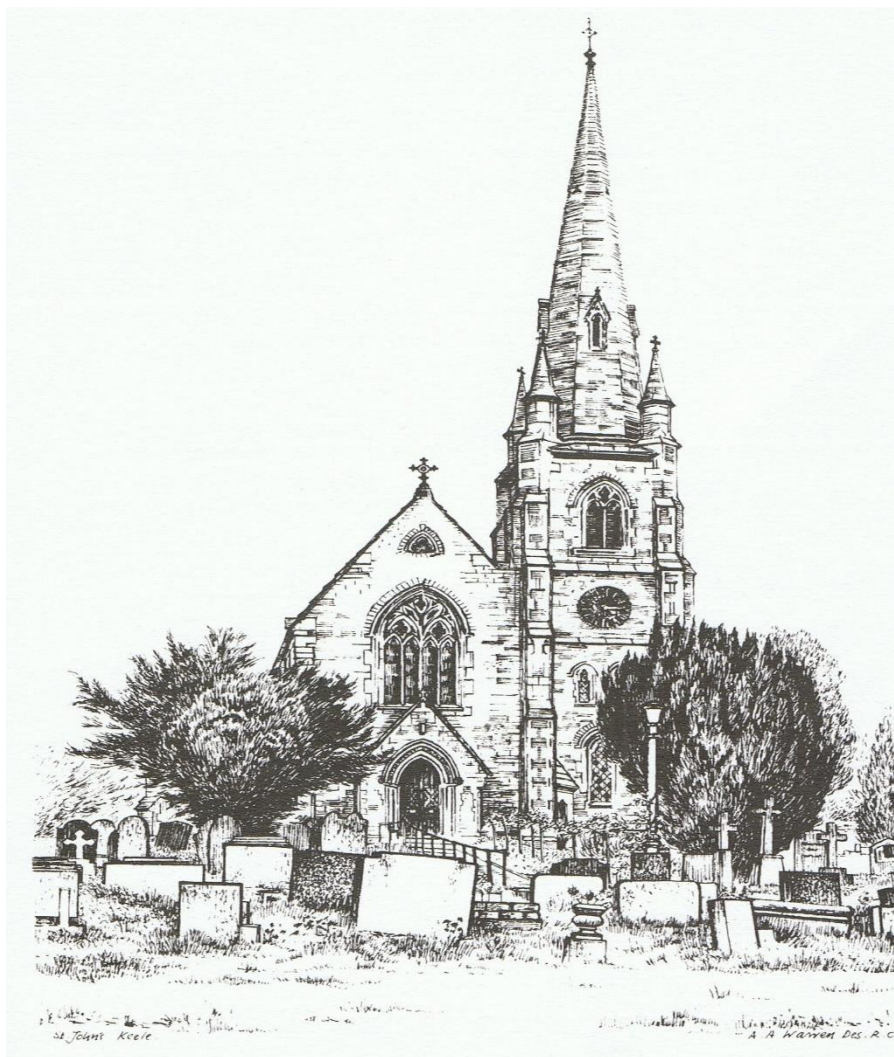


PARISH MAGAZINE



**St. John the Baptist Church
Keele**

October 2019

50p

Worship at St John's October - November

October

Sunday 6th Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity 11.15am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 13th Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity 8.00am Said Eucharist
11.15am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 20th St Luke's Patronal Festival 10.00am Sung Eucharist
Joint service for both churches at Silverdale

Sunday 27th Bible Sunday 11.15am Sung Eucharist
Act of Thanksgiving for the Departed 4.00pm at St John's
(Clocks go back one hour)

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 Sung Eucharist

Sunday 17th Second Sunday before Advent 11.15am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 24th Christ the King 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 ...

The end of September and (by local conventions) early October bring us two celebrations. The first – that on 28th September – is the Feast of St Michael and all Angels. Fogies (I am one such) will know the feast as ‘Michaelmass’, and will remember that the first ‘term’ of the academic year was called ‘Michaelmass’ – court sessions were also held at this time.

What are angels (supposed to be)? We need to work very hard to rid ourselves of mental images of camp, blond, effete, fluffy (and sometimes tubby) mincers wafting through the air with their hands together in pious fashion. The Bible is not terribly replete with information concerning angels – largely because angel-worship was rife in the religious cultures of Israel’s neighbours. In the Hebrew Bible (which we habitually and wrongly call ‘The Old Testament’), various words are used that are translated into English as ‘angel’): ‘malak el-ohîm’ (messengers of the Lord), ‘Haqqodasîm’ (the holy ones), and ‘ha-elyonîm’ (the upper ones). By the time of the era known as the ‘inter-testamental period’ (the many years between the alleged ‘close’ of the Hebrew Bible and the beginning of the Christian era) both Judaism and Christianity were influenced by wild and erratic ‘angelology’ – though Christianity in particular was meticulous in steering away from such extravagancies. The controlling thought in Christian theology concerning the angels is that they are created and purely mental beings whose existence is spent at the service of God.

