



St Helen's Church

Loving God, loving others, loving the world

Notices for 22nd August 2021

Dear Friends

Since the beginning of the pandemic, I have written a weekly letter for this pew sheet as a way of sharing important updates, offering encouragement or challenge and generally staying in touch, especially important at those times when we haven't been able to see one another face to face. I reckon that means I've written you seventy or more letters. You may not realise it, but in many ways these letters have been love letters - letters written to those I love, and miss. Some of you have told me how much you have appreciated them. Thank you for reading them!

Now that life is picking up a bit of pace again, and now that we are seeing one another face-to-face more often - whilst maintaining our commitment to live-streaming - I am going to make these letters an occasional, rather than a weekly, offering. So - I'll still write when there's particular news to share, or a particular reflection to offer, but won't send out 'Rector's ramblings' every seven days.

If you've enjoyed my letters, perhaps you could think about taking on a bit of systematic letter writing yourself. I was given this idea by a colleague who sent 40 postcards in Lent, one for each day (except Sundays). His Lenten practice that year became an opportunity to bless others by reminding them that they were

remembered, valued, loved. Could I pass the love-letter baton on to you? Some of the most poignant letters ever written must surely be the letters that soldiers write before they go into a field of conflict. These are explicitly 'last letters' where they anticipate their own deaths, and write to their parents or to their partner, with one last message home. Inevitably, these are love letters too.

During the deployment of British troops in Afghanistan, 457 such letters were dispatched and read by 457 families mourning the loss of 457 women and men. Those letters represented love and loss that I can barely imagine. I wonder how many times they have been re-read over this last week, as the situation in Afghanistan has spiralled out of control again, and how much more searing the loss feels now?

Watching the news on Afghanistan there might be one more love letter we are each compelled to write; a letter expressing our love for the terrified, vulnerable people of that country, our brothers and sisters, desperate to flee a violent regime. We can't get a letter to them, but we can get a letter to our MP, to our political leaders, urging compassion, refuge, hospitality. If you write one letter this week, could it be that?

With love, as ever,

Mary

NOTICES & NEWS

Worship and Covid-19

With local infection rates remaining high, this is a gentle reminder that we ask you not to come to worship in the church building if you are feeling unwell or have any symptoms which might be Covid-19. Instead, please do join us for our 10.30am worship, streamed live to our Flagstaff Family of Churches Facebook page.

Thank you!

Many thanks to the two teams who ran two children's workshops over the last weeks, as part of our heritage offer to our local community. Thanks to Julie, Helen and Adrienne for running the glass fusing workshop, and to Caroline, Alison, Margaret, Julie, Susan, Michelle and Emily, who ran the Music and Makaton workshop. It's great to be welcoming families back to our buildings.

Anna's confirmation service

is this Sunday (22nd) at 6pm at Packington Church. Please come along and support Anna as she makes a public declaration of her faith.

Congratulations!

To Carol and Steve Eyley on the birth of their grandson, Theo James, born on 13th August.

Outdoor Team Service at Breedon - next Sunday, 10.30am

As next Sunday is 5th Sunday of the month, we are holding a Team Service for the whole of the Flagstaff Family at Breedon on the Hill at 10.30am. The service of Holy Communion will be held outdoors on the church field adjacent to the churchyard. There is plenty of parking

and all are welcome. Please bring a picnic to enjoy after the service!

Thank you

Jill Chapman is coming to the end of her time as our administrator, serving St Helen's primarily and, over the pandemic in particular, the villages of Breedon, Coleorton, Isley Walton and Staunton Harold. There will come a moment to express our thanks to Jill publicly but for now, Jill, thank you so much for all your hard, patient, gracious work among us. You have been so lovely to work with!

If you'd like to contribute to a gift for Jill, please post an envelope marked 'Jill' through the Rectory door or pass it to Judith or Shân, our churchwardens.

Welcome to Carole

Our new administrator, Carole Nettles, has started work with us this week. She can be contacted via the usual email address - sthelensashby@gmail.com or via the office telephone 01530 411607. Carole's usual working days will be Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 10.00am-1.00pm.

Do say hello to her if you are around! Carole will also welcome our understanding as she begins to learn a complex role. We're delighted she's joined us!

Prayer Chain

St Helen's Prayer Chain is now being coordinated by Adrienne Sedgman. Her email address is sedgmanadrienne@gmail.com. If you have any prayer requests, would like to be added to the Prayer Chain or to know more about it, please do contact her.

