

Crosstalk 60p



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

 THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester

October 2024



Donations of Flowers for Church

You can make a donation
“in memory of”, “in celebration of”,
or just because you like seeing flowers in church!

Please sign up at the back of church.

The money for your donation should be given to the parish office.

Your **cash or cheque** donation should be placed in an envelope with your contact details and the date that you have signed up for.

You can donate by **BACS transfer** (followed by email to the office stating the amount you have donated and the date that you have signed up for.) indicating that it is for the Flower Fund.

St Bartholomew and St Chad takes its duty and obligation to protect all extremely seriously. We have adopted the national Church of England's robust procedures and guidelines. You can find out more about the national policies and procedures at www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding

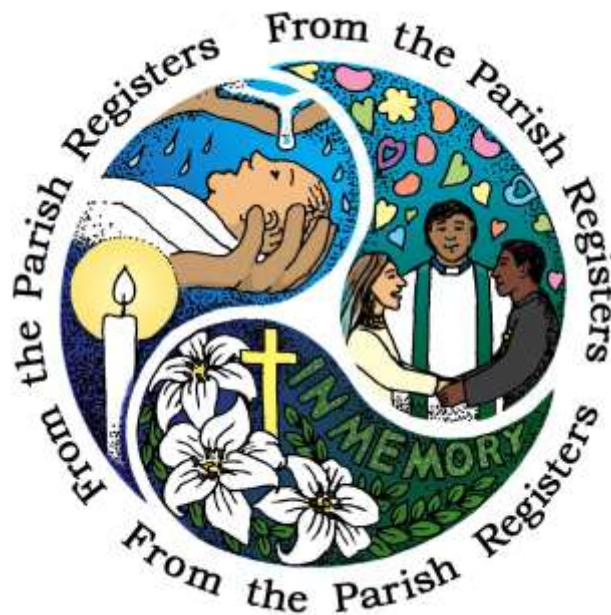
**Safeguarding is
Everyone's
Responsibility**

* **"Your magazine needs you"** *
* Please send your contributions *
* (eg. Poems. Prayers, interesting *
* articles etc.,) *
* to office@thurstaston.org.uk *

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.

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Baptisms

22nd September
Matilda Eleanor Powell

Weddings

9th September
David Llewelyn Thomas and Diane Helen Lornie

Funerals

As Halloween approaches...

Have you ever wondered what a Christian is to make of the unseen world of evil and the occult? Where do evil spirits come from, anyway?

The Bible takes the unseen world of evil spirits very seriously indeed. It tells us clearly that evil spirits were once part of the created angelic order (Genesis 6). They were not created as evil beings, for all of God's original creation was good (Genesis 3:1). The Bible relates how a number of angels, headed by Satan, or Lucifer, rebelled against God's authority and fell (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:11-19).

Satan, who disguised himself as the serpent in Eden, is leader of the fallen angels, and opposes himself to God. But evil and good are not co-equal! Thus, the idea of 'dualism' (belief in the equal and permanent existence of evil alongside the good) has no place in the Bible. Unlike goodness, evil has a beginning and an end. Satan's final destruction is already assured (Revelation 12:12; 20:10).

So, what is the world of the occult, then? The word 'occult' comes from the Latin: *occultus*, 'secret', 'hidden', and is our intrusion into the forbidden territory of superstition, fortune telling, magic and spiritism. Its downfall one day is promised us through Jesus. His early ministry established a bridgehead against the evil unseen world: no wonder the hostile, and sometimes violent, reaction of the demons! (Mark 1:23-27; 32-34).

But Jesus had no fear of demons, and neither should you, if you are a Christian. Further, it is important not to become obsessed with the unseen world – don't let it intimidate or fascinate you. Occult films can have deeply disturbing after-effects on people. Avoid them. A Christian has better things to think about.

While the occult world is certainly there, we are wise not to imagine, as some do, that every sin we commit, every bad habit, illness or misfortune we meet is due directly to an attack on us by Satan himself, and that therefore we need to be 'exorcised'. Terrible damage has been done in this regard by Christians who mean well but who are uninformed.

The kingdom of spirits is real, but so too is Christ's authority. Before Christ, the spirits shrink and retreat. Magic spells and charms have no power over the true Christian (provided we do not open ourselves to their influence) for "the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." (1 John 4:4)

If ever you are frightened by anything occult, remember some sound biblical advice: resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7). But remember, a Christian has no business dealing in anything occult. All occultism is to be ruthlessly shunned (eg Leviticus 19:31;20:6; 1 Samuel 28; 1 Chronicles 10:13; Isaiah 8:19,20; Acts 19:18-20.)

The demonic world is very real, very powerful, but it is also already doomed and defeated. (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14,15). Why? Because the death of Jesus Christ has achieved this victory.