At this point, and apparently inelegantly, I touch on the early October celebration. Harvest – not and never was a ‘festival’ – is of very recent and decidedly British origin. The story of its introduction into Christian worship during the 19th century is now well-known. Being a country boy, my memories of Harvest Thanksgiving (‘Diolchgarwch a’r Cynhaeaf’ in Welsh – just in case you’re interested) are strong and vivid and mostly associated with smells and sounds ... the sounds of the Harvest hymns and the smells (ah, the smells!) of the Harvest produce, brought up to the Altar during the processional hymn and laid around the church. In my previous parish, and in addition to the Harvest Eucharist, we would have no less than two Harvest Evensongs: one (bi-lingual) on Sunday, then one on Monday in Welsh – both with ‘special preachers’. The Harvest produce was then auctioned off at the Harvest Supper – a proper Harvest Supper: simple (a ploughman’s lunch and apple pie) and inexpensive.

Why have I brought these two celebrations together? It seems to me that each of these, in their own way, praise the richness and abundance of the creation. In an age in which some of us talk seriously about ‘multi-verses’ (about the possibility of universes other than our own), to dismiss the possibility of the ‘existence’ of the *malak El-ohîm* sounds rather like reverse-order special pleading; similarly, despite all the hype, we so desperately need the Harvest Thanksgiving to teach us how to properly acknowledge our dependency upon the enormous resources of the physical order.

By the time you read this, the great Feast of St Michael and the Angels will be behind us, and Harvest will be on the horizon. May the unseen created hosts watch over you and keep you in peace.

Fr Peter Jones

The Bishop's Pastoral Letter

Space, the final frontier

Not just once upon a time

I recently enjoyed a wonderful evening at Lichfield Cathedral, listening to Simon Johnson, the Organist and Assistant Director of Music at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, and members of the Lichfield Cathedral Choir and Chamber Choir presenting *The Planets* by Gustav Holst accompanied by amazing on-screen images from NASA's Goddard Space Flight Centre. This was part of the Cathedral's excellent series of events to mark the 50th anniversary of the first landing by a human being on the moon: 'Journeys through Space and Time'. I will not forget the wonder of listening to 'Neptune, the Mystic' whilst watching images of cloud formations on the planet itself and being overwhelmed by the beauty of God's creation. The Psalmist tells us:

'The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands... Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the end of the world.' Psalm 19: 1-2

Our Creator God made all of this and he also made each one of us as a unique expression of his love. God calls us to care for his creation, to be good stewards. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu has said:

"The future of our fragile, beautiful planet home is in our hands. As God's family, we are stewards of God's creation. We can be wantonly irresponsible, or we can be caring and compassionate. God says, "I have set before you life and death... choose life."

In April of this year, a 16 year old young woman from Sweden, Greta Thunberg, addressed M.P.'s in the Houses of Parliament. Her message was clear and powerful:

"We are living with a climate emergency. Sometimes we just simply have to find a way. The moment we decide to fulfil something, we can do anything. And I'm sure that the moment we start behaving as if we were in an emergency, we can avoid climate and ecological catastrophe. Humans are very adaptable: we can still fix this. But the opportunity to do so will not last for long. We must start today. We have no more excuses."

In the last week of September, people around the world took part in action to coincide with the United Nations Climate Summit, including many churches, schools, chaplaincies and fresh expressions in this diocese. We can all be a part of restoring God's creation, we can all make a difference but it requires our ongoing commitment – we're not finished in a week! In my office we are taking further steps to become more environmentally friendly, stopping any use of 'single use' plastics and items that are not environmentally friendly, ensuring that we cut down on the amount of paper we use and that all documents are printed double-sided, reducing, re-using and recycling.

What will you do?

*+Sarah Bullock
Bishop of Shrewsbury*



From the Church Wardens

Dear Friends,

I cannot believe it is almost the end of September and I am writing a magazine article for Octobers Magazine that I am sure at some point will mention Christmas!

We are still looking to find an arboriculturist to undertake the tree survey of the churchyard and carry out any related work that is required. We are especially concerned about the Yew trees at the back of the church that are currently encroaching onto the roof and gutters. We have had the Yew and Holly cut back around the Lychgate and cleaned the gutters, this has improved the surrounding area and should serve to protect the Lychgate itself.

The Vicar has re-submitted the faculty for the restoration of the “Templar window” and we are now hopeful that the Diocesan Advisory Committee will have all the information it requires to allow us to proceed.

