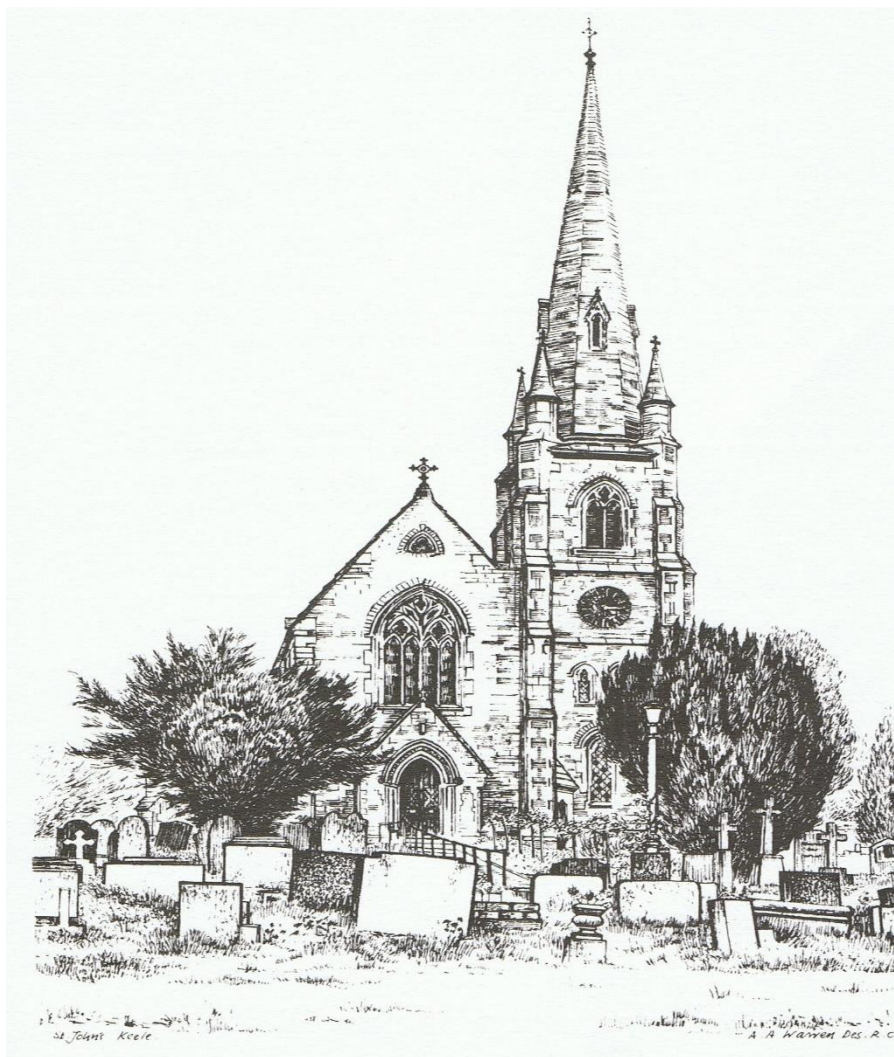


PARISH MAGAZINE



St. John the Baptist Church Keele

May 2019

50p

Worship at St John's May-June

May

Sunday 5 th	Third Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 12 th	Fourth Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist 8.00am Said Eucharist
Sunday 19 th	Fifth Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist
Sunday 26 th	Sixth Sunday of Easter	11.15am Sung Eucharist

June

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

I've recently written a letter to those who have relatives buried in our Church Yard. Part of the purpose of the letter is to remind recipients that the Parochial Church Council needs to pay for the upkeep of the Church Yard, and that without the donations we receive, the PCC would soon find it impossible to continue to maintain the Church Yard to the standard to which we've grown accustomed. My purpose in that letter is not just to beg for money though.

I read a scholarly article recently in which a case was made to the effect that biological life is fundamentally evil. This *sounds* like the sort of thing for which a Satanist might argue; but it's nothing of the sort. The author, David Benatar, is a thoughtful atheist, and he's setting out his reasons (in his *Better Never to Have Been Born: The Harm of Coming into Existence*, 2006, Oxford: Clarendon Press) for concluding that it would be better were there no biological life-forms at all since coming into existence always causes or involves serious harm. He writes:

Although the good things in one's life make it go better than it otherwise would ... one could not have been deprived by their absence if one had not existed. Those who never exist cannot be deprived. However, by coming into existence one does suffer quite serious harms that could not have befallen one had one not come into existence. (Benatar, p.1)

Benatar's assumptions here enable him to launch his arguments to the effect that procreation is morally unpardonable and that the safest number of human beings is not above zero. By no means all atheists are as pessimistic as this, though the view that life is or can be harmful certainly is a big part of what's supposed to be *the* major argument against the 'existence' of God.