So – be confident in Christ, but not complacent in your everyday life. Satan’s kingdom is alive and well in this present world, and it will still not admit its defeat at the Cross. The final destruction of all things occult will not come until the return of Christ.

Revd Jane

This is no trick! You're in for a treat!

Bring a pumpkin to carve and we'll have sweets to eat!

PUMPKIN PARTY

St Chad's Church

Thursday 31st October 2024

6.00-7.30pm

FAMILY FUN,
PUMPKIN CRAFTS,
TREATS
and a CAMPFIRE



FREE - but you must book your place.

Please bring a small pumpkin per family and tools with which to hollow and carve your pumpkin.

Please phone 648 8169

or e-mail office@thurstaston.org.uk

by Fri. 20th October to let us know you are coming.

No witches, wizards, ghouls or
other scary costumes - Thank You!



A message from Ailsa



As I sat today looking out of my window in the mizzle which seemed to be holding back rods of rain, I noticed leaves drifting down from trees on what was a gentle breeze.

They were leaves not blown or driven from the trees but that seemingly letting go of the leaves by the tree. A force of nature and memories of biology lessons long ago which taught me the tree had to shed its leaves to survive - this type of tree anyway.

I'm not going into that lesson now of photosynthesis (how do we even remember these things!) but watching those leaves fall is a sure sign autumn is here.

I love autumn. The colours, the changing light, the cooler mornings and evenings yet with still some warmth from the sun during the day. When we get to see it. And I think "ooh it's my favourite time of year".

I say the same thing I'm sure in the Spring and I love long summer days (when we get them!), the warmth and the light that seems to go on for so long.

So I guess I just love "the seasons" really, even winter with cold frosty mornings and snow - although not too much!

We are lucky in the UK, I think anyway, to experience these shifts in weather patterns; of days shortening and lengthening: of changes in light and heat. They form patterns and points in our lives - the new academic year, Christmas, Easter and summer holidays.

But I'm also aware of those who struggle. Those who will now be dreading the cold of the winter. The long dark nights and often the worry of Christmas just around the corner.

The Warm Hub in church has and can be a sanctuary for many - so, if you've not been. If you find yourself feeling the winter and it's isolation, do drop in. You'll find a warm welcome even on the coldest and darkest of days.



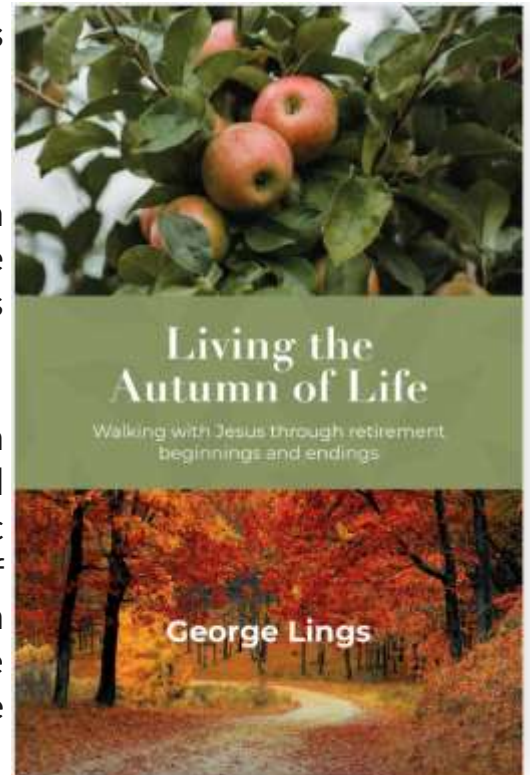


Living the Autumn of Life: Walking with Jesus through retirement beginnings and endings

By George Lings, BRF, £12.99

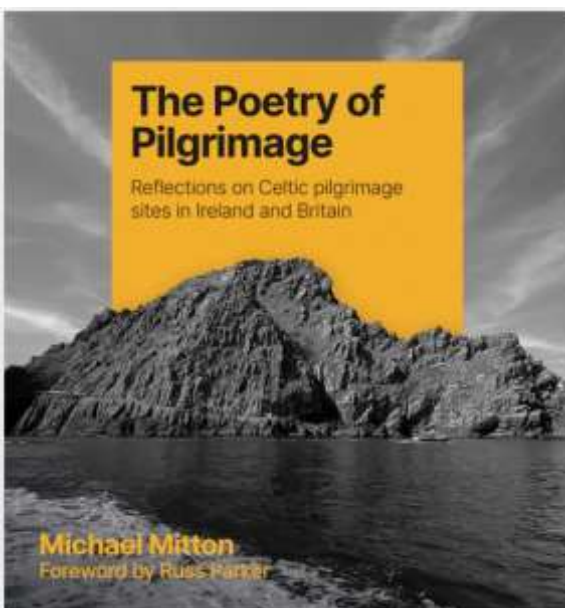
How can we best approach the season between retiring and becoming dependent? Autumn is a time of gains and losses: fruit being harvested, and leaves falling.

