

Crosstalk

60p



The Parish Magazine of St Bartholomew with St Chad
www.thurstaston.org.uk

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester

July 2020

THE LORD bless you
and KEEP you; THE
LORD make His face
shine upon you,
And be GRACIOUS TO
you; THE LORD lift
up His COUNTENANCE
upon you, AND GIVE
you PEACE.

**Sometimes we need someone to
simply be there. Not to fix anything,
or to do anything in particular,
but just to let us feel that we are
cared for and supported.**

- Unknown



The views and opinions expressed in the
articles in this magazine are those of the
author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the
views or opinions of the
editor, the Rector or the PCC.

"Your magazine needs you"

Please send your contributions
(eg. Poems, Prayers, interesting articles etc.,)
to office@thurstaston.org.uk
no later than 21st May

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Diary Dates

The PCC are currently working on risk assessments and practicalities required to re-open our buildings. Please be patient.

See the back cover of this magazine
for initial information
on re-opening for church services

From the Registers

Funerals

We commend to God's eternal care

24th June

Albert (Al) Skinner

From Your Rector

During the past couple of months I have received many messages of encouragement and there have been a number of videos circulating with Christian messages. I received one such video towards the end of May and this is a transcript of that video:-

As fine silver...

Malachi 3:3 says: *"He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."*

This verse puzzled some women in a Bible study. They got to wondering what this statement meant about the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible Study.

That week, the woman called a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver.

As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest, so as to burn away all the impurities.

The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot, and then she thought again about the verse that says: "He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver." She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined.

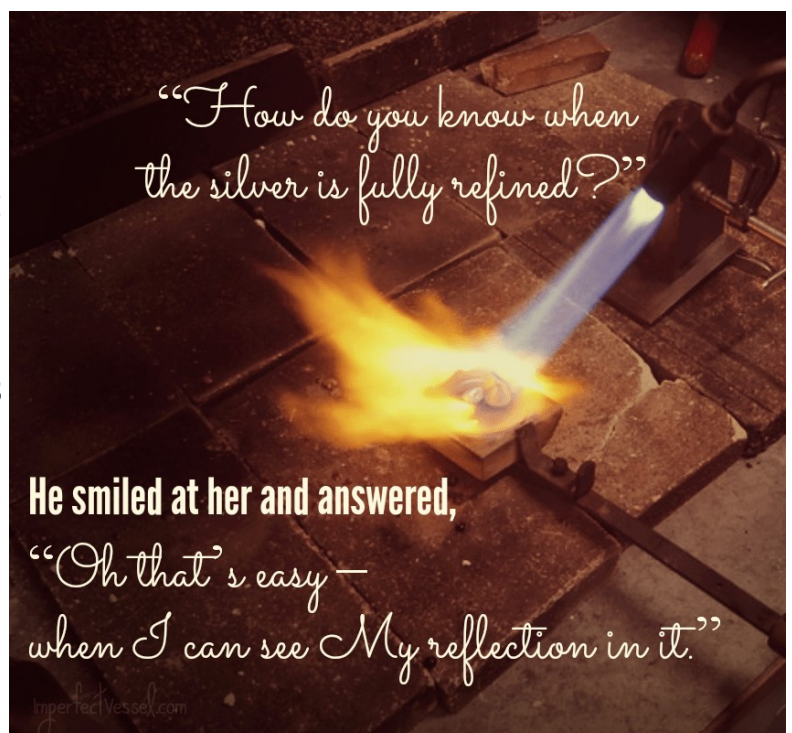
The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed. The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?"

He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's easy - when I can see my image in it."

If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, remember that God has His eye on you and will keep watching you. His aim is not to abandon or destroy you, but to refine you - until He sees His image in you.

God Bless,

Rex & Jane



Reflected Faith: a 'Holding Cross' by Revd Dr Jo White

Many churches today are using social media to hold public services – either together at the same time or uploaded so you can listen and watch at any time and worship in your home when it is convenient for you.

I find that having a 'prayer space' when I join, as well as when I pray alone, enables me to enter into that time of holiness quicker and more fruitfully.