Next year will be the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the “new” Church and we are planning to celebrate this notable event in a fitting style, we will let you know more details in due course but it will be over the weekend of 2 – 3 May.

As I promised I will mention Christmas with a reminder that our church Christmas Market will be on November 23rd and we hope we will see all of you there, put the date in your planners now!

“Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.” James 5:7

Kindest Regards

Diane & Nigel

W.I. Report

Seventeen members and two visitors met on Monday 2nd September to hear Pat Mood discuss her experiences of Picking Olives in Palestine. Pat began by saying that she had always been interested in the area and explained how Palestine used to be and then the situation after Partition. Pat used Maps to show how Palestine had been divided in order for the Jews to have their own homeland. With the division of the land in 1947/48 the Arab population was gradually pushed further out until only a tiny proportion of the population was left. Pat opinion was that Jewish citizens had considerable rights and the Palestinians lost many of theirs.

When Pat visited Palestine she found it to be a very militaristic state where the Arab people have no status or rights. Many olive trees were destroyed in order to build roads and the Arab farmers who were dependent on this crop were unable to farm. She described going into Bethlehem which she said was very oppressive, like a prison with barbed wire everywhere. Pat had gone to pick olives which are used to make high quality oil for tasty food dressings rather than cooking. She showed us photos of herself and the group of people she had gone with to help farmers harvest their olives. Pat brought a display of interesting objects crafted in Palestine by the Palestinian women which she also used to illustrate her talk. This presentation really opened our eyes to what is happening in this area of constant conflict, the reality of which is seldom reported in our press.

At our next meeting on Monday 7th October is a presentation by Peter Durnall entitled 'A garden through the Year'. Members of Garden Guild will tell you what a spectacular show this is. Everyone is very welcome to come along at 7.30pm to the Village Hall. [7.15pm should you wish to join in @Jerusalem']

Judith Deakin & Angela Studd



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Amazing Abseil

When I began this short piece, I wasn't quite sure what title I should give it - perhaps Daring Diane or Courageous Churchwarden or Graceful Grandma or Super Spider-Gran [4 year old grandson Eden's suggestion]. All of these would be appropriate for Diane Vogler's brave descent from the 110 foot tower of St Giles's church in the centre of Newcastle.

It was a beautiful sunny afternoon when Diane completed this abseil, just as the clock struck 3pm. There had been several daring young men before her, one descending frontwards in fewer than ten seconds and several others who fell over as they reached terra firmer. Diane lowered herself down serenely and with great calm and completed her two minute descent with her feet together, for an unaided landing. It was with great relief that "Team Diane" [family and friends and the vicar] welcomed her back to earth.

This was a sponsored abseil and we congratulate Diane for raising £700 for church funds. Thank you to all those who supported her feat. Of course, she may also be sponsored in retrospect and we note that there are some empty spaces on her final sponsorship form. Please contact her if you wish to do so.

Angela

The Autumn Fayre

It was an unseasonal scenario for our Autumn Fayre on 16th September. As it was a hot and sunny day with cloudless blue skies.....maybe that was why a disappointingly small number of people visited to purchase an array of home-made cakes, home-grown vegetables, jams & preserves stationary and fancy goods. Delicious teas were served with a choice of cakes.

Many thanks to all who helped in any way. We raised just over £440.

Angela

A Big Thankyou

Thank you, all of you, that manned the church for three hours at a time, Wednesday and Saturday afternoons during our 'Open Church' season. Your willingness to sign up for these sessions did not go unnoticed and were very much appreciated. Feedback from our visitors has been extremely positive.

The Garden Guild

Members arrived to hear a talk on “Climate Change”, a topic very much on the agenda after a year of changeable weather for gardeners. Our speaker, Mr. Michael Swales of Denstone Garden Guild, began by laying out an abundance of newspaper clippings concerned with events and debates on our subject for the evening. It was hardly to be expected that there would be anything but agreement on the need to reduce Carbon Dioxide release into the atmosphere. Indeed, the most recent meeting in Paris had suggested that it would still be possible to improve the situation, but investigation also tells us that there is much to be done, and many complex decisions to be taken.

Since we all recognise such phrases as “Global Warming”, the “Beast from the East”, the melting of icecaps, the influence of “El Nino”, and rising ocean levels that threaten Pacific islands, we are aware that none of us can avoid the threat of an increased struggle to produce food, or the inevitable pessimism arising from the desertification of once-fertile land.

At this point however, our speaker turned to a more positive viewpoint, in outlining the role that can be played by gardeners, and the importance of Garden Guilds. Here he listed solutions to assist the home gardener working to produce food for the family, and if possible, extra vegetables to exchange or give to other members of a local community. Thought should be given to preservation of water, with extra tanks for run-off. Garden Guilds will have an increasingly helpful role to play in providing advice on suitable plants and methods of cultivation. It is obviously important to educate young people in the art of gardening, with experienced gardeners to share their knowledge.