This book charts the experience of living through both realities, drawn from the author's own life and from the views of interviewees. Informed by historic and contemporary reading, it offers snapshots of later life, taken against a backdrop of ageism in society and church. George Lings reflects on the identity of the 'active elderly' and considers the challenges and opportunities that this season brings.



The Poetry of Pilgrimage: Reflections on Celtic Pilgrimage sites in Ireland and Britain

By Michael Mitton, BRF, £12.99



Drawing from his experience of co-leading pilgrimages in Britain and Ireland, Michael Mitton describes 23 significant pilgrimage sites for anyone from experienced pilgrims to armchair pilgrims.

Each chapter outlines the story of the Celtic saint who founded the site, together with information about the location, a poem inspired by the author's experience of that place, a reflective question, a suggested Bible reading and a photo of the site. Michael Mitton is an Anglican priest and canon emeritus of Derby Cathedral.



PARISH GIVING SCHEME

EASY & SECURE GIVING

One of the really important ways that each of us lives our faith and participates in the mission of the Church, is through the act of giving.

Regular giving can be a prayerful expression of faith in action, and it is vital to sustain our church, helping us to plan for the future.

We are members of the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) which provides the simplest and most secure way for everyone to give to our church. By making a gift through PGS, they manage all the admin on our behalf, which makes a big difference to the church staff and volunteers.

In fact, if you already give regularly through a Standing Order, please consider moving across to PGS. It's quite straight forward to make the change (you just cancel the standing order with your bank and set up a new gift with PGS) and you'll be lightening the load of our church team!

When you set up a regular gift by Direct Debit with PGS, you can choose the frequency and amount of your gift and opt in to Gift Aid, if you are eligible. Through Gift Aid, we receive an extra 25p for every pound you give which makes a significant impact across the year.

There's also an option for you to increase your gift annually, with the peace of mind that you can adjust your gift at any time. One of the most important aspects of our choice to partner PGS to process gifts on behalf of this church, is that the giver always remains in control.

The quickest and easiest way to set up and manage your regular gift is online, through the PGS website.

It is also possible to make a one-off gift online, using a debit or credit card, Apple Pay or Google Pay.

To set up a regular or one-off gift online, scan the QR code next to this article.

Or visit parishgiving.org.uk, find your church using the easy search tool, and follow a few simple steps to set up your gift securely.



If you're not connected to the internet, don't worry. You can set up your regular gift by phoning the PGS team on 0333 002 1271 and quoting our church code - 090609164, Monday to Friday, 9-5, or completing a paper gift form.

If you'd like to know more, please get in touch with our church PGS Project Leader - Ms Cheryl Goddard, pcc-secretary@thurstaston.org.uk

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is responsible for my personal information?

Although PGS has been set up to help us manage gifts, it is a separate legal entity from our parish and must comply with data protection law. By returning the gift form you consent to PGS using your information for the purposes of the Parish Giving Scheme. For more information please see PGS's privacy notice available on the PGS website www.paritygiving.org.uk/privacy-policy. Alternatively, please call PGS on 0333 002 1260 for a copy of the privacy notice.

Why can't our parish offer Direct Debit?

Direct Debiting is a highly regulated system, and is only offered by Banks for established businesses or organisations who are considered financially sound and reputable with proven internal control systems.

Will our parish be charged for this scheme?

There is no direct charge to us for using the Parish Giving Scheme or processing your gift. The annual running cost of the scheme is met by the National Church Institution of the Church of England.

Why am I giving to PGS?

In order to claim Gift Aid and manage your gift on behalf of our parish, it is necessary that your gift is legally given to PGS who are handling all the administration on our behalf. The gift is restricted to our parish and cannot be used by PGS for any other purposes.

Can I choose the day my gift is collected?

Unfortunately not. In minimising costs it is important that all gifts are collected on the same day each month, which has been agreed as the 1st.

What rate of inflation will be used?

If you opt-in to increase your gift annually, we will use the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as an independent and well known measure of inflation. As your giving anniversary approaches, we will calculate your increased gift using the most recently published monthly CPI data.

What if I say yes to an inflationary increase, but my circumstances change?

We fully understand that circumstances can change; please rest assured that you will be written to 30 days in advance of any increase with the revised amount. If you are unable to meet it simply let us know.



"It's either an appeal to youth culture or we can't afford to service the boiler for the Winter season"

We're Supporting:



forum
It's all about you

**Christmas Appeal
2024**

Forum Housing Association provides supported accommodation to single young people and vulnerable adults, who are homeless or seeking independence.

We offer a range of accommodation in Wirral and Cheshire.



How you can help...

Gift Bags

Items UNWRAPPED can include: a hand towel, facecloth, toothbrush, toothpaste, shower gel, shampoo, shaving gel, deodorant, socks, mug, body spray, chocolate, sweets, gloves, hats, scarves, novelty gifts such as puzzles, pens etc

Please note that Forum Housing are usually supporting more males than females.

