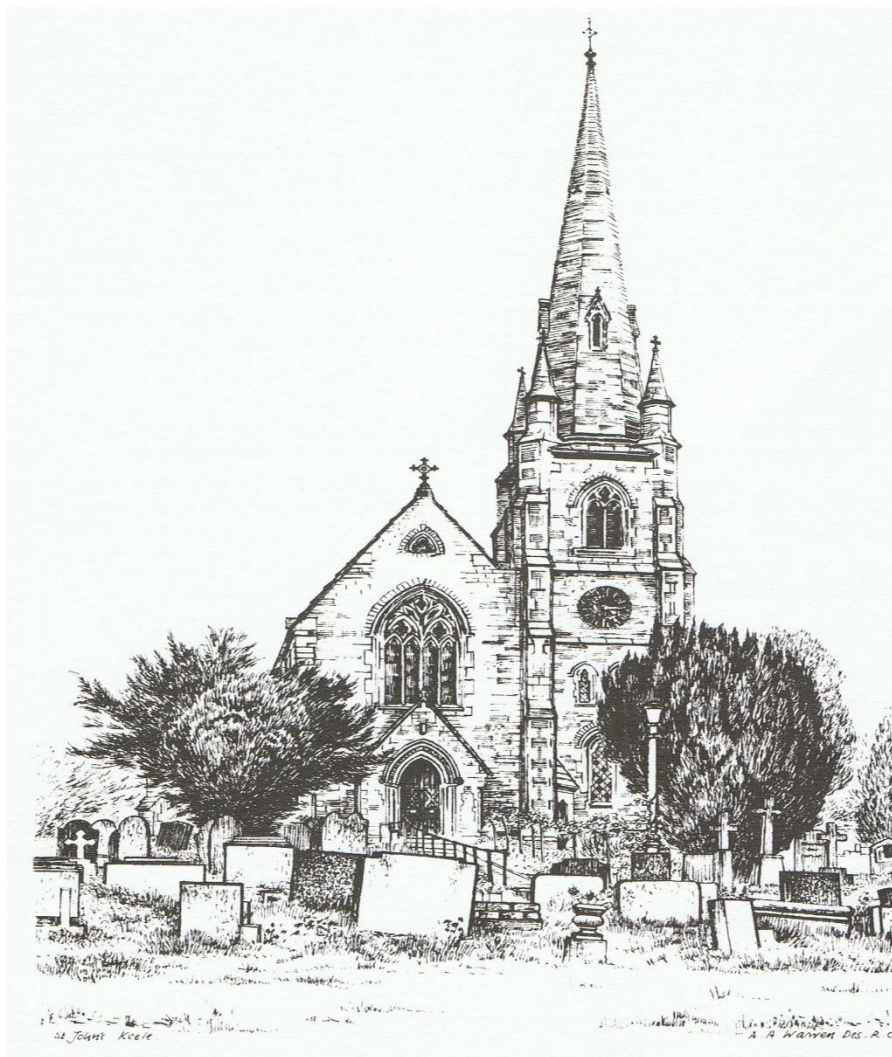


PARISH MAGAZINE



**St. John the Baptist Church
Keele**

November 2019

50p

Worship at St John's October - November

November

Sunday 3rd All Saints Day 11.15am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 10th Remembrance Sunday 08.00am Said Eucharist

Worship starts at Keele Memorial 10.50am

Sunday 17th Second Sunday before Advent 11.15am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 24th Christ the King 11.15am Sung Eucharist

December

Sunday 1st First Sunday of Advent 11.15am Sung Eucharist
Advent Carol Service

Sunday 8th Second Sunday of Advent 08.00am Said Eucharist
11.15am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 15th Third Sunday of Advent 11.15am Sung Eucharist
Carols & Readings for Christmas 3.30pm

Sunday 22nd Fourth Sunday of Advent 11.15am Sung Eucharist

Tuesday 24th Family Worship (with Christingle) 4.00pm
First Mass of Christmas 10.00pm Sung Eucharist

Wednesday 25th Mass of the Day 10.00am Sung Eucharist
At St John's

Sunday 29th First Sunday of Christmas 10.00am Sung Eucharist
At St Luke's, Silverdale

**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 ...

The canonisation of John Henry, Cardinal Newman on Sunday last (13th October) gives me an opportunity to say something about 'saints'. Perhaps a good place to start will be the assumption, widely-held, that Newman's canonization was the occasion of his being 'made a saint', such that we can say of St So-and-So that she was made a saint on such-and-such a date, that date being her canonization. This isn't so. John Henry Newman, like any other saint, was made a saint *at his Baptism*. What happens when someone is 'canonized' is that they are accorded a feast-day and have a collect and readings listed ('canonized') for the Eucharist and Morning and Evening prayer for that day.