It's like when you physically go to a church building for a service. Your hand holds the door handle and you choose to enter into a sacred space.

Not many of us have the luxury of a separate space where we currently live, and in many ways I prefer not to distinguish prayer life from everyday life. After all, where does one end and the other begin? God is everywhere; in every room in the house. He's no less in my home or yours than He is in our locked church buildings. He's with me when I pray and when I eat, or cook, or watch TV and so on.

One item I appreciate is a cross that I can hold. Ideally one that completely fits into my hand.

There are wooden 'Holding Crosses' that you can make or buy especially for this purpose, but you can use any material. Perhaps you could make one out of felt and stuff it, to give it form and solidity.



I have one made from an old plastic book binding strip, which I cut to size. One piece slots into the other, to form the cross shape.

What I appreciate about the holding cross is its firmness, it reminds me that Christ is my firm foundation; that God is solid and dependable. It reminds me also that whatever happens I will cling to Him. And it tells me that as I hold that cross in my hand so I pray that He will hold me forever, never letting me go or fall.

This month: See what materials you have from which you could make a Holding Cross. What feelings and thoughts come to you as you use it in your prayer and worship time?

The Rev Dr Jo White has worked in social care and education since before she left secondary school, and for the last 15 years has done this as a Parish Priest in the Church of England. Jo has written articles in a various publications; both secular and spiritual, and is co-editor on two books about pilgrimage. Jo leads quiet days, retreats and time away for all those with any faith or none. Following her recent retirement from full-time ministry Jo is looking forward to developing her passion for finding more ways to help people recognise and connect with the God who is with us and for us and everywhere.

The Breath Prayer

Written by Sheridan Voysey

Lord God, fill me with your Holy Spirit

I receive your **love** & release my **insecurity**

I receive your **joy** & release my **unhappiness**

I receive your **peace** & release my **anxiety**

I receive your **patience** & release my **impulsiveness**

I receive your **kindness** & release my **indifference**

I receive your **goodness** & release my **ungodliness**

I receive your **faithfulness** & release my **disloyalty**

I receive your **gentleness** & release my **severity**

I receive your **self-control** & release my **self-indulgence**

Artwork by @jodiew888

Online 'Talking Jesus' course FREE during the Covid-19 lockdown

HOPE Together has made the hugely popular Talking Jesus course available, rent free, to watch online during the Covid-19 crisis.

Roy Crowne, executive director of HOPE Together, said: 'We have had lots of requests during the Covid-19 lockdown to make the Talking Jesus course available online. There seems to be an increased interest from non-Christians in spiritual issues. People are searching for hope. We want to help equip Christians to tell their story and to talk about the hope we have because of Jesus.'

The Talking Jesus course includes six video-based teaching sessions with inspirational testimonies. To access the course free until end of August visit: www.hopetogether.org.uk/talkingjesus

We are in the same storm, but not in the same boat

Author unknown



I heard that we are all in the same boat, but it's not like that.

We are in the same storm, but not in the same boat.

Your ship could be shipwrecked and mine might not be, or vice versa.

For some, quarantine is optimal – a moment of reflection, of re-connection, easy in flip flops, with a drink or coffee.

For others – this is a desperate financial & family crisis.

For some that live alone, they're facing endless loneliness.

While for others it is peace, rest & time with their mother, father, sons & daughters.

Some are bringing in more money to their households.

Others are working more hours for less money due to pay cuts or loss in sales.

For some, not getting on with family, domestic abuse is rife – we never know what goes on behind closed doors.

Some were concerned about getting an egg for Easter while others were concerned if there would be enough bread, milk and eggs for the weekend.

Some want to go back to work because they don't qualify for support and are running out of money.

Some are home spending 2-3 hours/day helping their child with online schooling.

Others are spending 2-3 hours/day to educate their children on top of a workday.

Some have experienced the near death of the virus, some have already lost someone from it and some are not sure if their loved ones are going to make it.

Others don't believe this is a big deal.

Some have faith in God and expect miracles during this 2020.

Others say the worst is yet to come.

So, friends, we are not in the same boat.

We are going through a time when our perceptions and needs are completely different.

Each of us will emerge, in our own way, from this storm.

