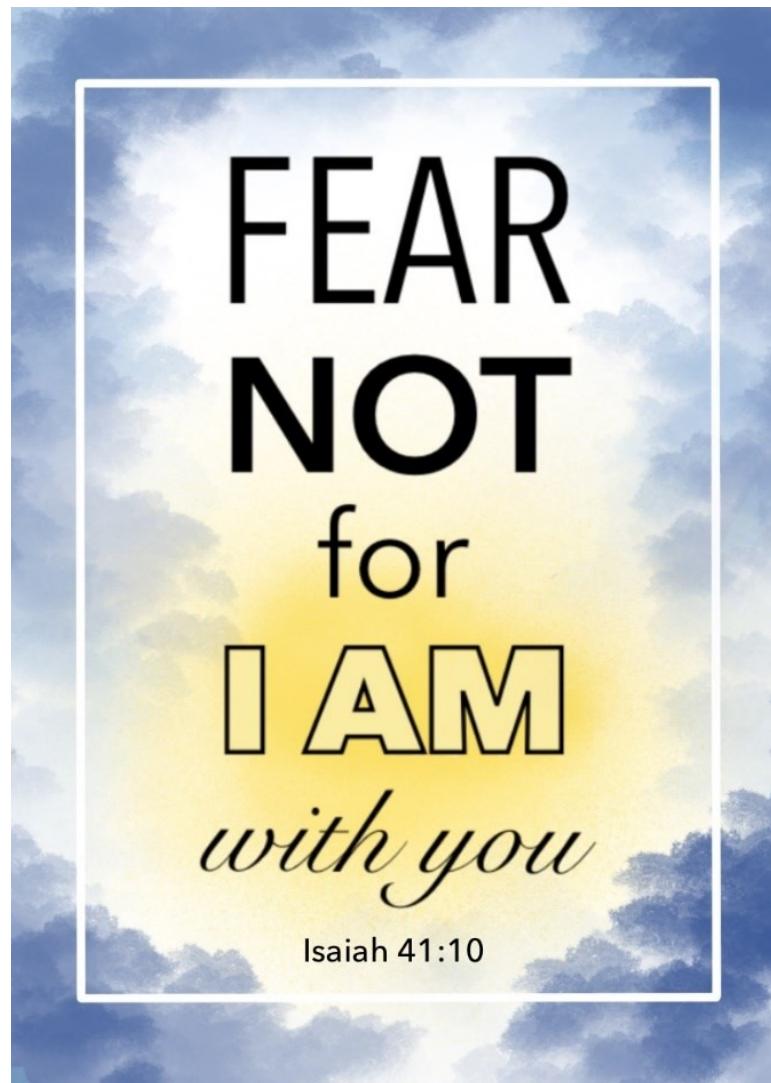


**ST ANDREW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND
HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM**



**THE MESSENGER
PARISH MAGAZINE**

APRIL/MAY 2022

50p

St Andrew's Clergy

The Church is currently in Interregnum

Enquiries – 0121 551 2097 or email vicar@standrews-handsworth.org.uk

Asst Priest – Father John Austen

Church Wardens – Carl Hart – 07967 410155

Lay Readers

Carole Sami – 07447 889657

Alison Thorne

Valerie Powell (Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Representative)

Stuart Jeffs (Director of Music)

Services

Sunday 10.00 – Parish Eucharist. This service is also live streamed via YouTube

Wednesday 7.00p.m. Evening Prayer

Every second Wednesday of the month at 7.00pm Book of Common Prayer

Wednesday Services take place via Zoom and are led by Lay Readers Valerie Powell, Stuart Jeffs and Alison Thorne.

Church Website <https://www.standrews-handsworth.org.uk>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/StAndrews.Handsworth>

Twitter @StAndrewCE_HW

St Andrew's WhatsApp Group – if you wish to join, please contact Carl Hart 07967 410155, Valerie Powell 07540 890068 or Stuart Jeffs 07910 484505

St Andrew's PCC

Carl Hart- Church Warden

Vacancy – Church Warden

Vacancy – PCC Secretary

Richard Paton-Devine – Treasurer

Mary Bairstow

John Emmins

Rachael Emmins

Stuart Jeffs

Glory Omenma

Val Powell

Carole Sami

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Happy Easter!

On the St Andrew's website, it says:

Welcome to St Andrew's Church. We believe that a church is more than a building or a set of activities, it is a collection of people.

The word "church" can be confusing – because it can mean a local gathering of Christians or an organisation (like *the Church of England*). And of course, it can mean a building – *the church on Oxhill Road*.

Many independent churches in Birmingham don't have their own building but rent rooms or halls in which to meet and worship. There are a number of churches that rent the Sports & Community Centre, or the Good Shepherd Hall. It means they can be very flexible, moving to bigger or smaller places according to their needs and size. And they may eventually build a new church or buy one that is no longer needed. The Seventh Day church building in Grove Lane used to be a Church of England Church. Years ago, the parish of St Andrew's rented rooms in Grestone School and the congregation there was *St Francis Church*.

A church building has wonderful opportunities for worship and for mission. People pass it, see it, know what it is. And now that there are new smart notice boards outside St Andrew's, and the well-tended garden, people can see that it is a church building which is being used as a church.

But buildings have big problems too. At St Andrew's, there are always repairs that need doing, and the costs can be enormous. And just keeping the church going is expensive – the church building costs £135 per week just to insure, and we have to find that money ourselves.

But we need places that help us lift our hearts and minds to God. That's why old churches especially are so often lofty and beautiful. And therefore, hard to heat! When St Andrew's was opened in 1909, I don't think they had to worry as much about how much the heating was going to cost!

Places like Westminster Abbey or St Paul's Cathedral are great tourist attractions, and they work hard to make sure that the spiritual centre of those buildings is not forgotten. Old churches and Cathedrals aren't museums – though they can look like that. They are places where God has been worshipped for generations. Places where prayer has been valid, and people have come in good times and bad to bring their joys and their sorrows.

