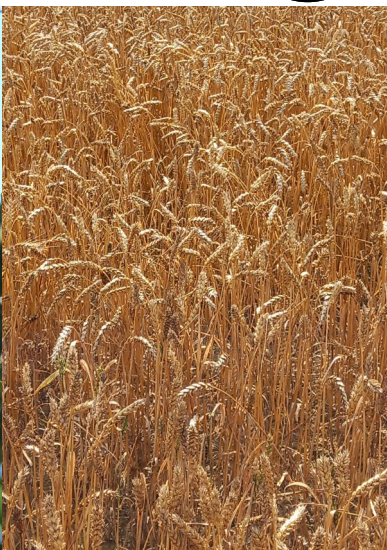


St Helen's Magazine

September 2021

50p



St Helen's Church

Ashby-de-la-Zouch



Loving God, loving others, loving the world

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(The dialling code for these numbers is 01530 except where stated)

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♦Opening times Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 10.00am - 1.00pm

- ♦ Facebook pages: St Helen's Ashby de la Zouch
St Helen's Heritage Ashby de la Zouch
- ♦ Twitter: @sthelensashby
- ♦ Website: sthelensashby.net
- ♦ Flagstaff Team: www.flagstaff.org.uk

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You can make donations to the work of St Helen's via our website - [https://
www.sthelensashby.net/Groups/327469/Giving.aspx](https://www.sthelensashby.net/Groups/327469/Giving.aspx)

Editor Writes ...



Over the years I daresay we've all had occasion to look at a particular summertime 'news' story and ask, 'Is that really the most newsworthy event of the day??' But we're accustomed to it and expect it. We arrive at the beginning of August understanding that news channels and newspapers will serve up a 'silly season' – such delights as killer chipmunks, food that looks like Jesus, or, the perennial favourite, the mystery of crop circles. You can imagine editors across the land declaring - Welcome to August, when only the most ludicrous stories will do.

Our own looking-back-at-August's 'silly season' stories include – How to make a penguin out of glass; How to sing with your hands; and how to cause a flurry of excitement on Breedon on the Hill's Facebook page with some beautiful singing. The photographs which tell these stories are on pages 22, 23 and 24. And the answer to 'How to burn down a pub' is on page 20.

We don't have killer chipmunks, but we do have a wonderful birdwatching story from Margaret Jacques on page 12.

We might not have toast images of Jesus, but we do have manacles made of wool as part of activism that looks like crocheting on page 25.

And we may not have crop circles, but the AYFC team are planning to circle round and round Ashby this month – read about their unusual and original ideas on page 27.

But, sadly, August 2021 didn't really obey the silly season rules, what with a mass shooting, an earthquake, ongoing Covid, wildfires ... even the cute animal story of Geronimo the alpaca ended badly. And then there's Afghanistan. For which we pray:

All-loving God, Your hands have fashioned every lovely corner of this treasured planet, and the beautiful land of Afghanistan is as precious as every other place your children call 'home'.

We pray for peace, dignity and freedom for its people

Be their true home to all who have been displaced

Be open arms of loving acceptance to those who fear because of their gender, ethnicity, religious or political views

Be peace to those engaged in armed conflict and those who live within its shadow.

Turn our hearts and minds to your ways of just and gentle peace,

Open our eyes to see you in all acts of compassionate care

Strengthen our hearts to step out in solidarity with your suffering people and Hold us all in your unfailing love.

In the name of Jesus Christ, the peace-giver, we pray. Amen.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's wise words about our response to the tragedy of Afghanistan are to be found on page 6.

Jill Chapman



Revd Mary Writes ...

Dear Friends

Welcome and hospitality are important values for us as Christian communities (and, of course, for many people of other faiths, or no faith). We appreciate the unconditional welcome we have received from God and we long to welcome others in the same spirit. I often end a Facebook post advertising a church service or event by typing 'Everyone welcome', when our churches are open, we have 'Welcome' signs outside our doors and when people come along we give the warmest welcome we can, try to make them feel at home. My heart is always glad when people tell me how welcome they have been made to feel amongst us.

Despite our best efforts, there are people who *don't* feel welcome in some Christian communities - or who don't feel that the *whole* of who they are is welcome. I am thinking especially of people who identify as LGBTQIA; who would either not describe their sexuality as heterosexual, or who do not understand their gender as cisgender. (Someone who is cisgender identifies with the gender assigned to them at birth). Many LGBTQIA people do not feel wholly welcome - and therefore not welcome at all - in some Christian communities because those communities state they are unable to embrace and bless the fullness of who they are. This lack of full welcome is incredibly painful.

The Church of England is currently wrestling with the extent of the welcome it offers and might offer to LGBTQIA people through a process called *Living in Love and Faith*. This process begins with local churches engaging in a study course of that name and, having explored the issues, considering where they stand on questions of inclusion and 'full' welcome. Later, these questions will come to the Church of England's governing body, the General Synod, where a motion on inclusion will be debated and voted upon. (This may well take several years.)

Some of the key questions are:

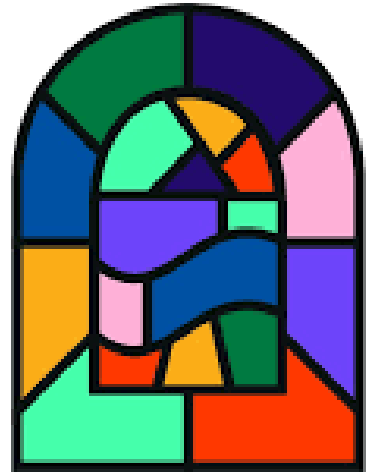
Will the Church of England change its policy and begin to bless same-sex relationships, and to conduct same-sex marriages?