It is very important to see beyond what is seen at first glance - not just looking, actually seeing.

We are all on different ships during this storm experiencing a very different journey.

Please realise that and be kind.

Who is in the boat with you in the storm? Could your boat be a lifeboat? We can pray, love, care and share where we can in the midst of this storm.

Hearts for Homes
Thank you to all Knitters & Sewers



**An amazing
191 pairs of
hearts have
been given to
6 homes on
the Wirral**

**We have delivered hearts to :
Aynsley Nursey Home, The Lodge, Charlotte House,
Upton Grange, Gerald House and Hilbre House.**

**We have a committed group of people and a regular
supply of hearts. Please let me know of any homes you
would like us to deliver to**

Julie DeBoorder tel: 07599186893

Email : jules2121jule@gmail.com



Charlotte House created a **tree of hearts** in their reception, residents made them into keyrings - with messages and photos attached; for their loved ones to collect



Another month has passed. Time has gone quite quickly for me, whether it's because I have got used to this new life and relaxed without much outside pressure. I must admit though, to feeling a bit guilty that I can't do much for the wider community.

I have continued to see my younger daughter when she brings me some shopping and, I quote, to see that her aged, vulnerable mother is alright. Social distancing is strictly observed! I have also seen my elder daughter, her birthday coincided with a relaxation of some rules, so we had a picnic in her garden, separately prepared for them and me. It was wonderful to see her after 3 months and we had a lovely time.

I have seen more of friends, always at the required distance, but it does make me realise how important actual human contact is for all of us. Won't it be wonderful when the churches fully reopen.

Following on from this thought I realise that there is very little structure to my life at the moment. Sunday, with Church, bell ringing, coffee and the family always felt like the hub around which the rest of the week pivoted.

The rain was very welcome for the garden and the fruit and vegetables are doing well, except the lettuces.

I am also still spending time on social media, WhatsApp and Zoom, which continues to be a wonderful link to the outside world.



Over all this is the ever present anxiety about my family, friends and the wider community. I don't think I pray as much now as have an ongoing conversation with God as I carry on with my life.

I hope you all are keeping well and that we will be able to meet in the not to distant future.

Ruth Eden

Do you need a new pain killer?

Do you ever take pain killers? If so, do you take one for your shoulder, and another one for you knee? Of course not. Once the painkiller enters your bloodstream, it goes everywhere, soothing and damping down the pain, and hitting all the right spots.

God works a bit like that on the pain in our lives. He has a prescription for ALL the problem areas of our lives. Most of us carry emotional scars, or a burden, or some heartache, around with us. It may be the trauma of loss, or it may be anxiety for our family. It may be uncertainty over our jobs, and our futures.

Whatever it is, God offers us a prescription to help the pain. The psalmist writes: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1) Jesus added: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

This kind of help is real and immediate and there for the asking. We don't have to put up with our dis-ease and struggle alone. God, our heavenly Father, is only a prayer away. Not just twice a day, after meals, but whenever we need him.

Use your old clothes to help others in poverty

Lockdown drove many of us to do a Spring clear-out of our wardrobes. But what do you do now do with the old clothes you no longer want?

Charity shops may be closed for the time being, but there's still a way to donate your old items and support your favourite charities. Just go online and visit [Thrift+](https://thrift.plus/) (<https://thrift.plus/>). It is an online store where you can buy and donate great quality second-hand clothes. And you get to choose which cause to support when you make a donation.

While lockdown measures are in place, they've introduced a doorstep collection service, so you don't need to leave your home to support life-transforming charities.



From Church Times 29th May 2020 - Lighter side of lockdown.

ALTHOUGH some of our lockdown contributors have lightened the mood, it is possible that these pages have not represented the great efforts being made to cheer people up during the pandemic. This week we feature just two of them: two “Lockdown Psalms” written by Professor Catherine Clarke, from the Institute of Historical Research, University of London.