Nowadays, most European countries have too many church buildings. Christian faith has declined, and many churches are struggling to continue. Recently, a priest in rural Yorkshire tweeted that no-one at all had turned up for the Sunday service. All Saints', Barmston, has a regular congregation of about six people, and was struggling to find any church officers or PCC members. An old building, it was difficult to ventilate and

was situated half a mile outside the village. That's a situation that can be repeated many times, and it can be true in towns and cities too.

At St Andrew's we have a beautiful church. But as our website says:

We believe that a church is more than a building or a set of activities, it is a collection of people.

Now that Covid is less severe, and the weather is warmer, let's try to be part of that praying collection of people on Sundays at St Andrew's. Without the people, it's just another old building. And let's encourage others to come and find what our website *calls*: *An oasis of Peace, Calm and the living spirituality of Christ in the vibrancy of Handsworth.*

Fr John

New Beginnings

Our world has changed it's time to reflect

Nothing's the same what can we expect

We've been through the dark now we enter the light

Lord fill our hearts with the joy of spiritual delight

Oh how we thank you for all that you have done

Your love for us sinners is second to none

Our sins and our grief you took them to bear

To show how much we are loved, how much you so care

This Easter morn we remember you are our saviour

Who came to save us all from our sinful behaviour?

As we reflect on the coming of this holy week

May the words from our mouth fill our hearts when we speak?

How blessed we are to have such a chance

No longer condemned to one circumstance

Thank you oh God for the blessing of your son

Our saviour, redeemer and our holy special one

The sign of the cross reminds us of the life we can choose

To be with you always Lord there is nothing to lose

May we celebrate this Easter of new beginnings to come?

In the name of the father Holy Spirit and Jesus the son



Valerie Powell. Poetry Emotions

The Rt. Revd David Urquhart is stepping down as Bishop of Birmingham on 18th October 2022. Having reached the retirement age of 70 and after 16 fulfilling years in the diocese, he is preparing for new adventures in life and ministry.

Meanwhile, in addition to business as usual and making his farewells, Bishop David will be part of the welcome to the Commonwealth Games. After Easter, more details of opportunities to say farewell will become available. During the Vacancy, episcopal oversight will be exercised by the Rt. Revd Anne Hollinghurst, Bishop of Aston.

Bishop David commented,

"I shall miss Birmingham very much and am most grateful for the many opportunities to experience faith and friendship across a wide diversity of communities. I have been privileged to serve such a generous and vibrant city region and am looking forward to making the most of the remaining sixth months together."

+David Birmingham

Reflected Faith Series: The Meaning of Colours - part 1

In March, April and May this year the coloured frontal of the altar will have been changed many times – as will the colour of the priest's vestments. Each colour – and there can be as many as six in a church's store – has a different meaning. They reflect the significance of that day or the season.

In March purple was used as a symbol of penitence, as we were in Lent and trying to prepare ourselves for Christ's final act of love for each of us.

Holy Week – the time of Christ's final journey – was denoted by the colour red. Red, the colour of blood, is used for feasts of martyrs as well as those for the Holy Spirit – when it more likely represents his flames of 'fire' which rested on those in the Upper Room.

Maundy Thursday, we switched to white for any Communion service, as this celebrates the remembrance of the first Communion with His apostles which He commanded us to continue. Good Friday, and we were back to red.

Then on Easter Sunday, the day of the greatest Christian Celebration, we entered to an altar bedecked in gold or the 'whitest' with the most elaborate decoration the church possesses.

'Plain' White will be used for the Easter Season signifying purity and Christ's triumph over death until Ascension Day on 26th May. This, being a special and more significant day in the life, death and resurrection of Christ, goes to gold again: then immediately back to white for the next ten days.

On the day of Pentecost itself, Whit Sunday, 5th June, the colour will be? Yes, you got it, red for flames of fire.
c/o Parish Pump

All in the month of April

It was:

150 years ago, on 2nd April 1872 that Samuel Morse died. This American artist and inventor helped develop commercial single-wire telegraph systems and co-developed Morse code.

125 years ago, on 3rd April 1897 that Johannes Brahms, German composer, piano virtuoso and conductor, died.

100 years ago, on 3rd April 1922 that Joseph Stalin became leader of the Soviet Union, in succession to Vladimir Lenin.

90 years ago, on 23rd April 1932 that the Royal Shakespeare Theatre opened in Stratford-upon-Avon, replacing the one that burnt down in 1926.

75 years ago, on 1st April 1947 that the school leaving age in the UK was raised to 15.

Also 75 years ago, on 16th April 1947 that the term 'Cold War' was used for the first time when American financier and presidential adviser Bernard Baruch described the relationship between the USA and the Soviet Union.

65 years ago, on 24th April 1957 that the first episode of the British astronomy series *The Sky at Night* was broadcast on BBC TV. It became the world's longest-running TV series with the same presenter (Patrick Moore) until his death in December 2012. The series then continued with new presenters.

50 years ago, on 11th April 1972 that the first episode of the radio comedy panel game show 'I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue' was broadcast on BBC Radio 4. It is still running.

40 years ago, on 2nd April 1982, that the Falklands War began when Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands. A British victory, although Argentina continues to claim sovereignty over the islands.

30 years ago, from 5th April 1992 to Feb 1996 that the Siege of Sarajevo took place, during the Bosnian War.

Also 30 years ago, on 15th April 1992 that the President of Afghanistan, Mohammad Najibullah, was forced to resign when his regime collapsed. Islamic rebels seized power on 28th April.

Also 30 years ago, on 27th April 1992 that Betty Boothroyd became the first female Speaker of the House of Commons.