Any items which you wish to donate (a single item is fine, as together we can make whole gift bags) need to be dropped off at church or the parish office **by Sunday 17th November** so that they can be delivered to Forum Housing in time to be included in the gifts for the Forum Housing Residents.

If you prefer to make a financial donation, the details can be obtained from the parish office, along with a Gift Aid form (if appropriate).

Ruth's Reflections

Hello again, it doesn't seem like a month since I last wrote, is it just me or does time seem to go much more quickly nowadays! I don't seem to have done much in the last month, certainly not outside, mainly due to the weather, but I have managed to make a start on getting the garden ready for the winter. I have cut back some of the bushes and plants but I need to get someone in to do the bigger bushes at the bottom of the garden. I also need to get the fence there replaced as well.

I haven't been out with my camera much, again partly due to the weather and partly due to other commitments. I have had several hospital appointments, luckily nothing too serious, just a few things that need sorting out. Add to that the Dentist, Optician and Audiologist, I feel like a walking disaster!

The Photography Club has restarted for its winter season, which is good and usually a very enjoyable evening out, with interesting talks most weeks and good company.

I still go to the W.I., both to our monthly meetings and to the weekly craft sessions. We also try to go out on some sort of outing once a month and this time we went to Burton Wetlands. RSPB. It was very wet when we set off, but by the time we had lunch in the excellent cafe there, the sun was shining. Unfortunately, due to the heavy rain parts of the reserve were flooded which restricted where we could walk. we still had a lovely afternoon and ended up back at the cafe for a cup of tea.

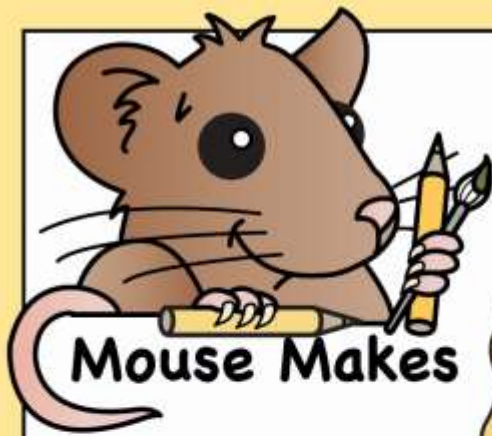


I have been ringing as much as possible, including ringing for Diane and Dave's wedding as well as on Sundays and our weekly practice..

The sun is shining and I really must go and do some work in the garden so I will finish this now and say goodbye.

Take care and stay safe everyone

Ruth.