There's much to Benatar's book that I strongly object and against which there are very strong counter-arguments; but I don't want to deal with these here. I mention Benatar's thesis because a very element in (orthodox) Christian teaching is that the physical creation is fundamentally good (I'll spare you the Biblical and other references!). Not that Christianity (or Judaism, or Islam for that matter) holds that the creation is a bit bad and a

bit good; nor even is it that the creation is a mixed bag – a kind of pastiche of good and bad. No: there is an emphatic ‘It is Good!’

What we colloquially call ‘Easter’ (the several weeks’ long feast of the Resurrection of Jesus) is the affirmation of God’s promise to raise the physical creation to the fullness of life – not the physical giving way to the ‘spiritual’, but the transformation of all that exists into the good creation that God wills it to be. And the beauty of our Church Yard (indeed, ‘the beauty of the earth’) is witness to this.

Fr Peter Jones



The Bishop’s Pastoral Letter

See the Power

While we await a new Bishop of Shrewsbury, another archdeacon pens a pastoral letter.

What do you expect when you pray?

When we pray, do we expect it to be a way of persuading God to give us what we want? Or is prayer an activity in which we engage with God, to achieve what he wants?

To be able to engage with God, we need faith, trust in God, in every part of life. Prayer helps us to grow in trust (Proverbs 3:5-6). But faith filled prayer is not a device to ensure an easy life – see Hebrews 11:32-39 to see what trust in God achieves in real people’s lives. Prayer is the way we have been given to see God’s power at work in every situation, to help us cope, to overcome evil, to witness change.

Thy Kingdom Come, is an opportunity, between Ascension Day and Pentecost (30th May-9th June), for all of us, ‘to deepen our friendship with Jesus, bring others to know Jesus or know him better and to come to know that every aspect of your life is the stuff of prayer’.

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

As we have recently celebrated at Easter, and do so every day, Jesus Christ is RISEN, He is ALIVE. When we pray we pray to God our Father, through our living Lord and Saviour, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

In times of great pain and suffering, in times of joy and celebration, we pray with the focus that Jesus himself taught us in the Lord’s Prayer. ‘Thy Kingdom Come’, is followed by the words ‘Thy will be done’. We pray for the coming of God’s kingdom in our lives, the lives of those around us, the life of our churches, communities and beyond. We do so based on God’s agenda, not ours; we do so expecting God to work. ‘Your will be done’.

So let’s all pray. If you don’t know what to say, start with the words Jesus taught us – the Lord’s Prayer (Matt 6:9-14). Pause between each line, be ready to be challenged, encouraged and comforted. Listen, watch and see God at work. And GIVE THANKS.

The Ven Sue Weller
Archdeacon of Walsall

5 Finger Prayer

Thumb: The thumb is closest to your heart – Pray for those closest to you

Index Finger: The finger that points the way – Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal you

Middle Finger: The tallest finger – Pray for leaders and all who have authority

Ring Finger: The weakest finger – Pray for the weak, sick, and those most in need

Pinkie: The smallest finger – Pray for yourself and your own needs

From the Church Wardens

Dear Friends,

Whether you take as the start of spring the meteorological (March 1st) or astronomical (March 20th) date, it's very obviously spring now and I hope you all had a Happy Easter. The spring flowers are presenting a lovely display in the Churchyard and it is heartening to see it in such a good state of upkeep. You may have noticed that the Lychgate has had a new coat of paint but that's not all. Early signs of rot had been spotted and we have Mr. Bev Stringer to thank as he has arranged to have this professionally treated prior to having it painted and his kind donation to this project is very gratefully appreciated.

We are in the process of trying to arrange for a drone survey of the roof of the Church, especially the crosses to ensure all is well and to provide a future record. We are researching the use of a drone as it seems by far the safer and most cost effective way of undertaking this work, as I am sure you will agree. In the first instance we are trying to find out if there is anyone connected with the Church who has a drone who would be willing to help. If we can get this set up it should give us an interesting view of the Church and if there are any particularly interesting images, I will try to find a way of displaying them.