25 years ago, on 13th April 1997 that the American golfer Tiger Woods, aged 21, became the youngest player to win the US Masters championship, and the first African American to win.

c/o Parish Pump

Holy Day - 26th April: Mark, disciple, apostle, writer of the second gospel

Mark, whose home in Jerusalem became a place of rest for Jesus and His 12 apostles, is considered the traditional author of the second gospel. He is also usually identified as the young man, described in Mark 14:51, who followed Christ after his arrest and then escaped capture by leaving his clothes behind.

Papias, in 130, said that in later years Mark became Peter's interpreter. If so, then this close friendship would have been how Mark gathered so much information about Jesus' life. Peter referred to him affectionately as his 'son'.

Mark was also a companion to Paul on his journeys. When Paul was held captive at Rome, Mark was with him, helping him. Mark's Gospel, most likely written in Italy, perhaps in Rome, is the earliest account we have of the life of Jesus. Mark died about 74 AD.

Early in the 9th century Mark's body was brought to Venice, whose patron he became, and there it has remained to this day. The symbol of Mark as an evangelist is the lion, and is much in evidence in Venice.

c/o Parish Pump

Synod approves rules to help churches meet carbon-reduction target

The Church of England's General Synod has approved new legislation to help churches meet carbon reduction targets.

Most of the changes will make it easier for churches to make adaptations such as insulating pipes, draft-proofing doors and windows, fitting new non fossil fuel boilers, electric pew heaters, electric car charging points and soft furnishings to help worshippers feel warm and comfortable.

Meanwhile the installation of like-for-like fossil fuel boilers and new oil tanks will now be subject to a full faculty application.

The rules come as part of a wide-ranging approach to meet the 2030 net-zero carbon target set by General Synod in February 2020. In July (2022), Synod will discuss a full proposed route-map to net zero which is currently out for consultation.

The changes have been called a "positive and proportionate" part of the Church's response to the Climate Emergency. The proposals do not compel parishes to make changes, but help to foster an informed approach to decisions when they are made.

The Church of England's lead Bishop for Environmental Affairs, Graham Usher, who is Bishop of Norwich, said that the General Synod's 2020 commitment had been "noticed and praised" at the COP26 summit in Glasgow last year.

He said: "Our parish churches can be exemplars, leading the way in communities, for sustainable living." The rules will be laid before Parliament and come into effect on 1st July 2022. **c/o Parish Pump**

WAR IN UKRAINE

Advice for parishes on helping refugees

The Church of England has published a ‘toolkit’ of resources for parishes seeking to help refugees and evacuees from Ukraine in the wake of the Russian invasion of the country.

The material, available at <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/community-action/war-ukraine-responding> brings together advice on how churches can welcome people arriving from Ukraine through giving, longer-term practical support such as community sponsorship, prayer and advocacy, as well as links to other sources of information including safeguarding.

In a foreword to the toolkit, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell, say that The Church calls on “all people of goodwill to join in prayer for the people of Ukraine and to work practically to support them in their hour of need.”

They continue: “We have been inspired by the warm response from churches and community groups. We hope that in this toolkit there will be some useful answers.

“In these days of uncertainty and fear, we pray that each of us might again turn to the Lord and receive God’s gift of peace, work for God’s justice, and know God’s reconciliation and love.”

The toolkit includes a brief guide to what is happening in Ukraine and the humanitarian response, together with details of organisations and appeals.

It also contains information on how parishes and individuals can take action to support those arriving both through the family visa scheme and the humanitarian sponsor scheme, advocacy and prayer and theological resources for churches.

More information

[View the parish resources for responding to the war in Ukraine](#)

[View the safeguarding guidance - Homes for Ukraine \(safeguarding e-manual\)](#)

Diocese in Europe and USPG launch Ukraine emergency appeal

The Church of England Diocese in Europe and USPG, the mission agency, have launched an emergency appeal to get aid to people in desperate need because of the invasion of Ukraine.

Funds raised by the appeal will support Christian charities and churches carrying out humanitarian work both in Ukraine and responding to the arrival of refugees in neighbouring countries.

Partners on the ground are providing food, medicine, shelter, care for children and people internally displaced in Ukraine. With refugees they are supplying care at the border and beyond, including attention to those from Africa and Asia as well as Ukrainians who are fleeing the war.

The appeal is for urgent help NOW, but the work will go on for many months.

The Church of England's Bishop in Europe, the Rt Revd Robert Innes says: "War is horrible. It injures, destroys, and kills in an often indiscriminate and uncontrollable way. And now, we face war in Europe.

"The people of our little church, Christ Church Kyiv, find themselves in the midst of this crisis. They are typical of so many others.

"Some have fled the city whilst others are still there; praying for their safety and for peace as they shelter as best they can. These people are our brothers and sisters. Those still in Ukraine and those who have fled need our help."

USPG's General Secretary, the Revd Duncan Dormor, adds: "Our hearts and prayers go out to the people of Ukraine. We have launched this appeal in partnership with the Diocese in Europe to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and support church responses to the current crisis."

To donate to the Ukraine emergency appeal, visit <https://ukraine-emergency-appeal.raisely.com>

John Rutter pens new work after Ukraine invasion

John Rutter, the composer, has written a new choral work in response to the invasion of Ukraine.

Funds raised from 'A Prayer for Ukraine', are going to the Disasters Emergency Committee's Ukraine appeal.

Rutter explained: "How can a composer respond to a global tragedy? I suppose by writing music: like everybody I have been shocked and dismayed by the events of recent days.

"The first thing I wanted to do was write music that would respond in my own way. I went to a late-night service in my old college chapel where they sang a setting of a lovely Ukrainian prayer, so having encountered the Ukrainian text, on Thursday I wrote my own music. I hope the meaning of the text will resonate in people's hearts."

The words of the piece, which are originally in Ukrainian, translate into English as: "Good Lord protect the Ukraine. Give her strength, courage, faith, and hope. Amen."