1. I have dwelt long in the house of lockdown: I have enclosed myself in the habitation of Netflix and groaning.
2. They have set me my bounds which I shall not pass: I keep the statutes and observe the laws.
3. I entered into the supermarket, but it was barren: its plenty was turned into empty shelves, and there was no toilet paper in it.
4. Neither were there delivery slots by day nor by night: verily, not even from Ocado.
5. [2nd part] Deliver us from the wilderness of delivery: and deliver our deliveries unto us.
6. I am become a stranger unto the pub, and unto the office: even an alien unto Pizza Express.
7. The sun ariseth, and I go forth to work and to my labour: even in my pyjamas until the evening.
8. I am weary of Zoom, my throat is dry: it melteth away like wax as my broadband vanisheth.
9. Yet they gape upon me with their mouths and say: thy toddler sitteth lurking in the corner of the screen, and lo he imagineth mischief.
10. And thou, oh daughter of lockdown: thou shalt do thy phonics in exile.
11. Also thy literacy and numeracy work, and thy comprehension: yea verily, even thy fronted adverbials.
12. They have sprayed markers for my feet: they have set a place for me on the pavement outside Tesco Metro.
13. The unrighteous forget their social distancing: I swerve from their transgressions.
14. [2nd part] The people rebuke each other: and bear in their bosoms the rebukes of many people.
15. A mask hath covered my face and I wash my hands: neither have I found any hand sanitiser to comfort me.
16. The pestilence layeth siege against me: according to the cleanness of my hands shall I be recompensed.

1. Clap your hands, all ye neighbours: clap in the front gardens and on the doorsteps.
2. Make a thankful noise, for it is Thursday: clap your hands and bang the pots; bang the mighty pan from the stove, the frying pan from the draining board, and the little pan from under the sink.
3. Rejoice, for thou hast booked a delivery: a weekly slot even unto the end of June.
4. Surely plenteousness shall be in thy house: goodness shall follow thee, at a two metre distance, all the days of thy life.
5. [2nd part] Our garners shall be full: and Netflix shall bring forth thousands and ten thousands of new episodes for evermore.
6. Arise! Yea, verily, for the lockdown easeth: gird thy face with apparel and go into the city.
7. Rejoice in the fruitful offices, all ye who were furloughed: but thy going out and thy coming in shall not be on public transport.
8. Rest ye alert by day, and alert by night: and the pillars shall deliver ye out of the wilderness.
9. Judgement and remembrance shall be thine heritage: and ye shall dwell in the house of austerity for ever.

'He gave us eyes to see them': 'My Lord and my God'

The calendar allows us to celebrate St Thomas the apostle in this month of July as well as traditionally in December. Thomas is mentioned with the other disciples in all the Gospels, but it is in the fourth Gospel that he moves into the centre of the stage in his own right.

In chapter 14 he queries the words of Jesus that evokes the confession 'I am the way and the truth and the life' from our Lord. Then after the resurrection, when unconvinced by the accounts of the others, Thomas has that memorable and moving encounter with the risen Lord. In chapter 20 Jesus meets him in his doubts and his faith is restored.

'The Incredulity of St Thomas' is the subject of this month's painting by Peter Paul Rubens. Rubens (1577-1640) lived mainly in Antwerp, but his work displays a delight in sumptuous colour and the human form, which he would have learnt from his studies in Italy. Rubens was a good-humoured and genial person, and as a Roman Catholic, he cherished his religion and faith. This painting is from 1614 and is part of a triptych. The two outer panels portray the patrons who commissioned the work for their chapel in the Franciscan church in Antwerp – Nicholaas Rockox and his wife.

In this central panel, Thomas gazes in wonder at the marked hand of Jesus. He is there with a youthful St John and another disciple, who is looking at the face of the Lord. The light in the canvas comes from the risen body of Jesus, and the disciples move from the shadows into that light as their faith in the risen Lord grows and matures. In a moment, Thomas will raise his head and look up to Jesus. It is a momentous occasion in John's Gospel, for this meeting of master and servant, of Lord and disciple, is not just an exercise in overcoming doubt. It is an affirmation that only God can raise or be raised from death. Only God has the key to life. Thomas recognises Jesus fully and completely as he utters the words 'My Lord and my God.'