Will the Church of England allow its clergy, in same-sex civil partnerships, to be sexually active?

Will the Church of England allow its clergy to enter into same-sex civil marriages - and same-sex church marriages if these were allowed?

None of these things are permitted currently.

Moving through this process is complex because of the diversity of sincerely held, carefully considered, views of members of the Church of England. All of them want to treat the Bible seriously, but they don't all read the Bible in the same way. All of them want to be sensitive and loving to others, but their understandings of what is loving in this regard is different. All of them want to balance theology, science, social studies and experience, but set the balance in different places. All of them are committed to unity, but have different understandings of where the pursuit of unity needs to give way to upholding what they understand as the truth (and their understandings of that is different).



Just because the process is complex doesn't mean we should shy away from it. And, actually, over lock-down, a group of us from our churches have gathered over fourteen evenings to begin exploring what we think and how we might respond. I write 'begin' because in our final session just a few days ago, we agreed that we still have questions to explore.

More than this, though, we agreed that we need to involve far more people in the conversation, so that as many people as possible have the opportunity to explore these questions of welcome, and how we read the Bible as we explore them. We are thinking about how we widen the conversation and are considering offering teaching in sermons and in further discussion or study groups.

I'd be interested to learn how you respond to what I have written. You might have strong opinions in any direction and I'd love to hear them in response to sermons we preach or in groups we facilitate. I hope you are not indifferent, though. For many of us, one of the most powerful aspects of the *Living in Love and Faith* course has been the videos where Christian people have shared their experience of how their sexuality or gender identity impacts their welcome from the church. These videos have been, for some of us, 'the word made flesh' - an otherwise theoretical discussion (for many of us) given flesh and bones and joy and pain. Some of my own most painful, most fruitful learning, has come from listening to LGBTQIA people. Having listened to them, indifference is not an option.

So - please watch this space about opportunities to engage in these conversations. And perhaps you might like to think about what full welcome looks like - and if a conditional welcome is a welcome at all.

With love
Mary

Chris Lewis

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Leaving Afghanistan - The Archbishop's response

The Archbishop of Canterbury's speech during the House of Lords debate on Afghanistan on 18th August.

My Lords,

I look forward today especially to hearing noble and gallant Lords, diplomats, and others with local knowledge in Afghanistan. We rightly remember the courage, suffering and sacrifice over the last 20 years, and the courage being shown by our ambassador and the service people in Afghanistan at the moment, together with their colleagues and reporters.

When we look back, I remember a cathedral, full for the funeral of a soldier: family and many colleagues silent in dignity, some wounded, mourning their loss.



The failure we face today is not military or diplomatic: they did all they could. It is political. Recovery and hope will come to Afghanistan with us supporting commitment to the neediest and most desperate. We have proven capacities in soft as well as hard power.

We owe an absolute, lavishly generous moral covenant to all those who are

at risk because they served with us in Afghanistan or took seriously our frequently professed commitment to its future, women and girls included. An Afghan refugee, now a UK citizen said to me this week, “families in such times of trouble belong together”. His words are not politics but humanity. This is about morals not numbers. Will the Government confirm that their policy will reflect moral obligation and not be controlled by numbers?

In Pakistan, a country facing huge pressure including from refugees, we must undertake dialogue and support, learning afresh the religious and cultural literacy which is essential to effective work. We must not put any groups there, or in Afghanistan, into a corner where they may be driven to greater extremes. The aid we offer must support dialogue, inspire hope and prepare reconciliation. And that aid must be genuinely additional, not a transfer from other places of need. Is that going to be the case, I ask the Government?

We must renew commitment to freedom of religion and belief everywhere, a point not much mentioned so far. That will count in Pakistan and Afghanistan for Christians and religious communities such as Shia, Hindus, Jains, Ahmadis and Sikhs. A WhatsApp, from a Christian in Afghanistan yesterday, asked for support there and in Pakistan. Memorably, it said, “I am willing to die for Jesus, but I do not want to die forgotten”.

My Lords, this is a very bad time, especially for so many in Afghanistan, and for those who served there. It is a time for prayerful humility – and for us to display generosity, virtue, and courage. Rebuilding our reputation in such ways will give many others hope as well.



Dear St Helens

Thank you for creating and sharing your e-envelope in support of Christian Aid Week. We are delighted to tell you that a total of £342,941 was given through the e-envelope this year.

And £297.50 of this was thanks to the e-envelope you set up on behalf of Ashby De La Zouch St Helen.

You've done an amazing job and your support means so much. Many families are still fighting the climate crisis, but your kind gifts will help them stand strong and look to the future with hope.

Warmest wishes and thank you again,

Sophie Brightwell
Christian Aid Week Manager

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St Helen's Church & Heritage

4 Church Yard, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leics, LE65 1AA

**Hello Heritage
Open Day
Saturday 11th September 2021**

**'Ride & Stride' &
Hidden Nature at St Helen's**

10 am - 4 pm

Come and explore our amazing 15th Century church.
Mouse trail around the church. Hidden Nature trail outside.

Opportunity to see our Community Heritage Centre
calligraphy exhibition and to picnic in the garden.

Free Guided Tours at 10.30 am, 12 noon & 2 pm

Refreshments available in Church.