Mouse Makes

WALK WITH THE LORD

"Teach me your way,
O Lord, that I would
walk in your _____."
Psalm 86:11

"For we **walk** by

not by sight."
2 Corinthians 5:7

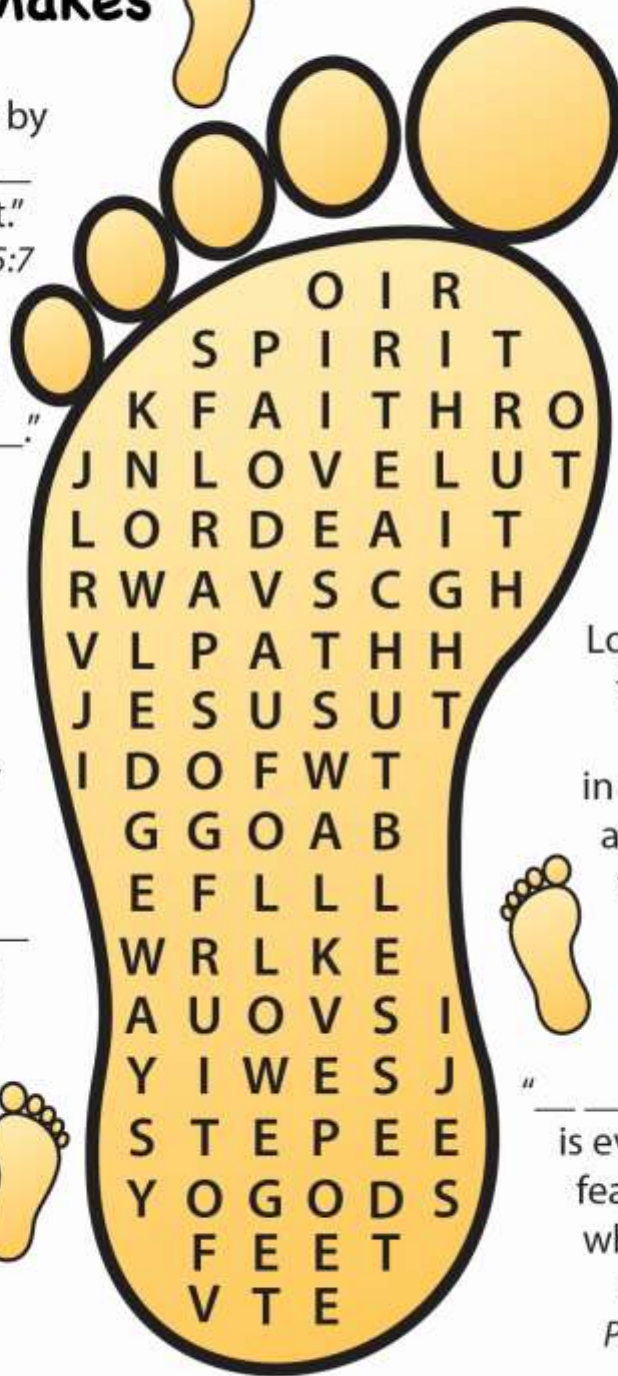
"**Walk** by the

"
Galatians 5:16



Jesus said:
"I am the light
of the world.
If you

me you won't
have to **walk**
in darkness
because
you have
the light
that leads
to life."
John 8:12



"**Walk** in

as Christ loved
us and gave
himself up for us."
Ephesians 5:2

"**Walk** in
a manner
worthy of the
Lord, fully pleasing
to him, bearing

in every good work
and increasing in
the knowledge
of God"
John 8:12



"_____
is everyone who
fears the Lord,
who **walks** in
his ways."
Psalm 128:1



- GOD • JESUS • LORD • WALK
- WAYS • STEP • FEET • PATH • GO • TEACH • KNOWLEDGE • LIGHT

Find the words from the questions too!

Bible Bite

It can be read in the Bible in
 Mk 5:1-17, Lk 8:26-39, Mt 8:28-34

A short story from the Bible

In Gerasa was a man filled with demons
 He tore off any clothes or chains put
 on him, and he lived in the graveyard.



Jesus and his disciples
 arrived and the man ran to him.



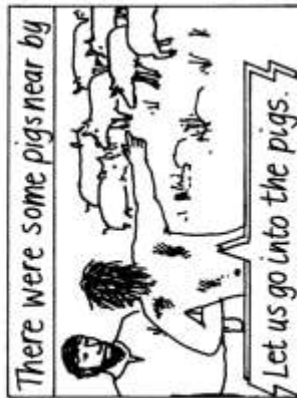
What do you want
 with me, Jesus?



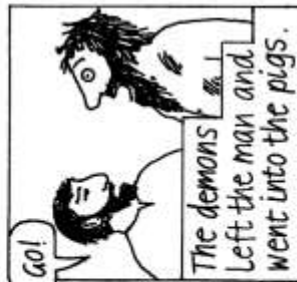
What is your name?



Legion, for there
 are many of us.



There were some pigs near by
 Let us go into the pigs.



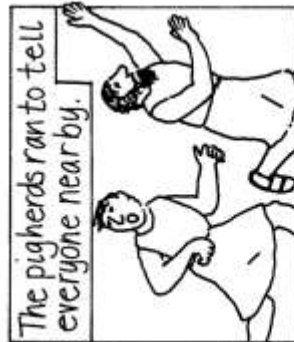
Go!



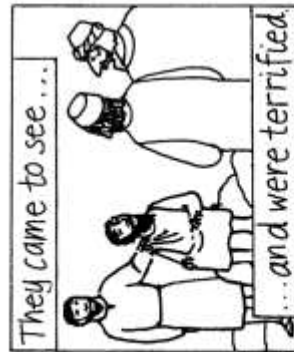
The demons
 left the man and
 went into the pigs.



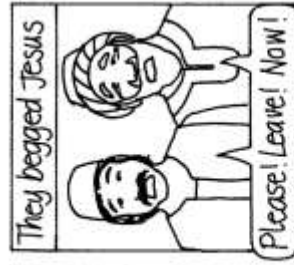
The pigs stampeded
 over the cliff into
 the sea and drowned.



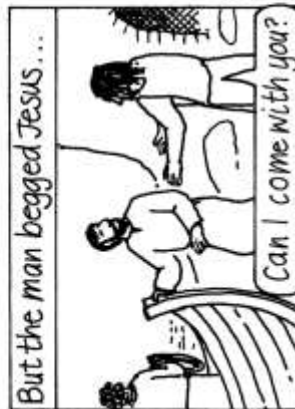
The pigherds ran to tell
 everyone near by.



They came to see ...
 ...and were terrified.



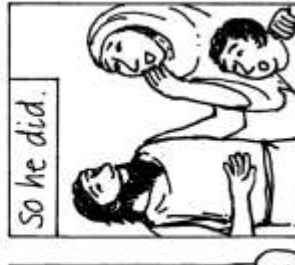
They begged Jesus
 Please! Leave! Now!



But the man begged Jesus ...
 Can I come with you?