Remembering this – indeed, getting it right – is important in November, November opening with *All Saints' Day* and closing with *St Andrew's Day*, with umpteen saints' days in between.

You might be rather shocked that we're made saints at our Baptism – and so we should be shocked! Think of all those people who are, in effect, practical atheists, who were baptised as babies! More to the point, think of me and you, also made saints at our Baptism! The shock might be lessened by our saying to the effect that, I'm not perfect (as a person, or as a member of the Body of Christ), and thereby let ourselves of the hook upon which our Christian identity hangs. We're full of escapist tricks like that; but they won't do.

John Henry Newman (Now, St John Henry Newman) is something of an inspiration to me – fussy man though he was. A contemporary detractor of his (the famous Christian socialist priest-author Charles Kingsley – he of ‘The Water Babies’ fame – and also someone I much-admire) said of Newman that if you ever dine with him, sup with a long spoon and be sure to count the silver once he’s gone! Kingsley did not like Newman at all – though there is no evidence that Newman was quite as Kingsley describes him. I guess that my point here is that saintliness comes wrapped up in packages like me and you; that pictures of saints as squeaky-clean occupiers of moral or popular high ground are just neither realistic nor helpful; that saints sing with the choir and howl with the dingoes; that some are (unconscionably) nice, while others have rough edges – I well remember working with Cicely Saunders, said to be the founder of the modern hospice movement. A very difficult person to work with, and robustly forthright in her dealings with civil servants and cabinet ministers; but so kind and open and gentle with those with life-limiting conditions and their visitors.

Saints come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. You and I are tokens of them. Let’s become what we are, not by changing into something we’re not, but by being transfigured into what we really are.

Fr Peter Jones



The Bishop's Pastoral Letter

The Bishop of Stafford's final Pastoral Letter - November 2019

A Builder's Vision

Add tasks to create hope

A tourist visiting Italy came across a construction site. "What are you doing?" the tourist asked the three stonemasons.

"I'm cutting the stone," answered the first.

"I'm cutting stone for 1,000 lire a day," the second said.

"I'm helping to build a cathedral," said the third.

I like this anecdote because it speaks to me of the importance of vision. The third stonemason was able to lift his eyes above the daily routine of his work to envisage the final result. His contribution was a part of something much bigger and together all of those involved in the project would produce something tremendous and beautiful – a cathedral dedicated to the Glory of God.

I was reminded of this when I read recently that the Sagrada Familia Cathedral in Barcelona is finally due to be finished in 2026. The first stone was laid in 1882 and its architect, Antoni Gaudi died in 1926 and is buried in the crypt. His vision has been 'caught' by others who have continued his work and taken his ideas forward.

For 'vision' to be successful it has to be shared by others. That is why a good Mission Action Plan needs to evolve out of a Parish Away Day where all have had the opportunity to contribute their ideas and suggestions.

Our Nation at this time is lacking in a clear shared vision.

Consequently, people want to go in their own direction and are critical and ungenerous about other possibilities. We have to be honest and say that wherever we are in the continuing BREXIT saga, our Nation has been torn into shreds and it will take time before we have a sense of being reunited.

As a Church we have a role to play in serving our communities by bringing people together to share their vision for the future and to help identify common threads. For example, as a grandfather I want my grandchildren to grow up safely, have a roof over their heads, food on their plates and an education that will enable them to do what they want to later in life. Surely, this unites me with all other grandparents?

Once shared vision is established there needs to be discussion as to how this vision can be turned into a reality. A vision without a task is a dream. A task without vision is drudgery. But the two together are the hope of the world. We need to think and pray about the specific roles that we can play in this process. Perhaps too many of us are content to ‘cut the stone’ rather than ‘build the cathedral’.