Are you a church-crawler?

If, like me, in better times you enjoy visiting churches – the older the better – you will have noticed that most have been closed for months, for understandable reasons. Fortunately many – though sadly not all - have now reopened. I recently revisited the Churches Conservation Trust church at Stretton En Le Field, a medieval church with one of the most complete post reformation interiors. There's a nice sundial on the outside, too, though not as good as the one at Helen's!

As I was leaving, having soaked up the atmosphere and enjoyed the peace, I noticed a poem on CCT headed paper. I don't think it was written for St Michael's, which has no angels in the roof or marble statues to damage. The reference to poppy heads refers to medieval bench ends, and there are none there either (go to Packington to see what they look like). But it speaks of the history of our thousands of ancient English parish churches and touched something in my soul. I hope you enjoy it too.

Defeated? A Sonnet to Empty Churches

Come on. You lot survived worse things:
Black Death, Plague and two World wars,
The Reformation (Cromwell clipped the wings
Of angels in the roof); and there are scars
On ancient faces, marble noses cropped
And poppy heads beheaded like the king;
And modern vandals too. But you've not stopped
Your ageless plain ability to sing
Of something quite indifferent to the now;
Built with a trusting love and potent faith
You stand there still in testament to how
Beauty is not a wafted fleeting wraith,
A ghost which chance can whimsically destroy;
You can be filled, if not by faith, with joy.

Anon, June 2020.



Interior of St Michael's, Stretton



Modern bench end at Holy Rood, Packington. There are a number of medieval bench ends in the church.

Anne Heaton



For news and views in North West Leicestershire read your local newspaper

Ashby Times

on sale every Thursday at your local newsagent

Telephone:

01530 813101

email:

editor@ashbytimes.com
advertising@ashbytimes.com

Birdwatching!

Twenty years ago I had breast cancer and so I live with a body damaged by cancer and by the treatment and, then of course, as we go on, age kicks in as well. Post cancer, and after 15 years working flat out I realised that I could not continue to work at that pace until I retired at 67, so, with the Doctor's support I retired at 63. But then what does someone do, aged 63, who has never sat still and whose mind whirls round and round and plans and prepares for every eventuality all the time? Then I discovered birdwatching! Don't get me wrong, I'm no twitcher. Even after 5 years, birds are still mostly "little brown things" or "little pretty things". But I want to share with you a couple of experiences from this summer.

We often go to the Lincolnshire coast and have taken to visiting one of our National Nature Reserves, Rimac, in the evening. Almost every time we have been this Summer we have watched two or sometimes three Marsh Harriers hunting for their supper, often along with a Barn Owl as well. These birds are spectacular, and incredibly beautiful. You don't even need binoculars to see and experience them or a bird hide to hide in. In the evening sunlight they glow all shades of brown and dance across the sky.

We also spent some time in Suffolk to go to RSPB Minsmere to see the Bitterns. So there we sat in the dark of a bird hide – no Bitterns – eventually we gave up. But then lady in the next caravan to us came back from Minsmere very excited having found the Bitterns and taken some very good photos of them. So, the day after, back we went to Minsmere to sit in the dark in a bird hide. Again, no Bitterns. We waited. We watched. We waited. We looked at our watches. But still no Bitterns. But just as we were about to give up the reed bed gave a slight twitch and a head silently emerged and had a look round. Apparently having liked what it had seen the Bittern then emerged stealthily from the reeds. They are the most elegant of birds! It almost glided into view and then tiptoed daintily and silently through the shallow water directly in front of the hide. In fact, waiting and watching even longer we actually saw three Bitterns and have the photos to prove it.



The reason for sharing all this is that it seems to me that looking for God and his work in the world is sometimes like birdwatching. Sometimes God feels very close. You can see and feel his beautiful influence in your lives and in the world quite clearly like watching Marsh Harriers.

But sometimes, and especially when the chips are down, God's presence is

more hidden and his work carried out stealthily and in stillness and silence. On these occasions it's easy to think God is not there at all and after waiting a bit, give up and loose faith But like the Bitterns, he is! Sometimes we have to wait to find him. But never give up, because know this. He loves YOU. He has YOUR name written on his hands and he knows even the hairs on YOUR head. He promised to be with YOU till the end of time and even when you feel alone he is there working away at finding a way forward that is best for you.