He added: "I hope it speaks in terms which reach out to the Ukrainian people in their hour of need."

The score is available for free by [submitting this form](#). You are welcome to duplicate the score for the sole use of your own choir. You may like to make a donation to a Ukrainian relief charity, perhaps equivalent to the approximate cost of the copies had you purchased them. If you wish, you are free to make an audio or video recording of the piece without a special licence to do so.

Listen to the new work at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bx4QFxfW2s>

Praying for Ukraine

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued a pastoral letter to the clergy and people of the Church of England, calling on them to pray for peace in Ukraine.

They wrote: "This attack is an act of evil, imperilling as it does the relative peace and security that Europe has enjoyed for so long. The attack by one nation on a free, democratic country has rightly provoked outrage, sanctions, and condemnation.

"We lament with the people of Ukraine, and we pray for the innocent, the frightened and those who have lost loved ones, homes, and family.

"We continue to call for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Russian forces as well as wide-ranging efforts to ensure peace, stability and security."

c/o Parish Pump

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen

*Archbishop Justin Welby
Archbishop Stephen Cottrell*

INTERESTING PLACES OF WORSHIP

This month I asked for photographs and articles on interesting places of worship you may have visited.

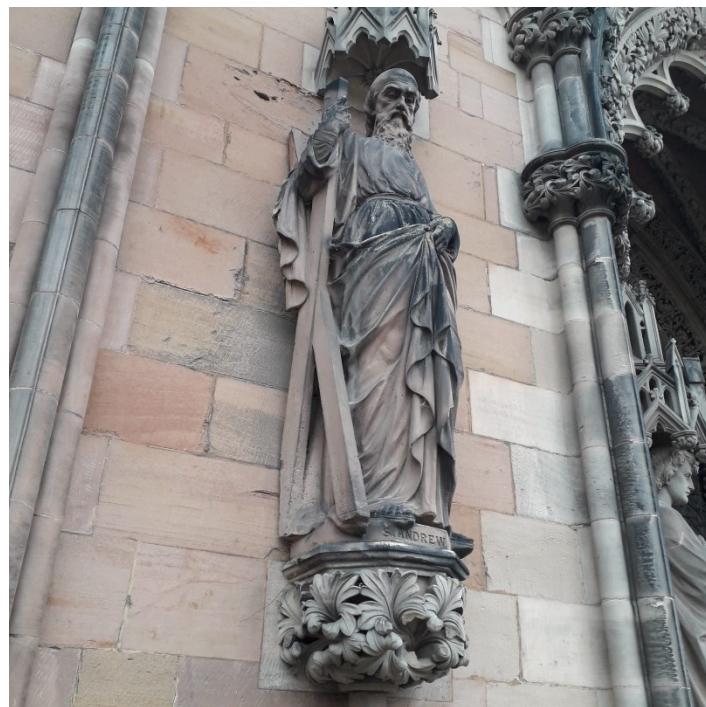
IONA ABBEY



Iona is one of the oldest religious centres in Western Europe and was originally a monastic community. I took these photos when I visited Iona in the early 90s when I was a student, and found an amazing place of peace, reflection, and spiritual growth. I remember the long journey to get there – a train to Glasgow, onto Oban and a ferry to the Isle of Iona. As part of my visit, I joined in with the chores and I remember being on kitchen duty and being presented with what seemed like '101' onions to chop. But I enjoyed sharing in the tasks and talking to other visitors and people who lived and worked in Iona. It was many years ago but still a very memorable experience. **Eileen Lawrence**

Lichfield Cathedral photographs

Carole Sami visited Lichfield Cathedral last year and has provided the following photographs.



Another visitor to Lichfield Cathedral is Joan Wild.....

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL

Lichfield Cathedral really impressed me at the very first sight of its Three Spires, known by some as the 'Ladies of the Vale' on approaching the city. Then, on entering the Cathedral Close, I was amazed and stunned by the West Front of the Cathedral from which statues seem to 'walk out' from the stonework as if in greeting and hospitality and welcome.

Lichfield Cathedral is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to St Chad. St Chad died in a plague in Lichfield on 2nd March in 672 - one thousand, three hundred and fifty years ago! He was initially buried in the church that he had built and had dedicated to St Mary. This church became incorporated into the structure of the Cathedral.

Although it is many years since St Chad died, his spirit is very much alive at the Cathedral. A new statue of him has recently been unveiled in a 'Garden of Hope' which has been planted with spring bulbs to bloom at the time of his Feast Day, 2nd March. The statue shows a kind and friendly man leaning forward to approach people with the good news in his hand. He stands to welcome all pilgrims who still travel to this holy place in Lichfield.

My visits to the Cathedral in recent years have been occasioned by reunions with cousins from Cheshire who also love the Cathedral. The photo shows me with my cousins sitting in The Pedalavium which links the Chapter House to the north quire aisle. This is a vestibule area used for ceremonial feet washing. I'm not sure if we realised this at the time.



Near here is the carving of 'The Lichfield Angel'. This is a 9th Century Anglo Saxon carved limestone panel which once formed part of a Shrine Chest. Although it is not known for certain, the Angel is thought to have been part of St Chad's Shrine. To add to my interest in the Cathedral are tales our friend,

Gill Ludford told of being evacuated to Lichfield as a schoolgirl in the War. She had lodgings with the Verger, Mr Dodds and his family in the Cathedral Close and had art lessons in the Bishop's Palace. She was very happy there, especially compared with other places to which she was evacuated.

When Gill heard of the sad death of her dear friend Penny Fleming earlier in the year, she asked if she could plant a rose in St Andrew's side Garden in Loving Memory of Penny. Because of Gill's links to Lichfield Cathedral, she decided on the David Austin Rose 'The Lichfield Angel' which was named after the limestone sculptured panel discovered in the Cathedral in 2003. Penny's daughter Charlotte thought her mother would have approved.