This is going to be a long process but a journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step and I would encourage every worshipping congregation in our Diocese to pray about the contribution that you are going to make in this process of reconciliation.

We are working on a shared vision for our Diocese to guide us during the coming decade. This ‘Direction of Travel’ is a work in progress and there is much consultation, reflection and prayer still to happen but it is already exciting and offers all sorts of possibilities.

As Ann and I move on to the next phase of our ministry, we are thrilled that we are leaving a Diocese that is in such good heart and positive about future growth. We are less thrilled at leaving so many wonderful friends but are really grateful for the privilege of being able to be part of the journey and can only thank you for your love, support and prayers.

May God bless you as your vision enables you to build not a cathedral but God’s Kingdom!

+Geoff
Rt Revd Geoff Annas,
Bishop of Stafford

From the Church Wardens

Dear Friends,

I must start with an apology I realised that I was terribly remiss in my last article and I forgot to thank some people for the work that they had done for the Church. In this case the apology and thanks go to Phil Gay and his team in the Bell Tower who have arranged for the repair and re-leading of the damaged window in the steeple. Not only did they arrange for the work to be done they have also paid for it themselves, so our thanks to all involved.

Now the leaves are coming off the trees I will intensify my efforts to find a arboriculturist to undertake safety work on the trees in the churchyard, the first one I contacted has not given me a date when they will be able to do the work, so I will look elsewhere.

The faculty has been provisionally approved for the work to go ahead on the “Templar Window” and the mandatory faculty notice is currently on display in the Church until 11 November and after that date the formal notice allowing us to proceed should be issued. As the nights draw in I would like to remind you that our Christmas Fair will be on 23 November in the Village Hall, I do hope as many of you as possible will be able to attend. Details of the services in advent are in the Church newsletter and we hope to see you there.

"While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, And cold and heat,
And summer and winter, And day and night Shall not cease." [Genesis 8:22](#)

Kindest Regards

Diane & Nigel

W.I. Report

Peter Durnall, our speaker on 7th October, is a keen bird-watcher and award-winning film-maker, so it came as no surprise when his first film “A Garden Through the Year”, showed rather less of the plants in his garden than the birds that come to feed and breed there.

Many of us have noticed the arrival of birds new to our gardens, and in Peter Durnall’s case, some of the newcomers listed were red-legged partridge, grey wagtail, (and a canary! – who did not stay.) But his words were rich in advice on the care we should give to feeding and provision of nest-boxes for the old favourites, all clearly and colourfully depicted living their frenetic existence among the trees and ivy-covered walls in his garden. Christmas card shots of robins in the snow were accompanied by solemn reminders that this favourite bird does not enjoy cold and ice any more than the rest of us.

Indeed, in close-ups, we were made very aware of the wear and tear on the adult birds, as they rushed to satisfy their offspring. Nor were we spared the results of attacks by predators.

From the relative peace of a garden, we were taken to a farm in Derbyshire. Barn owls in particular are losing the barns that once gave them their name. Nowadays, nesting boxes for owls, strangely bulky structures, are attached to trees at the edge of fields, providing cover for new families. Unfortunately, having lost their farmland habitat, many barn owls die as they hunt their prey alongside motorways.

To close, we were transported to one of our speaker’s favourite filming sites, the island of Skomer in Pembrokeshire, home to the largest number of breeding puffins in South Britain. With its treeless heath land and exposed cliffs, this is an ideal place to show the behaviour of these irresistible seabirds, their beaks in full colour for the mating season, bobbing about in the heather.

Whatever season, high summer, winter or spring, there is always something to capture on film, as Peter Durnall so ably showed.

Peggy Chaplin

Our next meeting will be on Monday 4th November at 7.15 p.m. in the Village Hall. when our President, Sue Dean, will demonstrate “Craft for Christmas – making a door wreath”



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Greetings from Sunny Arizona

Dear All, my journey here went very well indeed, except for the drive to Heathrow in the early hours of the morning. Apart from the speed restrictions on the M6, I then found myself ‘parked’ for a while on the M25!

As I approached the airport perimeter road, the sun rose. It was a glorious sight but it blinded me and I had difficulties reading the sign posts to my parking area! I made it though and all went very smoothly from then on.