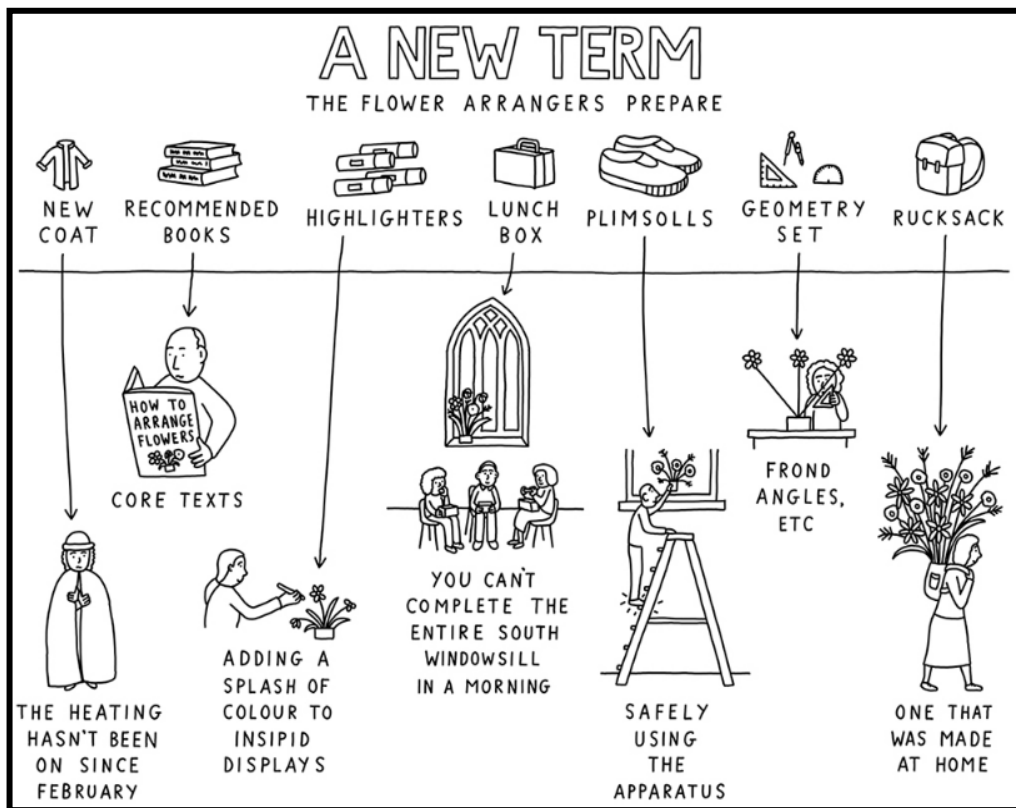
I hope and pray that as Autumn approaches you will find, and delight, in the God that is often visible and doing great and lovely things in the world, but also that you sense his presence even when the chips are down and he is hidden and find re-assurance that he is silently working away behind the scenes just for you and the world he loves. When the time is right he will certainly come into your view again.

With love
Revd. Margaret

*Photo is Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*, Far Ings, North Lincolnshire

Source <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lincsbirder/10839969015>

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Giving in response to grace

Friday was a big day in our life together; a day when we gathered together from across our churches to say goodbye to our sister Val Dawson. It comes after eighteen months of many such goodbyes, when we have felt real loss at the death of these beloved ones, yet such thankfulness, too, for the colour and love they have shared with us.

One of those was Suzanne Edwards, who worshipped at St Helen's. She will be remembered for her gentleness, her humour, her faithfulness, her musicianship - and for giving our group of churches our name, for suggesting we be called the 'Flagstaff Family of Churches'.

As we think about how we contribute financially to our life together, reminding ourselves that we are a Family is a good place to start. I'll get to that in a minute, but first, I just want to say thank you for all you already give, not just financially, but also in terms of time, energy and skills.

As I was pulling this sermon together yesterday, the tower captain at Coleorton phoned me. We had a knotty issue we needed to try and unravel, and he took time out of his weekend to talk it over with me. But he also mentioned how he'd been spending hours making the bell-ringing chamber Covid-safe and helping his ringers feel confident about returning; how, in deference to our neighbours, he was exploring sound-proofing parts of the tower. I had no idea that Colin was doing any of that and yet he was, working away faithfully, unseen. There are many 'Colins' across the Flagstaff Family, each playing their part, often without anyone realising how much they're giving. This is how family life works - with everyone being 'Colin', in the way that God calls them. Thank you so much.

--

So back to this idea of 'family' and the lens it offers as we consider our financial giving to our churches. This domestic picture of our life together is used in the Bible where, in his letter to the Ephesians, Paul describes himself and his fellow Christians as 'members of the household of God' (2.19).

So, just for a moment, think about your own family, your own household, and how you manage your financial affairs. I imagine that, however rough and ready, you have a budget: you know how much you've got coming in, and how much you've got going out - and how much you might have left over for treats or emergencies. Sometimes, when the roof springs a leak or when a red-letter day comes along, you make cut-backs in other areas of your life to pay for this unexpected sorrow or joy.

It's the same for *this* family, for our household of faith. We have costs we have to meet: like a domestic home, running costs of insurance, repairs, heating, lighting and cleaning; uniquely for a household of faith, costs of *ministry* - of people like me, of Readers like Judith and Sue, of musicians like Andrew and the choir - and costs of *mission* - of reaching out beyond ourselves with the good news of God's grace.

To meet these costs we have just four or five income streams: the fees from weddings and funerals - but, of course, the number of these vary from year to year and so can't be relied upon; legacies bequeathed to us; grants given to us for specific purposes; at St Helen's, rental from our Community Heritage Centre and in all our churches giving from members of the congregation. That's it.

The pandemic has squeezed many of these income streams: in an eighteen month period when life has been so restricted, our income from weddings, funerals, rentals, and from cash giving on Sundays has nose-dived. As for so many other organisations, balancing the books has become really difficult.

The pandemic may have had a financial impact on your own household, too. If you run a business, or work a zero-hours contract, you may have had significant financial loss. If you've been furloughed at 60% you may have had to tighten your belts considerably. But if your disposable income, normally used for coffee, meals out, holidays, has not been so disposable because you've been confined to barracks, you may have made real savings.

Every circumstance is different. In the light of the last eighteen months, some of you may be able to give less to our Family of Churches. I understand - thank you for all you give. Some of you may have to hold steady. I understand. Thank you for all you give. But some of you may be able to offer more. Thank you for all you give.