Penny was always so warmly welcoming and hospitable - like Lichfield Cathedral - and loved flowers. In the days when there were 8 to 10 ladies available for flower arranging, Penny arranged a weekly rota and was always encouraging and appreciative, and at those times when it was 'all hands on deck' such as Christmas and Weddings she would prepare a lovely lunch for us all with her wonderful home cooked ham and pickled onions to keep us going. I hope the Lichfield Angel Rose will bloom well this year to help us remember lovely Penny and to remind us of Lichfield Cathedral – such a special place.



JOAN WILD

York Minster



An overdue wish of mine came through, a very special day visiting York and the famous York Minster, to soak up the truly amazing architecture of a truly beautiful building and to also share in the spiritual ambiance of Choral Evening Service Truly an enjoyable experience, blessed indeed.

Giving thanks
Val Powell

Penny Fleming

Penny was a longstanding member of St Andrew's Church and sadly passed away in January this year.



Jan Fleming kindly provided the following information. Penny was a member of St Andrews for at least 30 years. She was very upset after she moved because she could not get to church. She was very active in the church and was Church Warden for a long time. Jan's daughters said she made the best egg and chips in England! Jan reflected that Penny was a lovely person, very well educated. She would do anything for anybody if she could. I miss her very much. Joan Wild recalls that Penny was always welcoming. Despite her poor health she never complained. She was involved in a lot of activities with St Andrews – flower arranging, bazaar, Harvest Supper. These are sentiments echoed by others who reflected on Penny's generosity and hostess skills. She was devoted to St Andrew's Church.

Nora Pottinger



Nora Pottinger sadly passed away in September last year. During the Pandemic it always comes as a shock when someone dies because you may not have seen them for a while due to Lockdown or Isolating. I remember Nora as the elegant lady who sat at the back of Church. She was always immaculately dressed and always had a smile on her face. I was sad to hear that she had passed away.

Val Powell kindly wrote a few words about Nora. Nora was Deputy Church Warden and was also part of the catering team. Nora brought order and laughter to our team. She was very organised and meticulous about how things were done and presented. She had a wicked sense of humour and loved posh and style but was never afraid to get her hands dirty when needed. Nora was like the aunty of the group always full of advice, someone you could talk to or go to about anything, quick to diffuse any situation that arose. Her faith was very strong and for her Sunday Service was very important and coming to Church every Sunday meant she was able to express her faith and meet with her Brothers and Sisters in Christ. She did tea/coffee sessions with Jackie which we loved because she would bake lovely cakes and we all wanted a piece of Nora's cake. She was just a lovely, kind, warm spirited elegant lady in a league of her own.



All in the month of May

It was:

150 years ago, on 18th May 1872 that Bertrand Russell, Welsh philosopher, mathematician, historian, and writer was born. He won the 1950 Nobel Prize in Literature.

125 years ago, on 26th May 1897 that Bram Stoker's horror novel *Dracula* was published.

100 years ago, on 27th May 1922 that Christopher Lee, British film actor was born. Best known for his many Hammer Horror films, especially his role as Dracula. He also played a leading role in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*. (Died 2015)

90 years ago, on 9th May 1932 that London's Piccadilly Circus was lit with electrical lighting for the first time. The road junction later became famous for its neon lighting and video advertising displays.

60 years ago, on 25th May 1962 that the new Coventry Cathedral was consecrated. The previous one had been destroyed by German bombing during WWII.

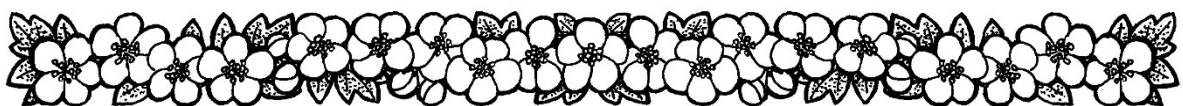
50 years ago, on 28th May 1972 that Prince Edward, Duke of Windsor, died. He was formerly Edward VIII, until his abdication in December 1936.

40 years ago, 27th-28th May 1982 that the Battle of Goose Green took place during the Falklands War. British victory.

25 years ago, 1st May 1997 that the Labour Party won a landslide victory, ending 18 years of Conservative Rule. Tony Blair became Prime Minister.

15 years ago, on 3rd May 2007 that three-year-old Madeleine McCann went missing while on holiday with her parents in Praia da Luz, Portugal. Despite long-running investigations costing millions of pounds, she has never been found. Her disappearance is the most-reported missing person case in history.

10 years ago, on 18th May 2012 that social media network Facebook went public. Its initial public offering raised \$16 billion – the third-largest amount in US history.



DATES FOR MAY 2022

Thursday 26th May: Ascension Day. 10 am Said Mass at St Andrew's

Saturday 4th June 11 am: Choral service of Matins at St Mary's Church Handsworth for the Queen's Jubilee.

Sunday 5th June 11 am Group Confirmation at St Mary's (no service at St Andrew's that day)

Saturday 16th July Memorial Service for Fr Henley James and Beverley James. 12 noon at St Andrew's

21st May - Ascension Day: 40 Days with the Risen Christ

40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (*Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.*)

The Gospels give us little of Christ's teachings and deeds during those 40 days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving 'farewell' in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: 'When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them.'

As Christmas began the story of Jesus' life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection!

Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: 'While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.' (Luke 24:50-1) He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: 'I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...' (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: 'they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.' (Luke 24:52,53) No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! 'I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.' (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

c/o Parish Pump

'Cathedrals are at the heart of Covid recovery' says lead Dean

If you value cathedrals, please visit them! This will assist their recovery in the aftermath of Covid-19.

The Dean of Leicester, David Monteith, who Chairs the Church of England's College of Cathedral Deans, has responded to recent data showing an expected fall in visitors and on-site worshippers during Covid-19. "The simple message for everyone is 'come and visit your cathedrals!'" he said.