The Venerable Matthew Parker, Archdeacon of Stoke-upon-Trent will be taking the service in Church on May 19th so it would be nice to see as many of you there as possible. Also, please don't forget that the original John Dennison watercolour that was used to make last year's Christmas Card is the subject of a sealed auction that will close on the 26 May. If you are interested in placing a bid please ensure that this is with Angela before that date.

“For as by a man came death, by a man has come the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.” **1 Corinthians 15:21-22**

Kindest Regards

Diane & Nigel

Belfry Bat

We heard on March 9th of the death of a friend of ours, Ruth Smith. She was the wife of Bob Smith, a famous ringer who in 1963 conducted the ‘forty thousand’, an eighteen-hour peal containing all the changes on eight bells. We got to know them in the early 1980s, when we were collecting the bells now installed in our garage. They were partners in a bell-hanging firm, and supplied us with our tenor bell (second hand) and a new bell specially cast for us. Bob and Ruth became good friends, and they both rang in the first peal on our bells in 1992. We rang our peal on Wednesday March 20th in memory of Ruth.

I was pleased with our peal on Wednesday March 13th. My legs are getting rather creaky, particularly my left hip, so I made sure I was ringing a bell where there was something to lean on. Slightly to my surprise, no leaning was necessary, which pleased me because on Friday I am ringing in a peal at Sandon, which will take a bit longer. There were eight at our practice that evening, and we were able to give everyone a really good work-out. John and Imelda did very well, and newly-arrived-in-Madeley Josie enabled us to ring Cambridge again. The Sandon peal didn’t go the distance, and I was quite relieved.

On Sunday March 17th we had seven, but the ringing was not as good as it usually is. On Monday my friend Ray Ballard brought a learner from Kidsgrove for some additional practice, including the use of the simulator which they don’t have at Kidsgrove. She is at the stage where she is beginning to ring with the band, but needs more rope time than it is possible to provide during a normal practice.

Wednesday’s practice was hard work – only six were there, but we had a useful practice. We are in the process of setting up some interesting teaching. Josie Martin has an eight-year-old grandson who is keen to learn to ring, so we are going to teach him and a friend on the small bells in our garage. We have some experience of this, with the Mellor grandson and the grand-daughter of a friend, and it worked very well. What I particularly like is that eight-year-olds are in scale with the bells. We have formulated a medium-term plan, which involves moving them on to the light bells at Whitmore when they are ready, and then on to the bigger bells at Keele and Madeley.

A remarkable incident arose when I was visiting the Butters workshop on Thursday. A standing joke has arisen between Graham who works there and me that when I need holes to be accurately drilled. I ask him if he has any in stock, and his reply is always that he will have to make some. I am currently suffering from a bad hip, so as a joke I asked him if he had any hip joints in stock, and to my astonishment he was able to find one – the metal part which is fitted to the top of the femur. He couldn't remember how he came to have it.

On Saturday March 23rd I spent the morning at Dilhorne delivering training on basic belfry maintenance to five members of the Association. On Sunday March 24th we went to early mass at Clayton before setting off for Suffolk for a family funeral on Monday. On Tuesday on the way back we went to Ruth Smith's memorial service at the magnificent Norman church at Melbourne, Derbyshire. Two visitors gave us eight on Wednesday March 27th, and we had a useful practice. On Thursday we had the first session with the youngsters, and it went well.

In the past I have arrived both late and early for ringing on the Sunday when the clocks are altered, but this year everyone arrived on time. There were seven of us, and we rang pretty well. On the following day, with help from a friend, I painted the floor of the mobile belfry as part of its winter maintenance, and went back on Tuesday to do a second coat. On Wednesday I recruited some of our morning peal band to help dismantle the belfry. In the evening there was a good turnout at the practice, although I had to leave soon after the start to go to a medical appointment, as a result of which I am now in the queue for a hip replacement, probably in August.

Steve and Pauline were away on Sunday, but we had seven of our own band and one visitor, and student Ian arrived just in time for one ring. We were pleased with the ringing.

On Monday I was up early to take the mobile belfry for its service, and back in time to take delivery of turf for the pond, which was laid the following day with help from Steve Mellor and visiting family. Apart from some additional planting, the pond is now finished, so I won't mention it again!