If you do feel prompted to make a change in how you give, here is what can really help us, if it fits in with your circumstances: firstly, planned, regular giving - perhaps by Standing Order or Direct Debit - so that we can shape our budget around a predictable income; secondly, at Coleorton and St Helen's, joining the Parish Giving Scheme, where Gift Aid is managed for us, and paid to us each month as another predictable income stream, and where there is an option to increase giving annually by inflation so that you giving keeps pace with the cost of living.

--

I've said quite a lot about the mechanics of giving, about the pragmatism which lies behind it, but there is more to Christian giving than this. This is not just about keeping the show on the road, or supporting a worthy

organisation, like the National Trust or the RSPCA. No, this giving is shaped by response and by desire.

Today's Bible readings were a wonderful litany, weren't they, of all the blessings we receive from God: his responsiveness to our prayers; his rescue of us; his protection around us; his provision for us; his closeness to us, especially in our distress; his preservation of us; his gift to us of eternal life. We have been given these priceless, invaluable blessings - and our giving is our response. As we sometimes sing 'Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small. Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all'. We give in gratitude for all we have been given. We give in response to grace.

This is why I give: because God knows me through-and-through and, knowing me, loves me perfectly whilst calling me to become more and more like Jesus; because God has made me new after decisions I made in the past that were not for my flourishing; because God sent his Son to die for me and, through that death, to win me everlasting life; because on a day like Friday I can be full of hope for a sister of faith, even in my sadness; because God is with me, even when I am all alone; because God is for me, even if the whole world turns against me. I give in response to all I have been given.

And I give in order that others might know such goodness too. When Jesus asks his disciples if they are going to leave him like so many others have done, Peter replies, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life' (John 6.68).

Jesus has the words of eternal life. Isn't that staggering? - through him we have heard the words of eternal life and have been entrusted with them. We give for the mission and ministry of the church that others may hear the words of eternal life and be transformed by them.

--

If this pandemic has taught us anything it is perhaps that the things that are most valuable are those things that money just can't buy: family, friends, love, company, hugs, laughter, breathing fresh air.

Might we take this learning into our reconsideration of our financial giving to our Flagstaff Family of Churches? - that when we have provided for what we *need*, there may not be many things that we *want* that compare with offering to others, within the household of God, family, friends, love, company, hugs, laughter and the fresh air of eternal life. Amen.

Rev'd. Mary

A Simple Message?

“Love one another” (John 13:34)

“Love one another” (John 13:35)

“Love one another” (John 15:12)

“Love one another” (John 15:17)

“Love one another” (Rom 12:10)

“Love one another” (1 Thess 3:12)

“Love one another” (1 Peter 1:22)

“Love one another” (1 John 3:11)

“Love one another” (1 John 3:23)

“Love one another” (1 John 4:7)

“Love one another” (1 John 4:11)

“Love one another” (1 John 4:12)

“Love one another” (2 John 5)

Our Worship



We worship together on-line via Facebook on the Flagstaff Family of Churches' page.

You can catch up with our services later, on the St Helen's Church website (www.sthelensashby.net), simply by clicking on the relevant date on the Online Services and Readings page, under the Church Life tab.

Service Pattern

- All-Age Service - First Sunday of the month
10.30am
- Holy Communion - Second, third and fourth Sundays of the month
10.30am
Within the St Helen's church building & on-line
- Holy Communion within others of our Flagstaff Family of Churches' buildings - Sunday afternoons
4.00pm
1st Sunday:
Isley Walton
2nd Sunday:
Coleorton
3rd Sunday:
Staunton Harold
4th Sunday:
Breedon

Book places for Sunday services by emailing sthelensashby@gmail.com

- Holy Communion - Wednesdays 10am
Within the St Helen's church building & on-line
- Parish Prayers - Saturdays 9.30am
Within the St Helen's church building

Flagstaff on Facebook

Facebook lets us know what engagement there has been each month for the Flagstaff Family of Churches Facebook page. The chart opposite is August's

Published	Post	Type	Reach	Engagement
29/08/2021 10:17	 The Flagstaff Family of Churches was live.		272 	135 44 
29/08/2021 08:15	 All our churches are worshipping together today, at 10.30am at		229 	5 3 
27/08/2021 19:34	 Church Tours		131 	13 1 
25/08/2021 09:52	 The Flagstaff Family of Churches was live.		155 	46 11 
22/08/2021 10:21	 The Flagstaff Family of Churches was live.		213 	53 95 
20/08/2021 11:20	 The Flagstaff Family of Churches was live.		230 	185 19 
20/08/2021 07:53	 Today at midday we have the huge privilege of hosting Val Dawson's		1.2K 	88 22 
17/08/2021 07:53	 As Revd Mary continues to recover from emergency dental surgery and		401 	59 14 
15/08/2021 10:26	 The Flagstaff Family of Churches was live.		260 	93 74 
11/08/2021 09:54	 The Flagstaff Family of Churches was live.		158 	38 14 
08/08/2021 10:24	 The Flagstaff Family of Churches was live.		197 	74 81 
04/08/2021 09:57	 The Flagstaff Family of Churches was live.		148 	45 8 
01/08/2021 12:56	 Caroline, Ruth and James did a brilliant reading at our service this		190 	9 13 
01/08/2021 10:25	 The Flagstaff Family of Churches was live.		185 	60 34 
01/08/2021 08:51	 It's a little bit damp this morning, so we'll be inside this morning for our		152 	3 0 

Ashby's Pub Disasters

There is well-known folk song about a pub called The Old Dun Cow which caught fire. It is a comedic song which makes fun of the event but in the days of thatched rooves, open fires, candles and oil lamps, the real thing could easily happen and, of course, it would be far from funny.