"Cathedrals across the country are working hard to welcome back more visitors and worshippers. It is a challenging environment, not least because of current utility cost increases. "Cathedrals and churches are here to support their communities including people who are still struggling following Covid-19, and as focal points for prayer and reflection and action in light of world events including the war in Ukraine.

"Local people have supported their cathedrals throughout, and we are grateful for the emergency grant funding which the Government and Church have provided, but this has now ended. "Cathedrals serve congregations and wider communities through worship, heritage, education and civic events.

"They are landmarks which characterise our regions and are testaments to faith and witness across the centuries. We are committed – with the help of all who visit, worship, and value them, to ensuring they continue long into the future. We exist for God's glory, for all the peoples of England and for those who join us from further afield." Recent figures from the Church of England and the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) show a 57 per cent reduction across all cathedrals, with St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey both named in the report.

The Church of England's Cathedrals Data from 2020 showed a 64 per cent reduction between 2019 and 2020 in on-site worshippers throughout the week, largely owing to the Government's closure of buildings for much of the year.

The data also showed that cathedrals stepped up to the challenge of providing worship and support remotely during the pandemic, through an increase in reaching congregations via online, telephone, email and postal means.

Cathedrals have now streamed thousands of online services to people around the world, while elsewhere the Church of England's national online services have been seen more than 16 million times since the start of the pandemic, with many more services broadcast by local churches. In recent weeks cathedrals have become the focus of prayer vigils and community gatherings following the invasion of Ukraine, with many lighting up in the colours of the Ukrainian flag.

A 2021 study by the economic research agency Ecorys showed that cathedrals attracted over 9.5 million tourist or leisure visitors in 2019, an increase of 15 per cent on the 2014 total of 8.2 million.

c/o Parish Pump

Where do you call home?

'Where is it that you call home?' I wonder how different people would answer that question.

It's so much gentler than asking 'where do you come from?' That question declares that clearly you don't come from around here so you must be a stranger in these parts.

But the question about home is much deeper and can prompt a range of answers. People can respond by telling you about where they live now, or where they were brought up, or maybe where their family came from.

Author Chine McDonald suggests the question in her book, 'God is Not a White Man' (Hodder & Stoughton) and I'm grateful to her. She says, "I love to hear the different answers people give."

For many people, the answer will be complex. All of us have roots in several places, with relatives whose homes are many miles away, and possibly across oceans.

Fridge magnets that say home is where the Wi-Fi recognises you, or 'where they have to take you in', widely miss the point.

Just now, many parts of the UK are welcoming British Nationals from Hong Kong, families who have left the former colony after the Chinese government introduced laws severely restricting human rights.

It's been good to see local churches helping to welcome the men, women and children who have crossed continents under the UK government's resettlement scheme.

The Hebrew Scriptures encouraged God's people to remember that they were once strangers in foreign lands, and to welcome those from afar.

In the gospels, Jesus underlines the importance of loving your neighbour, as you love yourself. He called on His followers to make hospitality one of their core values. It's a way that we open our lives to others.

I've called Hertfordshire home for more than 30 years but hold a special place for the part of West London where I was brought up, and I still support the local football team. Family research reveals that my surname derives from Dorset.

So where's home? It's the place where I can feel at home, where I am known and where I can be accepted without pretence.

It's my prayer that all churches may be places of welcome and hospitality for everyone.

By the Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts, and a former communications director for the C of E.

c/o Parish Pump

Why not go out on a short-term outreach?

Do you have some spare weeks this year? Want to do something meaningful with them? Why not consider going on an Operation Mobilisation short-term outreach?

OM gives two good reasons as to why you might want to go:

Firstly, short-term outreaches “push you out of your comfort zone, meaning you’re compelled to trust Him in ways you might not usually have to.

“It could be trusting Him practically with travel plans, or spiritually to give you the right words to say through the Holy Spirit at a particular moment. As you witness in word and action, you also allow God to work through you. Offering to pray for someone, or just sitting and listening to them, can create space for people to encounter Jesus.”

Secondly, short-term teams increase the capacity of long-term teams.

“OM only ever sends short-term teams to places where long-term teams are already established. This means that short-termers can increase the capacity of existing ministries.

For example, in Adaševci refugee camp in Serbia, short-term volunteers go to serve hot drinks, do laundry and chat to refugees in the tea tent run by OM. This frees up the long-term team to engage in the more strategic, logistical or administrative work that needs doing.

OM offers a variety of short-term outreach opportunities:

1 week trips up to 6 months; Christian gap years; mission outreaches in the UK; overseas outreaches all around the world; and finally, mission trips for church groups, families, individuals and couples. For more details, please visit: <https://www.uk.om.org>

c/o Parish Pump

Knit a corgi for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee

Thousands of people across the country are buying in light brown and white wool just now, in order to knit up a corgi in honour of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. It is a fun way in which anyone with knitting needles can get involved in the coming celebrations.