Phil Gay





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Spring Draw 2019 – Prizewinners

[1] Spring Planter	Stephen James, Knights Croft
[2] Whiskey	Steve Mellor, Westlands
[3] Simnel Cake	Beryl Keeling, Station Road, Keele
[4] Easter Biscuits	Barrie Wardell, Larchwood, Keele
[5] 12 Free Range eggs	Sarah Adams, Highway Lane, Keele
[6] Wine	Elizabeth Brooks, Keele
[7] Spring Hamper	Elizabeth Leslie, Audley
[8] Tin of Chocolates	Jeanette Dix, Keele
[9] Easter Egg	Llinos Williams, Churchfields, Keele
[10] Cheese Board	Jane Tillier, Plantation Park, Keele

We raised £282 and would like to thank everyone who took part in the Draw and to those who provided prizes.

The recent Yew Knight Supper

Like old wine in a new bottle the revised and reformed Yew Knight Supper this April proved a considerable success.

Becky Bowler, with Joe's help, provided a splendid nouvelle cuisine meal and petit fours (biscuits) for pudding.

Becky introduced us to Dr Jordan Kistler of Philadelphia, an accessible, arresting and entertaining speaker to crown the evening. She left us all so much better informed about the subtleties of museum labelling.

The date of the next Yew Knight is not yet decided but we look forward to the **St John's Harvest Supper on Friday 4th October.**

The Garden Guild

Cas Bailey, recently retired after thirty fabulous years in the police force, was sitting in the doctor's surgery when she picked up a magazine and read: "Have you ever considered if you are creative?" Two days later she was enrolled on a twelve month course in glass technology at the Brierley Hill factory. After having been awarded student of the year she decided to begin a new career giving TALKS – with no slides, no power point, no notes, and a rude joke if anyone fell asleep.

Cas described the processes in vivid detail, especially the art of blowing glass: getting molten glass heated to 1250 degrees on the end of a six foot hollow steel pole, and then a spit blow (like blowing a trumpet?) to inflate the glass. Most students lost their eyebrows and singed their hair. Only twenty five seconds is available to work with the glass and then it's back to the glory hole and re-firing.

Then someone fell asleep – this was the joke: A man walks on the beach and finds a dirty old bottle. Rubbing it clean he summons a genie. "O master, what is your desire?" "I wish to become irresistible to all the women in the land". The genie turns him into a box of Thornton's Continentals.

Cas introduced us to some of her fellow students (names changed to preserve anonymity)

There was Emma who claimed to be an expert – "You will all benefit from my experience"- who then ducked out of the mould making and glass blowing with a dental appointment, a puncture, dog's visit to the vets. It took her three weeks to master glass blowing "because I am too short."

There was Toby with dreadlocks who could smoke five cigarettes at once and down a two litre bottle of White Lightening cider. His output was limited to one hundred garlic bulbs, the easiest item to produce because not involving blowing.

There was Kirsty, a famous potter whose theme was women's erotica. She produced a magnificent pudenda. When Tom the tutor, a confirmed bachelor who found it difficult to talk to women, came to look at it he exclaimed "What a lovely tulip, Kirsty!" Kirsty had an aversion to the police, and never spoke to Cas, until one day, "I want you to help me. I'm celebrating diversity in womanhood – and you've got the biggest breasts." Cas was somewhat taken aback, but said Yes, thinking she could duck out of it later. "When?" "Now!" They went into an empty room, where Cas's breasts were smeared with vaseline and covered in plaster of paris to make the mould. This was very hot and got tighter as it contracted!

Cas brought along a wonderful collection of things she has created, including paper weights, ear rings, broaches, bottles, vases, dishes, pendants, leaded glass.

Barrie said “It has been interesting, informative, and entertaining!” Certainly the Garden Guild has never laughed so much! Another splendid evening!

Our next meeting is on May 13 at 730pm, when Barbara Andrew will speak on “Vera Brittain, Writer, Campaigner” All are welcome at our meetings.

Peter Hough

W.I. Report

Our April speaker was Jess Boyden, working for the RAF Museum at Cosford, who began by pointing out while this is the centenary year of the W.I., it is the 101st anniversary of the RAF.

The Museum of course holds much interest for the history of the aeroplane and has many interesting exhibits to admire, but Jess’ particular occupation is to search out and record memories of service, hence the title of her talk, “Stories of the RAF”.