Due to my three hour journey to the airport taking over four hours, I didn’t get much time to survey the Executive lounge before boarding the plane. I didn’t miss out on any pampering though, as once on board I was treated like a VIP for the whole journey.

I did think that being offered Champagne straight after the 9.30am take off was a bit early. Yes, I could have had water or juice as an alternative but I thought ‘why not’!

Next was a three-course meal with wine on tap. It was beautifully served on a tray covered in a pristine linen cloth and was delicious.

I was sleepy then, not because of the wine of course but the fact that I’d been up all night! I lowered my seat into the flat bed position, pulled up my duvet and slept quite comfortably. Another meal was served before landing and I opted for the freshly brewed coffee this time!

My dear friend Chet was waiting for me at Phoenix airport and very soon we were driving towards his home in Hereford. The roads were clear and the 199 mile journey flashed by. We chatted all the way and it was just like old times.

Yes, Arizona is a bit of a desert with a variety of flora and fauna fairly alien to that which I am familiar with in the UK. Coming face to face with a rattle snake was definitely a first and so was the tarantula experience as it crept out of its hole. I haven’t actually seen the coyotes yet but I hear them at night and see their prints in the sand along with those of the javelinas, the deer, the various snakes and the desert tortoises. I’ve seen road runners a few times as they speed past and several birds with names I hadn’t heard of. We were invited for drinks and nibbles with some neighbours the other day. They are only next door but one but too far to walk. There’s just so much open space here! A herd of deer came visiting there also! (to be continued).

Thinking of you all, Diane

The Garden Guild

Baz Fewster is an ambassador for Shropshire wildlife trust. He asked Why garden for wildlife? Because two species go extinct every year and that is because of loss of habitat. Gardens are much better for wildlife than farmers' fields, where there are no trees or hedgerows, no cover, no migratory corridors.

What do we do in the garden? Top ten: first relaxing, then drying clothes, dining, growing plants, sunbathing, entertaining guests, for children to play in, growing fruit, to attract wildlife, exercising pets. We should grow native species like bluebells and foxgloves which are a perfect fit for bees. Best trees for wildlife are alder, bird cherry, crab apple, goat willow, holly, rowan.

Horrid brambles are lovely for insects; dead wood ideal for fungi; the shingle beach is the gravel drive where spiders and ants can be found and butterflies sunbathe; the pool is like a river or a ditch, with frog spawn, dragon fly larvae- frog spawn ideal food for birds and hedgehogs, and dragon flies will eat midges; hedgehogs range, they do not have territories, so need to create a hedgehog corridor down the whole street! the rockery is a mountain where spiders spin and butterflies bask; the shed is a cave where spiders and butterflies hibernate; a rubbish pile is ideal for hedgehogs, windfall apples make a feast for birds, insect hotels can be made out of sacking, straw, teasel heads, decking boards and oasis.

We were urged not to use peat which takes thousands of years to form and can be destroyed in decades - the peat bog is a carbon sink for greenhouse gases like methane.

Only 9 out of 40 species of slug are garden pests, and poisons can affect everything else in the garden - so don't use them!

Our next meeting is on November 11th at 7.30pm in Keele Village Hall

Speaker Gordon Malt - Climbing and Wall Plants

Peter Hough

The Belfry Bat

I spent Thursday September 12th and the following day at the Butters workshop helping Graham to make three doors. There is an old pigsty on the site which will be retained as a store when the workshop closes, and the doors had become unserviceable. It pleases me that Graham usually asks for my help when there is a job involving woodwork. As one would expect for such a building, the doors are all quite small, but size is not much of an issue. I was surprised at how quickly we were able to make progress, so that by the end of Friday we had made and hung two doors and started the third. On Friday I came home with a nice item of upcycling, the seat from a two-seater privy, which we will turn into a seat to put in the orchard.

On Saturday at the Autumn Fayre Diane presented me with a badge of office – a brooch in the form of a bat, and we went home knowing there would be cake for tea. On Sunday several of the band were away but we rang five very nicely. In the evening Ro and I went to the cinema for the first time for several years and saw Downton Abbey. On Monday we played croquet for the first time this year, almost at the last possible time. But we think the weather might allow another two weeks. We were both very tired.