Thanks, Judith

Dates for your diary

Anna's confirmation: 22nd August
Anna Haines, a much loved and valued member of our church choir has chosen to get confirmed. The confirmation service will be at Packington Church on 22nd August at 6pm. Do come along and support Anna as she makes this public affirmation of her faith.

◆ **Living in Love and Faith: final session**

Graduates of the Living in Love and Faith course are reminded of our final session on 25th August at 7.30pm in the Heritage Centre.

◆ **Sunday 29th August is a fifth Sunday** and so will be a Flagstaff Family service for the whole team at 10.30am. This simple service of outdoor Holy Communion will be in the grounds of the church at Breedon on the Hill. There is ample parking. Hot drinks will be served after the service, but you are also very welcome to bring a picnic and to stay and eat together.

◆ **Saturday 11th September** We will be part of North-West Leicestershire's Hello Heritage event AND the annual 'Ride and Stride' fundraising event. There will be a churchyard self-guided tour, and tours of the church building at 10.30am, 12 noon and 2.00pm. We really encourage PCC members and church family members to come along to one of these tours so that you can understand more about our heritage and how it can help us share our faith. We are looking for volunteers to help us serve simple refreshments in our pop-up café, help steward church, and facilitate people eating their picnics in the Heritage Centre garden. If you can help please email sthelensheritage@gmail.com.

◆ **Quiet Morning 2022**

After all the Covid disruptions it seems quite scary to actually put a date in the diary and then expect it to happen, but, all being well we are hoping to offer a **Quiet Morning for the Flagstaff Family of Churches** based in the Heritage Centre and St Helen's Church Ashby on **Thursday 23rd June 2022**. Our usual format is to have breakfast together (and chatter!) followed by a short service and a reflection. Then a quiet time (with copious amounts of coffee and biscuits to fortify those who need it) followed by an informal Service of Holy Communion (in the garden weather permitting) and home by around 12.45.

We hope that this will give you a relaxing and special time out with God and each other, away from the usual distractions of an ordinary Thursday morning.

Further information will come over the next few months with a title and an opportunity to sign up, so put the date in your diaries and watch this space!
With love

Revd Margaret & Allan.

Giving

You can make donations to the work of St Helen's via our website
<https://www.sthelensashby.net/Group/s/327469/Giving.aspx>

Soft plastic recycling

Further to Revd Mary's letter last week I am sure one of the things we all try to do is recycle as much as possible. Are you aware it is now possible to recycle soft plastics at the Co op? Things like: fruit and veg nets and bags, bread bags, crisp bags, cling film, biscuit wrappers... the full list can be found on coop.co.uk under "soft plastic packaging" and a printed list will be displayed on the church notice board.

PRAYER

Please pray

for the Revd Brett Murphy, as he prepares to be inducted as Vicar of Broom Leys on Wednesday 1st September at 7.30pm.

Diocesan employees

Please continue to pray for Diocesan employees who continue to live with uncertainty about their employment. This is extremely stressful for them.

The bereaved

◆ Pray for the family and friends of anyone known to you who is recently bereaved.

In love, we remember those whose anniversary of death falls at this time, praying for their families & friends:

- ◆ Geoffrey Brian Coombs
- ◆ Dorothea Carter
- ◆ Francis John Clarence Westenra Plantagenet Hastings, 15th Earl of Huntingdon
- ◆ Raymond Saxelby Whitlock
- ◆ William Robert Roy Worrall
- ◆ Frank Spiby
- ◆ Brian Alfred Gardener

The sick, disabled or housebound:

Pray for ...

- ◆ Peggy Adams
- ◆ Teresa Shorthouse
- ◆ David Wileman
- ...& others known to you

Contact Details

- ◆ Revd Canon Mary Gregory:
revmarygregory@aol.co.uk
01530 564372
- ◆ Parish Office: Carole Nettles
sthelensashby@gmail.com
01530 411607
- ◆ Heritage:
sthelensheritage@gmail.com
- ◆ Lettings:
sthelenslettings@gmail.com
- ◆ St Helen's website:
<https://www.sthelensashby.net/>
- ◆ Facebook:
-The Flagstaff Family of Churches
-St Helen's Ashby de la Zouch
- ◆ Twitter: @sthelensashby