The Bulls Head in Ashby, probably our oldest pub, lost most of its roof timbers in a fire in about 1860. No further details on that event are to hand but the Bulls Head did suffer a disaster of another kind later in the 19th century. Strong winds were experienced across the country on Friday 10th December 1897. A writer in Loughborough recorded in the Leicester Journal that "the wind seems intent on blowing a gale and a half, despite which the rain is falling in such torrents as can gladden only the heart of a chairman of a Water Committee." At some point during the day, the gable roof blew off the Bulls Head and destroyed the Hastings Family heraldic device which until then had adorned the front of the pub. It was never replaced.



High winds caused a pub disaster of a different kind in Ashby in April 1921. The Flaxdressers pub in Wood Street caught fire. This pub no longer exists but it stood opposite the entrance to Upper Church Street where the traffic lights now are. It was a fairly long low building with a thatched roof. Next to the wall of the pub was a telegraph pole which needed attention. The engineer at the top of the pole called for a soldering iron and this was winched up to him on a rope and pulley. The wind caught it and blew it onto the thatch which started the disastrous fire. At that time, the town's fire



station was in Brook Street, where the Claridge Place flats now stand. The bell from the fire station is still there, mounted in a courtyard in the centre of the complex. In those days, the fire tender was horse drawn and the horses, named Dolly and Tom, were kept in a field off Nottingham Road so we can imagine that the response to the fire alarm wasn't all that swift! The pub was burnt down and was so badly damaged that it had to be completely demolished. The landlord at the time, William Cracknell, kept on trading from an ex-army hut in the carpark so that he wouldn't lose his licence. The pub was eventually rebuilt in a very different style from the original. It went through several name changes and changes of ownership during the subsequent decades of the 20th century (Ashby Court, The Saffron Blue Restaurant to name but two) and is now a private house.

Although not a fire, The Bowling Green pub suffered an equally alarming disaster in the evening of Boxing Day 1852. A group of Wesleyan Reformers was meeting for public worship in a large room over the brewhouse of the pub. A preacher from Burton-upon-Trent was to speak and this had attracted a large crowd. Half way through the service a loud crack was heard and the floor immediately gave way, taking the congregation with it into the brewhouse below. A small portion of the floor at each end of the room remained in place so that the preacher and a few other people remained where they were. The Leicester Chronicle of the following Saturday described the scene thus:

“As may be easily imagined, the alarm was excessive, and the shrieks and cries of the people perfectly appalling. Mr. Luke Severn, auctioneer was amongst those who kept their footing upon the unfallen portion of the floor, and he endeavoured to pacify the terrified sufferers, and was long and actively engaged in extricating them from the perilous situation. Providentially, no bones were broken, or any person dangerously injured; many received severe contusions, and painful abrasions of the skin, with sundry bumps and scratches, as well as their clothes being torn and otherwise injured. Those who were considered to be the most hurt, were females, but they are understood to be now doing well. The floor was of plaster (itself a very ponderous material) and the beams have doubtless been rotted by the steam arising from the frequent brewing operations below, which have been continued many years.”

Wendy Freer

Photographs courtesy of Ashby de la Zouch Museum



A free phone line of hymns,
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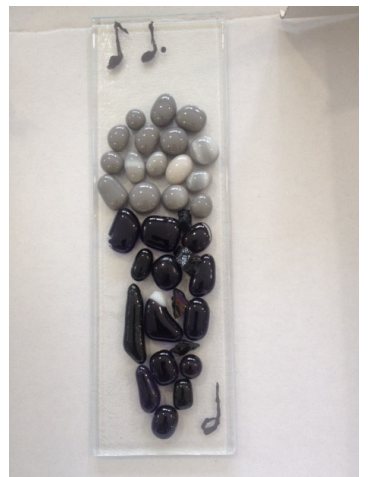
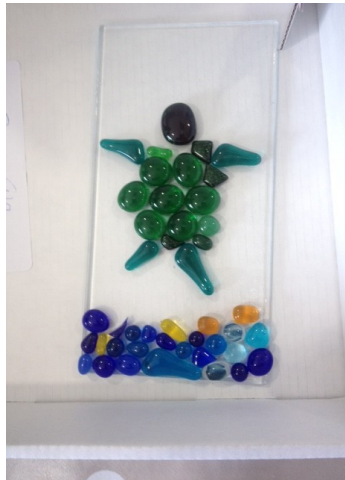
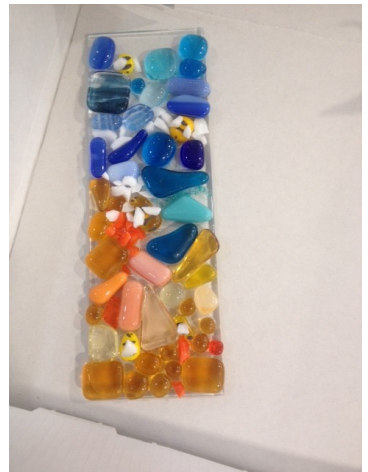
**THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND**

From the Albums ...

Glass Workshop

Summer holiday activities for children returned to the Heritage Centre with a very successful Glass Workshop. Helen Smith and Adrienne Sedgman supported glass artist Carla Harris to deliver it.

At the end of the session Carla took the children's work away to be fired and it's now been returned to them.