But Jesus said
 Go home and tell
 everyone what happened.



So he did.

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home
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want
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 stampeded
 happened
 Gerasa

come
 pigs
 begged
 demons
 leave
 many
 chains
 terrified

Community and Social Events Dates for Diary

October Friday 18th 8pm

Christmas Crafts demo and make for Christmas Bazaar

November Saturday 16th 1pm – 3.30pm

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Christmas Make

Friday 18th

October



8 pm St Chad's

An evening making Christmas Table
Decorations to sell at the Christmas Bazaar.

All you need provided, but if you have any
spare small artificial flowers or holly,
please bring along.

Any queries contact Julie DeBoorder

The **Christmas Bazaar**
this year is on

Saturday 16 November
1 – 3.30pm.

It is planned to have trade and charity stalls selling all sorts of Christmas goodies and gifts, a grotto, children's stalls, cakes, refreshments, raffle, Handmade craft stall (knitted goods and table decorations) and second hand books.

Please collect any books, children's soft toys and raffle prizes and drop off inside St Chad's outside the church office.

If you can help set up/clear away or can help on a stall please let me know your name and contact details

Thanks ,

Julie DeBoorder
07599186893

Jules2121jule@gmail.com

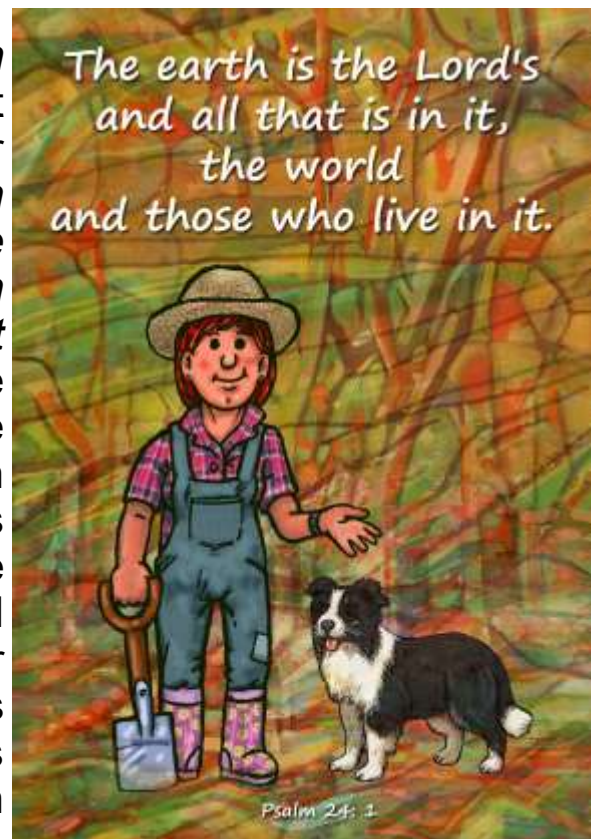
Care for Creation

António Guterres (United Nations Secretary-General) has said that we're at 'Code red for humanity: the alarm bells are deafening, and the evidence is irrefutable: greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel burning and deforestation are choking our planet and putting billions of people at immediate risk.'

At this time of Creationtide, how are we to respond to these climate concerns?

The world belongs to God:

'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it' (Psalm 24:1). The world is not ours, but God's! We are called to share in care for God's world: 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.' (Genesis 1:28). We represent God by governing with the same self-giving generosity that we see in His creation of the earth. This challenges our consumer mindset, that sees the earth's resources as both limitless and existing simply for our needs. For example, the fashion industry uses as much carbon per minute, as a car emits going six times round the world! How can we make a difference in our world?



We belong to Christ:

We also belong to the one who's plan is: *'to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.'* (Ephesians 1:10). We can look forward to the time when God will create a new heaven and a new earth and make everything new. Meanwhile, we are called to serve as He serves, caring for the earth and our fellow humans, by living simply, recycling, conserving energy and choosing reusable options.

In terms of our world, there is no plan B! God gave us only one planet!

What's the Big Idea? An Introduction into the Gospel of Mark

Mark is the second of the synoptic gospels, along with Matthew and Luke. Traditionally this gospel is ascribed to John Mark, a close associate of Peter. It was written for Gentile readers, probably in Rome during Nero's persecution of the church (c AD 64-7).

Mark unveils Jesus' public ministry with the words: *'the beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God'* (1:1). The gospel provides a succinct and vivid account of Jesus' ministry, concentrating on what Jesus did rather than what He said. Mark moves quickly from one episode to another, often using the word *'immediately'* which is characteristic of his gospel.

For Mark, understanding the true identity of Jesus is fundamental to his gospel. Jesus asks the disciples, *'Who do people say I am?'* (8:27), to which Peter replies, *'You are the Christ'*. This is evident in Jesus' role as teacher, the call for discipleship and the account of Jesus' death and resurrection, which occupies the last third of the gospel.

