress. We were in the presence of Dame Beautice Potts!

From then on, we were fascinated to hear the story of the theatre’s development, illustrated by pictures of productions, costumes made by Carol, and make-up. Dame Beautice herself had been in 36 pantos, naturally playing the dame. The narrative of the company’s successes was punctuated by our speaker’s lively performance, moving amongst the tables, asking questions, telling jokes, spraying us with “Shark Repellent”, and generally keeping us on our toes. Among the exhibits provided was a headdress worn in “Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves”, a small lidded basket with an asp emerging spirally from it.

Needless to say, it was over too soon, and the applause for Martin and Carol Thomas was rapturous. As Dame Beautice herself remarked “It’s just a bit of fun”. It certainly was – and long may the Audley Players continue to bring their joyful spirit into our lives.

It was time to celebrate our 87<sup>th</sup> birthday with refreshments, and we were happy to welcome our visitors to join us for a slice of our magnificent birthday cake.

Our next meeting is an away-day at the World of Wedgwood on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June

We shall return to the Village Hall on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July at 7.15 p.m.

with Kath Reynolds: Chalkboards and Gynslips.

Peggy Chaplin

# The Garden Guild

Barbara Andrew gave a superb talk on Vera Brittain, accompanied by an exhibition of photographs and books. Vera is best known for 'Testament of Youth', but she wrote 30 books. She was a feminist, a socialist, a peace campaigner, poet and traveler. First editions of 'Testament of Youth' sold at £5000.

She was born on December 29<sup>th</sup> 1893, in Sidmouth Avenue, Newcastle under Lyme. Her parents Edith and Arthur were earnest people, not frivolous or light hearted. Arthur was gloomy, Edith was his devoted carer until he jumped into the Thames and drowned.

The book that best summed up Vera's philosophy is 'Above all nations is humanity'. She kept a diary for 60 years.

She was educated at St Monica's, Kingswood, Surrey, from where she attended some women's suffrage meetings. Her brother Edward attended Uppingham School where his friends were Roland and Victor. Vera went to Somerville College Oxford, where she first met Roland Leighton, who lent her a book 'the story of an African farm' which became her favourite. She said of Roland "he seems to share my faults, my talents and my ideas". When Roland joined up in 1914, she said "I wish to be the mother of Roland's child".

In June 1915 she left Oxford to become an auxiliary nurse in Buxton, and then in Camberwell, where the sights and sounds and smells in the wards were terrible. Roland was killed in 1915 just before going on leave. He had gone to check the wire and was shot in the stomach and died later. His uniform in which he was shot was sent back to his parents to bury in the garden. Vera plodded on numbly, only to face more bereavement, when Geoffrey and Victor died. Edward won the MC on the Somme after rescuing a fellow wounded soldier. He died on June 15 1918, knowing he was to face a court martial for homosexuality. Whether by suicide or sniper fire is not known.

It is no wonder that Vera became a campaigner for homosexual rights. At the end of the war she describes herself as depressed, lonely and battered by grievous losses. She found solace in poetry and her friendship with Winifred Holtby.

She became a public speaker for the League of Nations, the Peace Pledge union, and women's rights. She wrote 30 books, and many newspaper articles. She had enormous influence on the great and the good, and was always a voice and a presence to be reckoned with. She married George Catlin, and both shared their life with Winifred Holtby. Her daughter Shirley (Williams) was born in 1930. It is ironic that she developed motor neurone disease, and in the end this great communicator could only speak with her eyes. She is buried in Italy with her beloved brother Edward.

On Tuesday June 11 at 3pm the Keele Garden guild is visiting a garden called The Pintles in Great Bridgeford.

Peter Hough

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On Sunday 19 May, whilst the Vicar enjoyed a well deserved week off, we were fortunate to have the Archdeacon of Stoke, the Venerable Matthew Parker, minister to us. His sermon on love and friendship was all the more poignant as we were joined by former student at Keele University and regular worshiper at St John's, Anand Kumar, who visited us whilst in the UK from Singapore. He loved the church and has some very fond memories of his time here during the 1990s. He was accompanied his wife and six year old daughter. The Rev John Whitehead who was Vicar at the time, also attended.

Nigel

## From the Registers

### Funeral and Burial in the Church yard

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May** Irene (Mavis) Hollins

## Dates for your Diary

**Open Church** We continue with our commitment to open the church to visitors from 2pm to 5pm every Wednesday and Saturday until **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September**. A list has been put up at the back of the church for you to add your name beside the date(s) you are able to be in attendance.

**Tuesday June 11<sup>th</sup>** - **St John's PCC** meets at 6.30pm in the school.

**Saturday June 22<sup>nd</sup>** – **St John's Coffee Morning** – Vicarage, 11am -1.00pm

**Sunday June 23<sup>rd</sup>** – **St John's Patronal Festival** – 11.15am

## Advance Notices

**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.  
Further details in the July magazine.

**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July** – **Potteries Theological Society** – **Keele University Chapel at 7pm**

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 us to go into Pioneer Ministry at Milton Keynes, and will be bringing us the fruits of her experiences there.

We look forward to seeing you then!

# Church Officers

Clergy	Rev. Peter Jones The Vicarage, 21 Pepper Street, Silverdale ST5 6QJ Email <a href="mailto:tadjones@btinternet.com">tadjones@btinternet.com</a>	01782 624455 (Day off Friday)
Church Wardens	Nigel Bostock Email <a href="mailto:nbbmjb@hotmail.com">nbbmjb@hotmail.com</a> Diane Vogler	01782 663035 07702 361646
Asst Church Wardens	Watson Fuller Angela Studd Email <a href="mailto:astudd@btinternet.com">astudd@btinternet.com</a> Janet Thornhill	01782 627220 01782 626372 01782 618290
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Gift Aid Secretary	Kevin Chawner	01782 644283
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**NB Articles for the magazine should be sent to the editor by the 12th of the preceding month.**