Music Makaton

Our Music Makaton Summer Event went extremely well and was enjoyed by all those attending - adults and children.

We started off by discussing what the Makaton Language Programme is and who uses it. Those attending then learnt about 40 Signs, and they were all so good at recalling them which was Brilliant!

Then we practiced the Signs for our Gospel Medley, "Swing Low Sweet Chariot, When All the Saints go Marching in and We Can Sing and We Can Dance". The music was then introduced and We all Sung and Danced in true Medley Style.

Finally all those attending were awarded their Makaton Taster Certificate.

A Great day was had by All! So much so that we're looking at holding another event in the School October Week.

Alison Cross



Our 5th Sunday Service at Breedon on the Hill



Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Mothers' Union in Bristol marks Anti-Slavery Day

To mark Anti-Slavery Day 2021, the Mothers' Union in Bristol is working with the Clewer Initiative to make 951 chain links to represent the 951 unseen victims of modern slavery in the city. The Clewer Initiative is a 3 year project to enable Church of England dioceses and wider church networks to raise awareness of modern slavery, identify victims and to help provide victim support and care. Using the national figures about the scale of modern slavery in the UK and combining it with the population of Bristol, the team calculated the potential number of victims in Bristol.

Aurea Hart, Diocesan President of the Bristol MU, was inspired by an article in the Clewer Initiative's May Newsletter on craftivism. Initially the idea was to crochet dozens of chain keyrings to leave around Bristol for people to find and take home. This developed into the idea of creating a giant chain of crocheted links that reflected the number of modern slavery victims in Bristol.



Aurea Hart explains: 'I am excited about this idea because it will help bring to life this horrific statistic. It is also a practical way that the Mothers' Union can get involved in raising awareness of modern slavery across the city during Covid times when many of our members are not able to get to big events or network widely. This craft project is something new for us, but we believe it could have a big impact, both as we crochet and reflect on the plight of modern slavery victims, and when the final chain is displayed.'

The deadline for the chain links is early October. They will be linked together in time for a photo call at Bristol Cathedral, in the lead up to Anti-Slavery Day. It is hoped that this eye-catching stunt will help people understand the scale of this problem in the present day.

If you would like to get involved by crocheting some giant links to send to the team in Bristol, please get in touch (before you start crafting) via clewerinitiative@churchofengland.org for more information.

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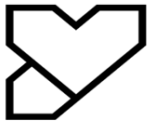
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Ashby
**YOUTH
FOR CHRIST**

Football

At the beginning of August I enjoyed the privilege of attending the Christening of the son of one of the footy lads. He hasn't been to Wednesday sessions for a while but we keep in touch. Chatting with him almost invariably proves to be a humbling, joyful experience. Humbling because when it comes to his development my own skills and efforts appear to be singularly ineffective. Joyful because my clumsiness doesn't seem to get in the way of God's nurture of him, and it seems that my presence and willingness are enjoyed regardless. I get the impression he and God feel rather like I do when my 17 month old daughter helps me with something.

Our first Wednesday session of August began cosily (3 attendees at kick off time). Then grew to 8 after I spotted a young man I knew and invited him and his friends to join us. It grew further as some more of his chums passed and were recruited and then shrank to a 3 a-side final 10 minutes after delays to the game saw me disappearing into the bosom of a tree for several minutes to search for an escaped ball.

For some football on Wednesdays is an important rhythm and when they can't make it they let me know. For others their attendance will depend on what else they and their friends are doing on a given Wednesday. For others it will depend on them remembering football's on and on how they're feeling. For others it will depend on their work finishing on time. For others it will depend on them happening across us as we play.

The benefit of Football being optional is that everyone there has chosen to be there. Their having chosen to come seems to be an important thing to them. Many of them believe that they have few choices and many of the choices they do make seem to them to be hardly a choice - more a way of dodging the consequences of not bowing to powers much greater than them.

Please pray that whoever shows up will be blessed by God's word and his Spirit and that they would increase in their knowledge of the Father's love for them through his son Jesus.

Please pray that they will know that the greatest decision before them is whether to surrender to God and receive his gift of rescue and forever with him. Pray they would recognise that to ignore / resist this offer just to gain a sense of independence and power is comparable to declining the offer of a winning lottery ticket just to prove that their own wisdom and resources are

enough for them.

At the beginning of September I am planning to take out 3 of our football regulars for an afternoon rock climbing in which they have expressed interest. Please pray that in this environment which is more conducive (than a football game) to conversation we will get to chat about some of the challenges that they are facing. Pray they would know plenty of encouragement, affirmation and sense of achievement - all of which seem in short supply in their regular worlds.

Thanks
Vernon

An Exciting Opportunity with AYFC

How would you like to complete a journey of 100 kilometres around Ashby? Keep reading. Go on.

Between September 25th and October 25th Ashby Youth for Christ are giving folk the opportunity to complete a 10 km circuit of Ashby, 10 times. It can be done in whatever size chunks works for you - maybe 3 or so kilometres a day, maybe as a team completing 1 lap each. You can do it whenever is convenient for you and utilising whatever mode of transport you can legally use on pavements. The route is small wheel friendly and has already been



completed by push chair, scooter, roller skates, wheelchair, wheelbarrow, and roller blades, Whatever works for you.

We'll provide the 10km route card. This comes with guidance for each leg of the journey together with points of interests and edifying and / or silly questions to keep you going. We can also provide information for prayer topics.