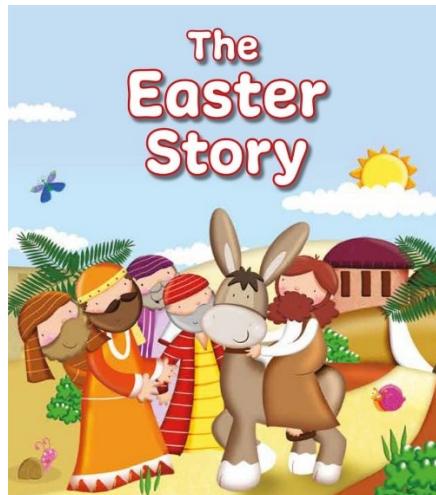
If you google ‘knitting patterns for corgis’, you will find a wide variety of free patterns on offer. Knitted corgis could help decorate house windows, local shops and churches as the big day approaches.

c/o Parish Pump

BOOK REVIEWS

The Easter Story

By Karen Williamson, illustrated by Marie Allen, Candle Books, £6.99

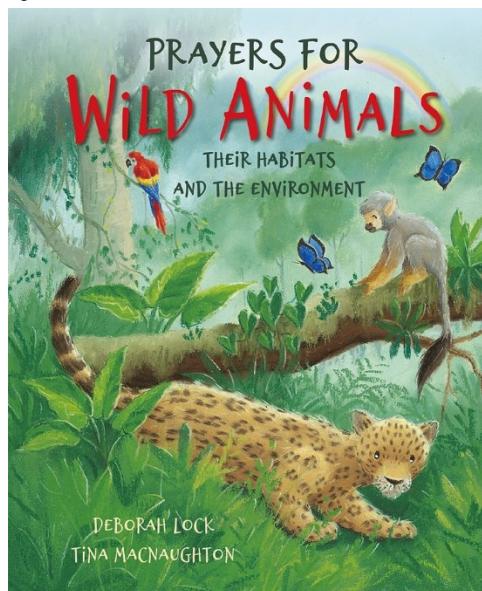


Here is a book for sharing with your toddlers and young children, perfect for bedtimes leading up to Easter.

It is written as a continuous journey, from 'A noisy entry' where Jesus is walking to Jerusalem, 'A meal to remember' where Jesus ate with twelve special friends, through to Jesus appearing to His special friends and His ascension. The story is expanded to give a little more detail and to enable it to be read as a continuous story over a number of days, leading up to Easter.

Prayers for Wild Animals – their Habitats and the Environment

By Deborah Lock, illustrated by Tina McNaughton, Lion Candle Books, £7.99

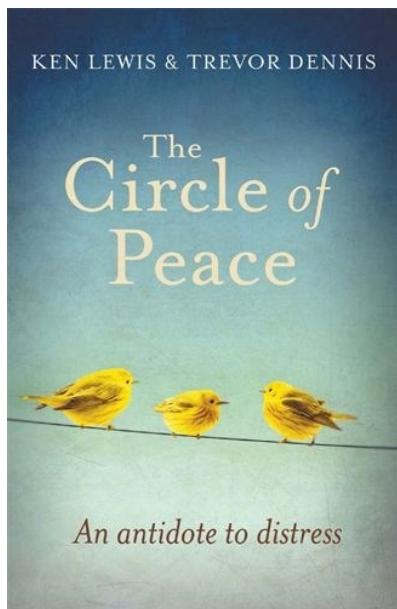


This is a prayer book of blessings to help children celebrate the lives of wild animals and God's love for them. The often-heart-warming prayers help express the joy children find in animals.

From butterflies to bears, Africa to Australia and forests to oceans, the collection includes prayers for the conservation of the animals' habitats and the care and protection for the environment.

The Circle of Peace

By Ken Lewis and Trevor Dennis, SPCK, £10.99

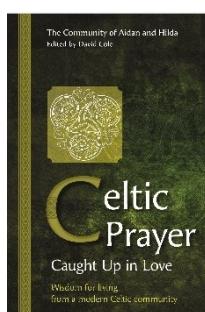


The Church is very good at challenging people to love their neighbours, but it is not so strong on encouraging us to also love ourselves.

Yet encountering the love of God sets us free to live as we were intended to live – loving ourselves and those around us. Through Bible passages, stories and exercises, the authors encourage us to throw off the sense of apprehension that bothers so many, and to enjoy living to the full in God's exhilarating company.

Celtic Prayer – Caught Up in Love

Edited by David Cole (Brother Cassian), BRF, £12.99



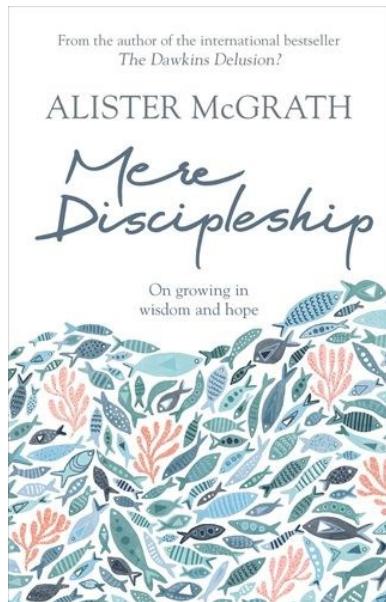
This rich collection of essays, conversations and reflections from 30 members of the Community of Aidan and Hilda distils the ancient wisdom of the Celtic Christians and applies it to the lived reality of contemporary readers.

It can be helpful for anyone drawn to explore teachings about prayer from a Celtic perspective. It offers deep spiritual truths woven beautifully with usable prayers, 'like a piece of Celtic knotwork flowing around the page of an illuminated scripture.'

As David Cole writes in his introduction: "Celtic Christian spirituality is about embodying the Divine in every aspect of your life, and prayer is a significant part of that."

Mere Discipleship – on growing in wisdom and hope

By Alister McGrath, SPCK, £9.99



In exploring Christian discipleship, Alister McGrath encourages us to move beyond a superficial grasp of our faith to discover its depth and riches. He sees discipleship as a process of growth in wisdom: we absorb a Christian vision of reality, allow it to percolate in our minds and then inform how we see things, think about them and act.