John ends his Gospel by saying, Yes, there was this moment of personal encounter, but believing without seeing is testimony to a more profound faith. Then it is not we who are invited to touch our Lord, but Jesus who can touch us. In the painting, one hand is turned towards the disciples, the other reaches out to us. We may come to Jesus, like Thomas, with doubts and concerns, with worry and anxiety. Jesus will meet us in the honesty and openness of our faith to reassure us that He is, as He was for Thomas, the way, the truth and the life – our Lord and our God.

Thomas Dale's poem on 'Unbelieving Thomas' ends with this verse:

"Oh! If the iris of the skies
Transcends the painter's art,
How could he trace to human eyes
The rainbow of the heart;
When love, joy, fear, repentance, shame,
Hope, faith, in swift succession came,
Each claiming there a part;
Each mingling in the tears that flowed,
The words that breathed – 'My Lord! My God!'"



God in the Sciences

A Scientist Reflects: Suffering and the Image of God

As I write, volunteers are distributing food to people who have been deprived of their usual ways of earning an income during the lockdown in a Majority World country. I became involved in raising money for this initiative very recently, and saw videos from the first people to receive packages. There were expressions of happiness, hope, quiet sadness, resignation, desperation – most often a mixture of several of these feelings at the same time.



I believe that our cries for answers at times like this, and our deep longing for things to be better, kinder, more just, less painful and chaotic, are a sign that we are made in the image of God. The Bible describes God creating men and women, instructing them to rule over the earth, and giving them the freedom to choose what they will do. The world God made was described as “very good”, but human wrongdoing caused a rift between people and God, and also between us and the rest of creation.

From a scientist’s perspective, it seems that the *potential* for accidents, disease and death – for both animals and humans – may have been part of God’s very good creation, and there was a real threat of famine, albeit far rarer than in our current mismanaged version of creation? How would we have managed life in what Genesis describes as an un-subdued world if our relationship with God hadn’t broken down, and evil hadn’t been unleashed? Maybe painful experiences would have been experienced as challenges that brought us closer to each other and to God, rather than bringing us the experience of suffering (which I would define more particularly as involving distress, isolation and fear)? Of course, these are theoretical questions that no one can answer, but perhaps they are worth exploring.

God has already responded to suffering at a root level by taking it on Himself. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus broke the power of sin and death. We do not yet see the final results of those decisive actions – the end of suffering for all those who trust Him – but we can already feel their impact. For example, many people have experienced the wonderful effect, either in their own lives or by receiving kindness from others, which is described by these words: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26).

Some of the people who received food yesterday were, in the words of the community team leader, “really desperate”, but yet they still trust God to meet their needs. My hope is that the worldwide Church will, with God’s help, be part of the answer to their prayers – demonstrating our true status as people made in the image of God.

30th July William Wilberforce, Olaudah Equiano & Thomas Clarkson

During the 18th century many people in England were involved in the campaign to abolish the slave trade. The CofE remembers especially William Wilberforce, Olaudah Equiano and Thomas Clarkson - three very different but all tireless campaigners against the evil practice.

Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846) was an Anglican clergyman and one of the most prominent of the anti-slavery campaigners. In 1787 he helped form the first Abolitionist Committee, and his energy and hatred of injustice made him a 'moral steam-engine'. He travelled hundreds of miles, gathering evidence from people caught up in the slave trade, from ship captains to doctors.

Olaudah Equiano (1745 - 1797) had been kidnapped in Nigeria, sold into slavery and sent to the West Indies. When he finally escaped, he made his way to London and became one of the most prominent black campaigners. His brutal autobiography of 1789 ran to nine reprints, and was translated into many languages, bringing home to people the horrors of the slave trade.

William Wilberforce (1759 - 1833), of course, became the main figurehead in Parliament. He came from a wealthy family in Kingston-upon-Hull, and represented the town in Parliament. He was recruited by Thomas Clarkson, who saw the need for a brilliant advocate within Parliament. Wilberforce was an inspired choice: not only wealthy and well-connected, but a gifted orator with a social conscience, especially after his conversion in 1785. He made his first speech in Parliament against slavery in 1789, but it was not until 1807, after a debate that raged for many years, that the Abolition Act was finally passed.