Tuesday September 17th was my son Simon's fiftieth birthday. Sometimes other people's birthdays can make one feel older than one's own! On Wednesday we had another good practice, with seven of our own band and two regular visitors. On Friday Simon visited us on his way back from London to Glasgow so that we could ring a special peal, in fifty methods, to celebrate his birthday. Fifty methods is very demanding, and we were flattered that he chose us as the band to do it, but in the end we didn't manage it, although we did have some excellent and very enjoyable ringing. Our Wednesday morning group has enlarged recently, which means that we don't ring six bells as often as in the past, and difficult peals like the one we attempted today need the band to be in practice.

The closure of the Butters workshop is getting closer, with Graham now spending most of his time sorting items ready to be sold. I had put in a bid for a couple of things, and they were delivered to our house on Thursday and Saturday, which required me to open the main door of the garage for the first time in many years. I was just able to make enough space.

There were eight in the belfry on Sunday morning, seven of our own band and Mike, an occasional visitor from Codsall. We were one short of a method-ringing band, but the call changes were good. On Monday our croquet at Madeley finished five minutes early when it began to rain, but we hope to be able to play next week. On September 25th there were eleven at the practice – eight of our band, two regular visitors and a villager who had seen my paragraph in the Newsletter. We were able to ring something near their frontier for everyone.

Steve and Pauline Mellor were back on Sunday September 29th and we had eight at morning ringing. Karen, Wednesday's visitor has said she would like to learn to ring so I will start teaching her this week. She has come along at just the right time for the band, as John and Imelda are no longer learners. Monday afternoon was wet so our final croquet session was cancelled.

We had another good practice on October 2nd – six of our band and four visitors. We were able to be fairly ambitious in what we rang. In the afternoon I gave our new recruit her first lesson, and she did very well. On Friday Rowena and I went to Madeley to ring for Bells for Peace. We were expecting several of the band to be away on October 6th, but in the end there were some unexpected absences too and we didn't have enough to ring. It's the first Sunday we've missed for quite a while. On Monday we had a visiting peal band at Woodlands. It's Derby Peal Week, which I have often taken part in, but decided not to this year as getting up towers is still not straightforward. We rang a pretty good peal, which particularly pleased four of the band who had lost peals here in the past.

Several regulars were away on Wednesday, but there were six of our band and one regular visitor. We were able to ring everything twice, which is always beneficial, and included Cambridge, our frontier method, without outside help for the first time. We were visited by Val Quayle, who lives at Leycett and was attracted by a Facebook appeal by Josie Martin, who is trying to recruit ringers for Madeley. She has decided she would like to learn to ring, and will have her first lesson next week. So in total we are now teaching four learners - Karen who had her second lesson on Wednesday afternoon, the two youngsters who are learning in the garage, and now Val as well. At the garage session on October 10th the two learners both had a major breakthrough, moving on to the next stage of their progress in spectacular style.

Phil Gay



St John's Christmas Card 2019

This year's Christmas cards are currently available in church and they will also be on sale at the Christmas Market on November 23rd.

The cost of the card will remain at £6 for a packet of ten cards and 65p for an individual card. The watercolour itself, unframed but with a thick card border, will be auctioned in May next year.

If you would like to purchase cards with a Biblical text, please contact Angela as soon as possible

Dates for your Diary

Potteries Theological Society – Wednesday 20th November at 7pm.

Dr Ian Bradley of the University of St Andrews will be talking to us about Celtic Christianity. Ian is the author of books on this subject as well as books on other topics in music and spirituality. You may have heard him on "Thought for the Day", as well as preaching on Radio Four's Sunday Service. This meeting is in the Chancellor's Building at Room **CB0.060**. It has been suggested that members arrive a few minutes early and take the opportunity to meet each other over coffee in the nearby Cafe.

Christmas Market – Saturday November 23rd 2 to 4pm in Keele Village Hall.

Keele PCC – Next meeting on December 10th, 6.30pm in St John's school.

From the Registers

Funeral

October 10th 2019 Veronica (Vera) Cartwright

Church Officers

Clergy	Rev. Peter Jones The Vicarage, 21 Pepper Street, Silverdale ST5 6QJ Email tadjones@btinternet.com	01782 624455 (Day off Friday)
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NB Articles for the magazine should be sent to the editor by the 12th of the preceding month.