Helpfully drawing on the astute and illuminating insights of Dorothy L. Sayers, C. S. Lewis, John Stott and J. I. Packer, the author suggests how we can hold on to hope while journeying through darkness and live meaningfully in a world where things don't always seem to make sense.

c/o Parish Pump

Wordsearch clues & answers for May

A prayer for Ukraine

Lord, we pray for Ukraine, a nation in which 70% of the population call themselves Christian. You, Lord, make wars cease to the end of the earth; you break bows, shatter spears, and burn shields with fire [Psalm 46:9]. And so, we ask you now to save the lives of many people in Ukraine. De-escalate this crisis. We hear of wars and rumours of wars (Matt. 24:6], but you Lord are our rock, our fortress and our deliverer. Our hope is in you. And so we address the nations now. In the name of Jesus we say: "Be still and know God! He is exalted among the nations; He shall be exalted in the earth [Psalm 46:10]. *Kyrie eleison – Lord have mercy.*

c/o Parish Pump



War
Cease
Earth
Break
Ukraine

Bows
Shatter
Spears
Burn
Shields

Fire	Lord	Our
Save	Rock	Fortress
Many	Deliverer	Hope
Lives	In	You
Crisis	Be	Still

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

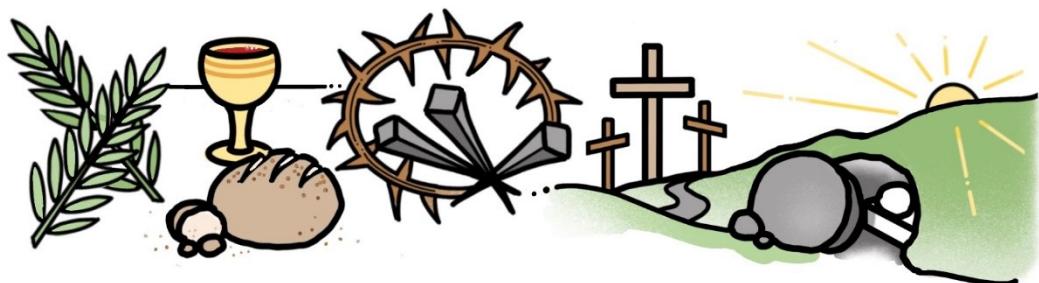
The magazine has been priced at 20p for many years and it has been decided to increase the price alongside current printing costs. The new price of the magazine is now 50p.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the magazine and thank you for your contributions. This month's magazine looked at places of worship. I hope to continue this in the next magazine. If you have some photos or stories to share, please email parishmagazine949@gmail.com.

It has been a difficult two years with the Pandemic. The Maundy Thursday Service this year was very moving, and it was lovely to see the Walk of Witness procession return, with the Outdoor Service and Meditation Service. The Meditation Service on Good Friday was quite moving. Bryan Jones sang his heart out with songs 'Gethsemene' and 'The Crucifixion' which I later learned were written by Stuart Jeffs in 1986 for a musical called 'The Resurrection.' It would be lovely to see that performed in St Andrews one day. Apparently, we just need children, adults, and a rock band!

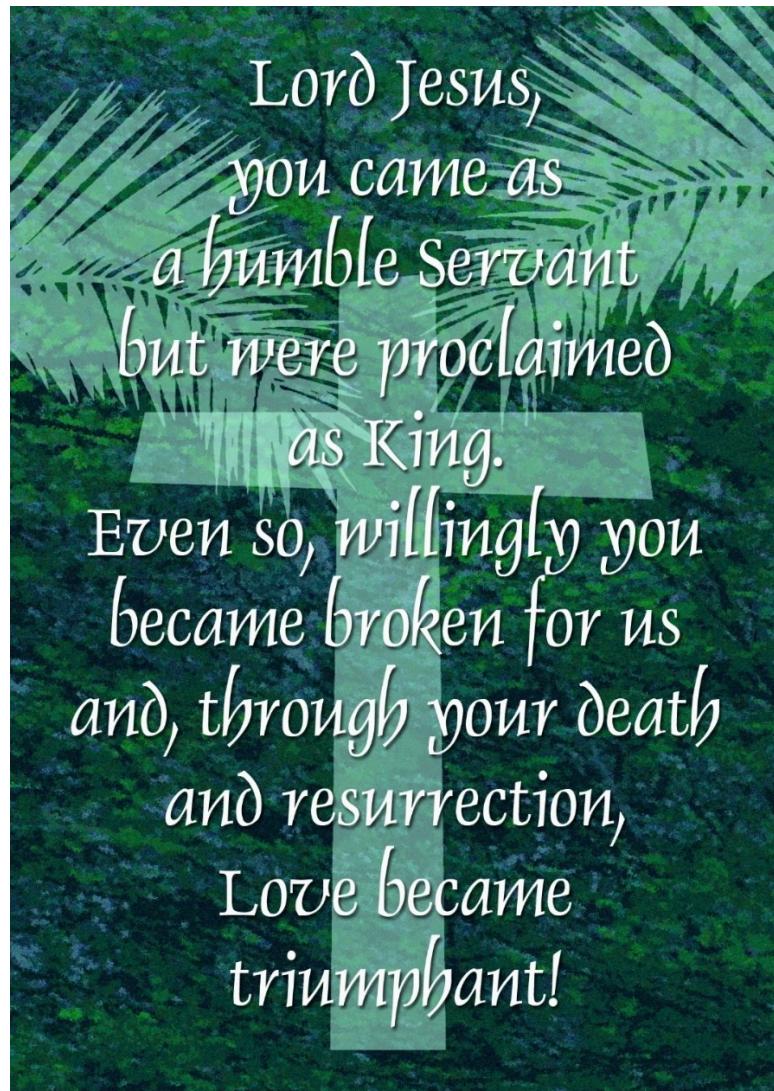
The Readers in the Meditation Service were also amazing and 'acted' their readings so well. As I was leaving, someone said that she found the Readings quite emotional as she felt as though she was there, back in time. The Service is available on St Andrew's YouTube page if you missed it. Thank you to the Ministry Team for organising the Easter Services.

Eileen Lawrence



ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

HANDSWORTH



Lord Jesus,
you came as
a humble Servant
but were proclaimed
as King.

Even so, willingly you
became broken for us
and, through your death
and resurrection,
Love became
triumphant!