Black Lives, like any other lives, do matter

The Revd Canon Lameck Mutete, Vicar of Tattenhall, Cheshire has produced a short video (<https://www.chester.anglican.org/news/black-lives-like-any-other-lives-do-matter.php>), reflecting on the death of George Floyd in the US, which sparked global demonstrations of justice and equity for all.

Lameck says: "As Christians, we are committed to playing our part in seeing racism eradicated and the restoration of justice for all. For so long the oppressed voice has been crying, 'I can't breathe, take your knee off my neck.'

"But the perpetrators of injustice have been silent.

"Finally, God spoke through George and the words went into flames of unquenchable fire. His final utterings have shaken the world and transformed it forever."

St Mary Magdalene, the woman with a past

It is easy to understand the popularity of Mary Magdalene over the centuries: she is the patron saint both of repentant sinners and of the contemplative life. Jesus drove seven demons from Mary, who came from near Tiberius in Galilee. Mary has also sometimes been identified with the woman who anointed Christ's feet in the house of Simon.

She became His follower to the bitter end. She followed Him to Jerusalem and was present during the crucifixion, standing heart-broken at the foot of the cross. Her love for Jesus did not end there, for she went to the tomb to anoint His body on the Sunday morning. Such faithful, humble devotion was richly repaid; it gave her a unique privilege among all mankind: she was the first person to whom the Risen Lord appeared on Easter Sunday morning. She thought He was the gardener at first.

Jesus told Mary to go to His disciples and tell them about His return to Heaven. She was obedient and became the first emissary of the resurrection. In those days, the witness of a woman was worthless. Despite ridicule, Mary had the courage to speak about Jesus in a place of great disbelief.

Mary
patron
repentant
sinners
contemplative
life
seven
demons
Tiberius
galilee
anoint
feet
follower
end
Jerusalem
Crucifixion
foot
cross
tomb
body
morning
faithful
humble
devotion
privilege
mankind
risen
appeared
easter
gardener
disciples
return
obedient
resurrection
witness
courage

E	N	E	M	S	J	B	D	B	E	E	R	E	S	T	Y	L
E	O	I	H	A	E	W	I	F	S	V	I	G	N	N	E	G
S	I	N	N	E	R	S	S	N	O	R	T	A	P	D	E	B
S	T	E	N	S	U	Y	C	X	O	L	T	R	U	E	A	E
E	C	T	O	M	S	J	I	I	B	N	L	U	I	E	P	A
N	E	V	I	T	A	L	P	M	E	T	N	O	C	S	P	I
T	R	L	X	B	L	E	L	P	D	G	O	C	W	O	E	I
I	R	W	I	I	E	G	E	L	I	V	I	R	P	E	A	N
W	U	A	F	L	M	R	S	L	E	G	T	S	S	O	R	C
N	S	E	I	A	A	A	I	A	N	N	O	R	N	R	E	T
G	E	H	C	E	I	G	S	U	T	I	V	A	M	E	D	T
T	R	E	U	R	N	T	L	R	S	N	E	E	A	D	P	P
I	I	L	R	M	E	R	H	G	A	R	D	E	N	E	R	T
X	T	G	C	R	B	T	A	F	O	O	T	N	K	M	O	T
R	I	S	S	M	A	L	U	U	U	M	T	N	I	O	N	A
N	T	B	O	D	Y	S	E	R	I	L	N	I	N	N	I	N
T	T	T	R	O	S	E	V	E	N	A	D	N	D	S	K	R

Although we usually associate Mary with the Easter story, this month on 22nd July, the Church celebrates her Feast Day. In this snapshot of Mary's life we know she had experienced great distress and suffering. After Jesus healed her, Mary expressed her gratitude by being utterly committed and devoted to Him.

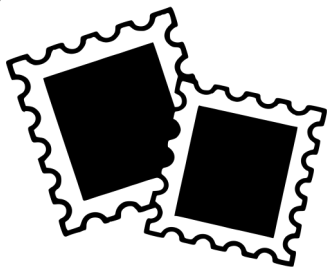
Jesus can give everyone a new start; a new purpose and direction in life. Like Mary we can thank Him for blessing us, loving us and forgiving us and moving into practical forms of service. Only Jesus can transform our lives so that we can glorify God in all that we do.