Since the recording project began, a great many stories have been recorded for posterity, and for our benefit, Jess had selected four specific accounts of RAF service, all related by women, whose very varied experiences demonstrated how greatly attitudes to women, and confidence in their skills, has developed over the years. Incidentally, these, and many more, may be found on the website: www.rafstories.org, so are now available to all.

The earliest of the stories came from Katharine Du Plat Tyler, a member of the WAAF, whose service began in secretarial work, graduating to the operations room, moving to Dover Castle to monitor signals from aircraft over the English Channel, listening for call signs that sometimes never came.

Another volunteer became an Air Transport Auxiliary pilot – at last a chance to fly a plane!

Jackie Moggridge’s daughter describes her mother’s ambition to break the sound barrier, but the RAF did not approve, and provided no support, though in the end she achieved her aim.

Julie Gibson became the first female pilot in 1987, and had to learn to cope with the surprise, even disbelief, that such a thing could be. Nowadays the range of careers within the RAF is much more varied, and is equally open to men and women.

Our last encounter was with the remarkable story of Michelle Partington, who served as a paramedic in Afghanistan. Her account of the standard of fitness required, and worse, the strain on mental health, was painful to hear, and we could only admire, even as we shuddered at the story of her experience of untreatable injuries on the battlefield.

Currently, you may wish to add to the project's collection, whether you yourself served in the RAF, knew someone who did, or are inspired by example.

On Tuesday (please note the change of day), May 7th,
we shall be celebrating our 87th birthday in the Village Hall.

With Martin Thomas and **Pantomime Tales**

Peggy Chaplin

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

14 Plantation Park, Keele Campus
Sunday May 19th, Sale open from 2.00pm

Last year £671 was raised thanks to generous donations of plants, garden produce, jams and cakes from friends and neighbours. Reports and photographs of the work of the Trust in a very poor rural region will be on display. Monies raised support basic health care in rural areas, rehabilitation of leprosy patients, maternity care and provisions for elderly widows

Entrance £2.50 (children free) includes refreshments. Items donated for sale can be delivered to 14 Plantation Park on Friday May 17th, Saturday May 18th or morning of the sale.

Contact Shirley Fuller (627220) if you would like items collected.



Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 1st May – Potteries Theological society - 7pm – Rm CBA 0060
in the Chancellor's Building.

Dr Peter Thomas will be speaking on **Christianity and Science**.

Peter needs little introduction, as we have known him at Keele for many years, where he is a member of the Department of Life Sciences. He is currently Reader in Plant Ecology, and his particular expertise is in trees. Amongst his responsibilities is the National Collection of Flowering Cherries, which is held on Keele campus. This may be our last opportunity of hearing from him, as he is retiring at the end of the year.

The remaining meeting this year is on **Monday 8th July**, when The Revd Ruth Maxey, former Chaplain at Keele University, is speaking about Pioneer Ministry.

Wednesday 15th May - Open Access to our Church begins.

We continue with our commitment to open the church to visitors from 2pm to 5pm every Wednesday and Saturday until **Saturday 7th 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.

Sunday May 19th – Plant and produce sale in aid of New Hope Leprosy Trust, India – 14 Plantation Park, Keele Campus from 2.00pm.

Admission £2.50 (children free) includes refreshments. (Details on page 10)

Advance Notices

Tuesday June 11th - St John's PCC meets at 6.30pm in the school.

Saturday June 22nd – St John's Coffee Morning – Vicarage, 11am -1.00pm

Sunday June 23rd – St John's Patronal Festival – 11.15am

(Further details of these events will be in the June issue of the Magazine)

Flowers at Easter

Janet is enormously grateful to all who made donations towards flowers this Easter.

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
Organist& Choirmaster	Freddie Clitheroe	01782 750387
PCC Treasurer	Steve Mellor	
PCC Secretary	Rick Marshall	01782 627733
Captain of the Belfry	Phil Gay	01782 750038
Sacristan	Janet Thornhill	01782 618290
Gift Aid Secretary	Kevin Chawner	01782 644283
Deanery Synod Reps	Angela Studd Diane Vogler	01782 626372 01782 632977
Magazine Editor	Diane Vogler Email dianevogler@yahoo.co.uk	01782 632977 07702 361646

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