The discussion ranged widely over the value of gardens in preserving wildlife, from feeding birds and insects, to protecting trees and hedges. Indeed the variation in agricultural practices in the UK alone led to consideration of the green future, from the planting of forests to a proper management of hedges round fields.

It was encouraging to think that there was something useful we could discuss, even achieve in our village membership, and the meeting ended on a note of optimism.

Peggy Chaplin

Next Meeting on Monday 14th October
at 7.30 p.m. in Keele Village Hall
Barry Fewster: Why Garden for Wildlife?

The Belfry Bat

There were nine at our practice on August 14th, eight regulars plus Jenny Beech from Stone. We were able to ring something near their frontier for everybody. On Friday August 16th we rang for our second wedding of the year with a practice night band and we were pleased with the ringing. The three married couples in the band were present on Sunday morning, and the ringing was good.

We had another good practice on August 21st – seven of our own band plus a regular visitor. Not enough for advanced ringing, but it meant that all the inexperienced people got two goes at their frontier. We will be away at the weekend, and so will several others, so you won't hear us on Sunday. I hope we will be missed. When netting the pond for algae this morning Ro discovered six baby newts. Wonderful! I don't think they can have migrated, so they must have been hatched in our pond without us noticing.

While we were away a parcel for us was delivered to Silverdale Post Office, and I collected it on Tuesday August 27th. It was a bell rope which had been sent away to have a new tail end fitted, a very cost-effective repair. Our tail ends suffer more wear than most because the ringing chamber ceiling is unusually low. We will fit the rope before ringing on Wednesday and send another one away.

There were ten at the practice on August 28th, including Jenny Beech from Stone who once again enhanced our repertoire. On Friday I went to the Butters workshop where we made the final items needed for the belfry windows, which can now be installed. In the evening I went to a ringing practice at Madeley. The Newcastle and Wolstanton bands hold a joint practice every Friday, alternating between the two towers, and when there are five Fridays in the month they go somewhere else so as not to upset the sequence. For the last two five-Friday months they have gone to Madeley, who used to practise on Fridays but where at present there is very little ringing.

On Saturday I rang for a wedding at Whitmore, but it turned out not to be straightforward. There was a misunderstanding about the time, so when I arrived to ring at 2.30, the wedding was already in progress, having started at 2 rather than 3 as we expected. But we rang them out, and they were pleased.

I have been wondering how the parish might celebrate the 150th anniversary of the church next May. In 1970 we did some special ringing, and I am sure we will want to do the same again, but there must be other things which could be done. All ten of our band were present on September 1st, and the ringing was good. Our strength in depth is about to be tested as Steve and Pauline are about to go to Canada for three weeks.

On Monday September 2nd, Steve Mellor, Graham from the Butters workshop and I met at the belfry to install the windows. I had been rather nervous about the process, but we were able to complete the job that afternoon, in spite of some minor difficulties. On Wednesday when cleaning the pond Ro came across an adult frog. Will it be a locust next?

Five of our band were absent from the practice in the evening, but the other five were joined by four visitors and we had a very productive practice. Another way of dividing the nine was six oldsters and three youngsters, including Jack from Wolstanton, who I taught to ring four years ago. He was a regular at our practice for some time, but during his GCSE year and then first year at college was too busy. A different timetable has now freed him up to come again.

Strength in depth was tested again on Sunday, when in addition to Steve and Pauline, Ro and I were away, visiting Ro's father in hospital. But there were still enough to ring, in spite of Roland being ill. He was still ill on Wednesday September 11th, and so was Amy, but there were seven of us and we had a useful practice.

Phil Gay



St John's Christmas Card 2019

We are very grateful to John Dennison for giving us another delightful watercolour which will be used for this year's Christmas Card. It shows the centre of the village just as the snow is beginning to fall, with a blue grey sky and a few light clouds.

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.

Cards will be on sale in church and at the Christmas Market.

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

Dates for your Diary

Harvest Supper – Friday October 4th 6.30 for 7pm in Keele Village Hall

Keele PCC meets – Tuesday October 8th 6.30pm in St John's School

Potteries Theological Society – Wednesday October 9th at 7pm in the Moser building, Rm CM 0.012 with Geoff Babb – Imagining God: Poetry and Faith.

The November meeting will be on Wednesday 20th November. Further details will be in the Autumn Newsletter and also the October magazine.

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

Advance Notice

May 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the consecration of St John's church. Ideas are already being discussed regarding how best we can mark this momentous occasion. This is to be a whole village affair and we look forward to welcoming as many of you as can make it to our celebratory Eucharist on May 3rd at 11.15am. Further details to follow.

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