Please collect your Postage Stamps

throughout the year for RDA (Riding for the Disabled).

There is a box in St Chad's foyer and an envelope at the back of St Bart's.



They were trying to remember when they had last left the house.



St Bartholomew's and St Chad's on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/stchadsstbarts/>

If you are already on Facebook it is easy to find and "like" the page. Just search for "stchadsstbarts" or "St. Bartholomew's Thurstaston, with St. Chad's, Irby" and you will find us.

If you "like" the page you will receive notifications when we add events and other informative posts.

From our page you can also share individual posts and events with others you may think would like to hear about us and our events.

Please do share this page with your friends.

You do not have to be on Facebook to view our posts.

Choose the UK's most trusted home insurance provider and we'll donate

£130

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Take out a new home insurance policy with us before **31 December 2020**, and we'll donate £130* to a church of your choice through our Trust130 promotion. Find out more at www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130 or call our team on 0800 783 0130 and quote **Trust130**.

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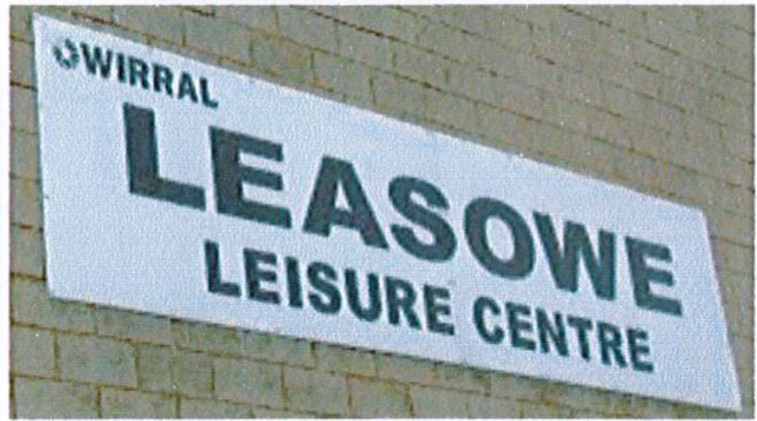
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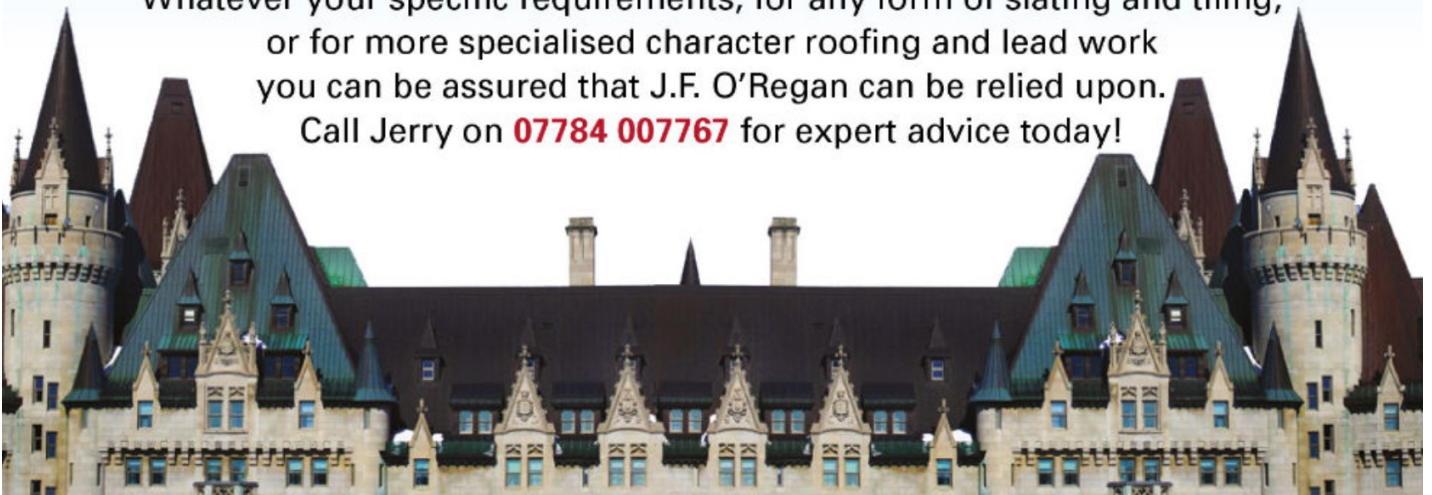
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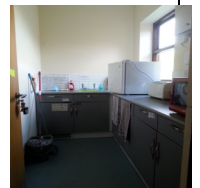
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Retired Clergy		Flower Guild (St Chad's) Mrs Dawn Rudd	648 0209
Revd David Trollope	342 2648	Cleaning Guild (St Bartholomew's) Mrs June Bibby	678 8124
Revd Ray Dent	792 2022	Cleaning Guild (St Chad's) Mrs Leslie Worrall	648 5590
Revd Margaret Fletcher	648 1025	Bellringers Tower Captain Dr Peter Robson	648 6691
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PCC Treasurer Mr Kevin Marley			
		CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	
		Junior Church Mrs Julie Deboorder	648 6331
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St Chad's Hall Booking Secretary Mrs Jean Heath	648 6015		