A key verse which helps us to understand the nature of Jesus' mission and how we might live in the light of it is: *'Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'* (10:44,45). As the Suffering Servant, Jesus gave His life on the cross, that we might know and share his love.

Mark is understandably in a hurry to tell us about Jesus: the one who reveals the truth of God to us, that we might live in reality not ignorance!

A warm welcome at the **Warm Hub**

Every Tuesday 9.30am - 12.30pm

Open to everyone, so please drop in!

**St. Chad's Church, Roslin Road, Irby CH61 3UH
0151 648 8169**

***Guest speaker
on 4th Tuesday of the month
Talks start at 10.30a.m.***

Tuesday 22nd October

Pauline Mitchell

"My African Safaris"

***Pauline will be talking about her time,
living and working in several different
African countries.***



**The Warm Hub
belongs to a
growing national
network of
Places of Welcome**



Jigsaw Library

Over the time that Warm Hub has been operating, we have been gifted many jigsaws. While we always have a jigsaw in progress at Warm Hub, there are many waiting for us to use in the future. Rather than these jigsaws just piling up, with the winter nights ahead we would like to make these jigsaws available for individuals to borrow and then return to us. We can't vouch that all the jigsaws are complete as they are donated to us but if you would like to borrow one then we can make them available on a Tuesday morning when the Warm Hub is open - 9.30 to 12.30 at St Chad's

Susan Smale



You can make donations to Foodbank by placing items (non perishable food and toiletries) in the box by the office door at St Chad's.

Dawpool WI - Remembrance Poppies

Dawpool WI are planning a "cargo net" display of Poppies for Irby Village for November. If you would like to support them by knitting poppies or supplying red (poppy colour) wool, please speak to Elizabeth Barton. The knitting pattern is available at the back of church.



Saturday 26th October 2024

10am -12.30pm
at 'Barnstables', 233 Irby Road

All Welcome to a
COFFEE MORNING FOR THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY
with Cake Stall, Bring & Buy, Craft Stall, Raffle etc



Can you please return any children's society boxes to Jean Heath for counting. They can be returned to St Chad's or St Bartholomew's or to Jean, 'Barnstables', 233 Irby Road, CH61 2XF.

If anyone would like them collecting, then please phone Jean on 648 6015 to arrange a convenient time.



St. Chad's Tots and Tinies

St Chad's Church (Roslin Road, Irby)

Every Thursday 9.30-11.30am
(Term Time Only)

£1.50 for one Adult and one child - All Welcome

Additional children £1.00
Additional Adults £0.50



Parents/Carers will be responsible for their child(ren) during the sessions

For further information please contact **Allison** via the Parish Office 648 8169

Reflecting Faith: Window Glass

Last month I wrote about the Arts and Crafts Movement's influence in the decoration of churches in Britain. This is often evidenced in the designs of windows – but why do we have so much coloured glass of all shapes and sizes in church buildings?

Stained glass in churches is similar to wall paintings in that it adds colour as well as traditionally serving the purpose of teaching non-literate people the great events and characters of their religion.

But glass is so much more than that.

The techniques used to create these windows have been refined over the centuries, and their intricate beauty has inspired countless artists and designers.

The way the light shines through the glass creates a unique atmosphere that is often described as ethereal or heavenly. In this way, the use of stained-glass windows helps to create a sacred space that is set apart from the secular world.

The light shining through the glass is shown onto the brickwork or stonework surrounding the glass and depending on the original colours, the intensity of the light, the angle of the sun's rays as well as the height and angle away from the watcher: these can range from vibrantly strong to softly muted.

Hundreds of years ago people saw the changes in light in this way as being very significant. It was thought that the light passing through was transformed or transmuted and because of this it had a healing and revivifying effect on people who placed themselves within its light.

This month

Visit a church on a sunny day and just enjoy the play of light being put on for you. What does it say about God's love for you?



God in the Sciences: Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Every person was once a sperm and an egg. Those two unique germ cells fused together, and in nine months they turned into a living, breathing, human being. One of the most important stages of this process is when each section of the body, from head to rump, takes on its identity.

In this context, identity means what shape it takes, and which limbs or internal organs grow there: legs or arms, lungs or pancreas, and so on. The source of that physical identity is DNA: the networks of genes that are switched on or off in each segment of the body, making all the proteins that are needed to grow and develop in the right way. The master-genes that control the whole process are called homeobox, or Hox genes for short.

The most beautiful thing about the process of body patterning is the way it brings the dimensions of time and space together in such a tidy way.