There is no cost to take part in this event, but if you would like to make a donation or you would like to raise sponsor money we are happy to provide any information required for this, however we are keen to see as many people as possible walking and praying for Ashby.

We are having a special launch day on the 25th September when teams from Ashby Youth For Christ will be completing a total of 100km afloat along the River Trent. This will be either on stand up paddleboards or kayaks.

We are able to offer a number of supporters the opportunity to travel along the River Trent with us, at the cost of £20 per person. All equipment will be provided, and instruction will be given. We are planning to have two sessions on 25th September, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Please let us know as soon as possible if you would like to be a part of this as we have a limited number of spaces available.

Any money raised from the event will go towards work with teenage girls in Ashby, the work supports girls in developing a positive self esteem and emotional well being.

If you would like to take part in the event or to sponsor the team please email helen.davis@yfc.co.uk



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those who limp and those who mourn
and those wounded by war;
refugees, asylum-seekers and foreigners of all kinds,
citizens of different colour from yourself,
women bishops (yes, there are a few!)
and priests who may be struggling,
leaders who are worn out, clapped out, burnt out,
lesbian and gay couples, even singles,
the wealthy who are trying to get through the eye of a needle,
and the poor who are struggling to maintain their dignity,
the emotionally deprived and harmed,
people of other faiths or of none,
fundamentalists and liberals,
radicals and traditionalists;
those who have failed to love
and those who are afraid to receive love;
those rejected by their ministers and their churches;
those who have broken their promises,
those bowed down with burdens,
those who teeter on the brink of breakdown;
those for whom the grip of alcohol or work, drugs or sex,
gambling or unnamed powers, is getting stronger
and those for whom the grip is loosening,
those struggling with faith and doubt,
and goodness knows how many others...
indeed, anyone who is like those Jesus mixed with.

*This is not a private club
but a public space open to all people of goodwill.
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to show the unconditional love of God at all times,
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Quotes for the Month

'We have overcome, by the blood of the lamb'

Sung by the Fijian Rugby Sevens team after receiving gold medals at Tokyo 2020, July 30th

'Very disappointed that my plan to call our stewardship campaign "Give, Laugh, Love" was vetoed by people with actual taste.'

Fr Eddie Green, Twitter, Aug 4th

'Liturgy is the divine drama where ... we all become the players in God's salvation drama.'

Revd Neil Thompson, Church Times, August 6th

'When the different nations of the United Kingdom find themselves pitched against each other on the sports field we could belt out our English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish anthems. Then sing our national anthem together. And love our neighbour.'

Most Rev Stephen Cottrell, Daily Telegraph, August 6th

'In Christ there are no metropolitan elites, no country bumpkins ... no English or Scottish or British. There are no rich or poor, male or female, trans or cis.
Artsyhonker Twitter August 7th

'Can we apply the golden rule to political discussion?'
Presiding bishop Michael Curry, Retweet GR 2020, Twitter, August 7th

'In six days God created heaven and earth and on the seventh day while he rested his cat walked over the keyboard, long story short, here we are.'
Paul Bassett Davies, Twitter, August 8th

'Actual reality is the only place where actual joy is to be found. If joy is deferred until a preferred future comes about we set ourselves up for despair. But if there is hope in THIS day. Joy in THIS reality. This Life. This body. This heart. - then certainly we can prevail.'
Revd Nadia Bolz-Weber, <https://thecorners.substack.com/>, August 11th

'The current trajectory of our church is a huge mistake ... it is time to rally the troops'
Former Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey, Daily Telegraph, August 14th

'We must forget all the words we love so much ... Words bend and break under the strain of trying to express what lies deepest in our being.'
Digital nun, How do we Pray about Afghanistan?, www.ibenedictines.org, August 16th

'Does God measure our prayer to see how much we mean it?'
Pastor Gary Cadge, Christian Misfit Community, August 17th

'Despite the tragedy unfolding in Afghanistan, the post-Christian West is not at all short on ideas, arguments, insults, ideologies, stratagems, conflicts or world-saving machines. But it is very short on saints.'
Paul Kingsnorth, The West has lost its virtue, Unherd.com, August 17th

'Being vaccinated with vaccines authorised by the competent authorities is an act of love.'
The Pope, August 18th

'There's a big tussle going on for the soul of the Church of England, between the bishops and the managers on one side and the parishes and ordinary church-goers on the other.'
Allison Pearson, Planet Normal (Telegraph) podcast, August 19th

'The old boring parish of the C of E is one of the most important institutions in this country ... it is where God Almighty, the eternal, meets the absolutely every day - the 2 things come into contact with each other.'
Giles Fraser interviewed by Allison Pearson, Planet Normal podcast, August 19th


'Neighbour is not a geographic term. It's a moral concept.'
Progressive Christianity, Instagram, August 24th

'We've come up with a good tag-line for the Church of England this evening - "Flabby but muddling through."
Revd. Mary, Living in Love & Faith course, August 25th

'The first thing you notice when you hear scripture read out loud really well, by an actor ... Is that it's actually funny ... If you hear large portions of it read there will be lots of jokes.'
Author James Cary, The Church Times podcast, August 26th

'Thou shalt not Covid thy neighbour's life.'
The God Article, Facebook, August 26th

'One of the joys of being a Christian, and one of the things that's embedded right into the depths of Scripture is that we're all given different gifts and different roles to play. So I feel that I am called by God, to be an activist in this way.'
Kate Chesterman of Christian Climate Action, re protesting with Extinction Rebellion, Aug 27th



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