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Christian Aid Representative Vacant	
Children's Society Representative Mrs Jean Heath	648 6015
Leprosy Mission Representative Mrs Pat Hulme	538 1953
Adoption Society Representative Mrs Chris Rostock	648 1112

Opening Church for services – Initial information

Following Government announcements this week you may well be wondering what we will be doing about re-opening St Bartholomew's and St Chad's for worship.

First of all we need to be clear that all permissions are permissive and there is no expectation that every church will be able to open at this stage, and every expectation that things will not return "to normal" any time soon.

We have not been able to make many definitive decisions at this stage, as the detailed information from government, Church of England and Diocese is was not available as we went to print (Sun 28th June)

However, it is important to share with you the initial thoughts at this stage.

No services at St Bartholomew's until at least September

Taking into account that a large proportion of the St Bartholomew's congregations (including sidespeople, servers and sacristans) are in the vulnerable categories, and some in very vulnerable and shielding categories and the restricted space in the aisle (only 1m wide) which will make social distancing very difficult; and a one-way system impossible - **we would encourage any congregation members who do wish to return to services at this point, to come St Chad's.**

This would also leave St Bartholomew's exclusively available for weddings (two booked – 22nd and 29th Aug) and funerals without creating excessive need for professional cleaning which only has to be done if the building cannot be quarantined for 72 hours after use.

Service at St Chad's at 10.30am on Sundays - when we are ready (hopefully by 19th July)

The 10.30am timing is intended to recognise that this is a service for ALL whatever service they normally attend.

In order to be ready the PCC will need to have:-

- a) Risk Assessment in place – this is in progress
- b) Worked out how many people we can safely have in the building – probably still aiming for 2m rule
- c) Worked out whether we need a booking system, or risk turning people away if too many turn up
- d) Established that we have enough sidespeople available and trained for new safety measures required
- e) Communicated with any families who wish to bring children to services
- f) Purchased sufficient quantities of antibacterial hand sanitiser, disposable gloves and face masks and worked out who will be responsible for ensuring that we don't run out as we go forwards
- g) Installed appropriate signage and reminders of social distancing etc.
- h) The PCC also need to think about how we will be able to manage services alongside maintaining what we are already doing, as those who are shielding will not be given permission to return to church until at least the end of July. And unless C of E advice changes, those over 70 and in vulnerable categories should still be encouraged to stay away.

We know that singing will not be permitted.

We don't yet know if Communion will be permitted.

4. No Junior Church until at least September – this will protect our Junior church leaders and give us chance to work out what Junior Church might look like going forwards.

As things ease over the Summer, it may be possible to have some small scale family activities or services, but we need to think this through carefully as things develop.

Please be assured that we will keep you updated as regularly as we can via our website as things continue to develop and change over the coming weeks and months.

Baptisms and Weddings

To arrange a baptism or wedding,
please telephone the Rector, Revd Jane Turner on 0151 648 1816

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