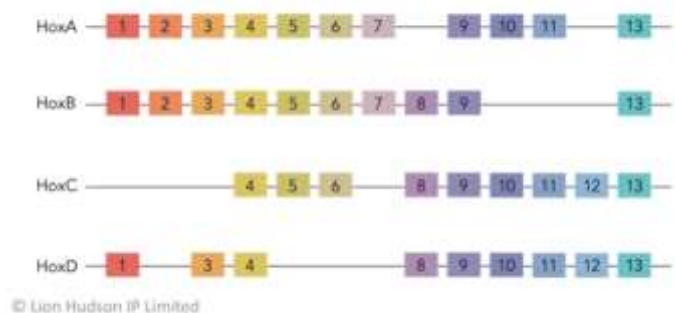
The Hox genes are organised into several clusters on the chromosomes, in the order in which they are needed during development *and* the order in which they appear on the body.

As the embryo develops, the cells near the head end activate the first genes in the Hox clusters. The cells just below the head then switch on the second genes in the cluster, and so on. A wave of gene activation passes down the embryo, specifying each section of the trunk in turn.

Once a Hox gene is switched on it can stay switched on in the next few sections of cells, and it is the overlapping activity of the genes which gives each section of the body its proper identity.

The Wisconsin-based developmental biologist Jeff Hardin often quotes Psalm 139 to express the wonder of embryonic development. ***“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb...your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.”*** The story of the tidy Hox genes is very relevant to these verses, bringing out the hidden beauty in the process.

The more biologists get to find out about how we came to be born, the more we can say, ***“I am fearfully and wonderfully made”!***



God in the Arts :

'Glorious the song when God's the theme': 'The Dream of Gerontius'

John Henry Newman was a great Victorian churchman, an inspired Anglican preacher and teacher who became a Roman Catholic in 1845. Newman was also a poet and wrote hymns that have remained perennial favourites – among them, 'Lead, kindly Light' and 'Praise to the Holiest.'

The first hymn was written when, as an Anglican, Newman was ill in Sicily and his servant thought he might die. But he recovered and, anxious to return home, he wrote these words, knowing that God had important work for him to do. The light that he prayed for in Sicily was to shine out, resplendent and glorious, in that later hymn which expresses the vision of the heavenly courts in the longer poem, 'The Dream of Gerontius.'

Newman wrote the poem in 1865 after the death of a 41-year-old fellow Oratorian, Fr John Joseph Gordon, who had said to him as he lay dying, "I do not say that I do not fear to die: for death must always be a fearful thing. God's justice is very terrible; but then, in the crucifixion, God's mercy appears so very great." 'The Dream of Gerontius' is about death and judgement, but it is the judgement of a loving God.

Newman presented Dvorak with a copy of this poem when the composer visited Birmingham, and he was invited to compose a setting for the city's 1888 Festival. Although Dvorak felt inspired by the words, the timescale was too demanding. The poem was presented to Elgar on his wedding day a year later, again with the suggestion that he set it to music. The words simmered and stirred in Elgar's imagination to produce one of the great oratorios of all time in 1900, when it was given its first performance in Birmingham.

Elgar inscribed the score ADMG (To the greater glory of God) and wrote on the last page of the manuscript, 'This is the best of me.' The light of God's glory and grace that inspired Newman shines through the music as it shone through Elgar's own life. His funeral card of 1934 contained words from the poem, and on his own score of 'The Dream' he wrote these words of Virgil, 'Whence doth so dear desire of Light on wretches grow?'

It is now difficult to separate the poem from Elgar's setting. The composer, like the poet, leads the listener from the prayer of faith, 'Firmly I believe and truly' – a prayer sustained by the words of the priest, 'Go forth upon thy journey, Christian soul' – to the judgement throne where the angels praise God in the heights.

One of the angels then leads the soul away with a beautiful setting of 'Softly and gently,' not to the fire of judgement, but to the cleansing, sustaining water of eternal life. The work ends with echoes of that angelic hymn, praising God who is our refuge in every generation.

Newman wrote, "I always sleep better after music." He compared music to an electric current that passes through the body and then into the mind and heart. And Elgar's wonderful setting can do exactly that, creating a vision of that new world of eternal glory that Gerontius expresses in the words, '*Novissima hora est.....*into thy hands, O Lord, into thy hands.'

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Did you know.....

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....and the rest, as they say, is history!

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OCTOBER 2024 SERVICES

Morning Prayer St Chad's Prayer Room 9.00am MOST Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays
(check with Revd Jane for cancellations due to other meetings or commitments)

EVERY Wednesday 10.30am HC at St Chads

- Sun 6th October 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
10.30am Holy Communion at St Bartholomew's
- Sun 13th October 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
10.30am All Age service at St Chad's
- Sun 20th October 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
10.30am Morning Worship at St Bartholomew's
- Sun 27th October 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
10.30am Communion at St Chad's with Junior Church
- Sun 3rd November 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
10.30am Communion at St Chad's
- Sun 10th November 9.00am BCP Communion at St Bartholomew's
Remembrance Sun. 10.15am Traditional Service at St Barts
10.55am Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial
11.05am All-Age Service at St Barts

