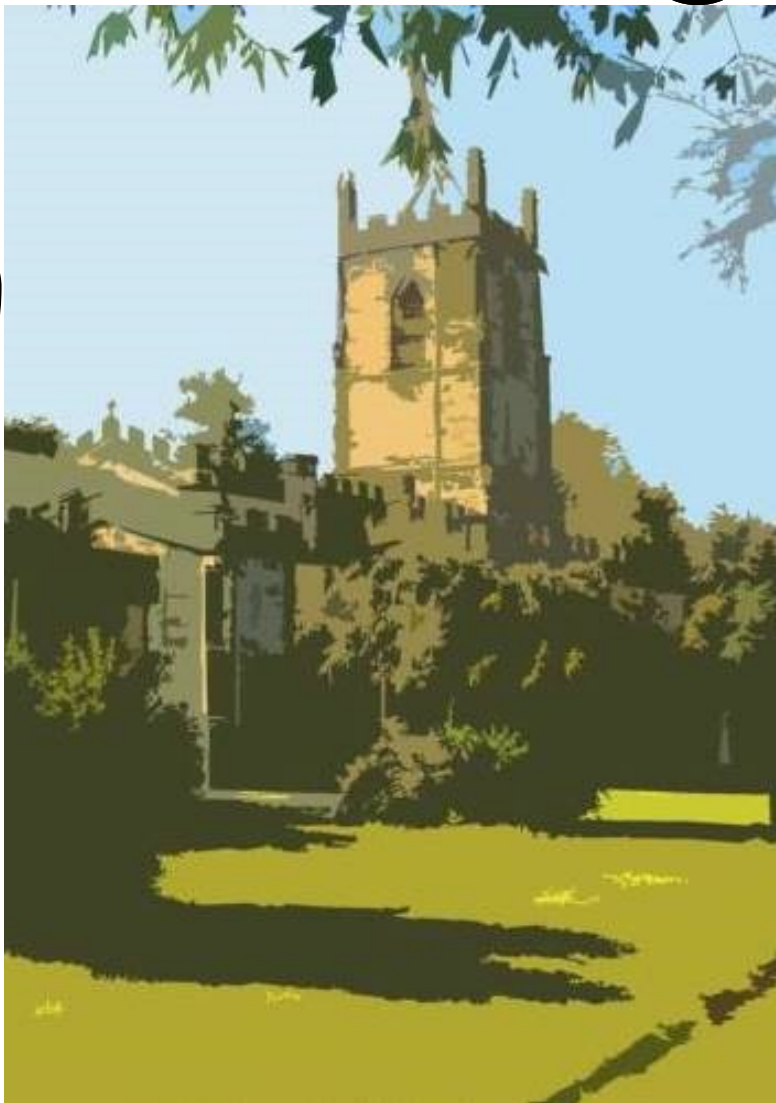


St Helen's Magazine

July 2023

50p



St Helen's Church

Ashby-de-la-Zouch



Loving God, loving others, loving the world

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

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Giving

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

Editor Writes ...

A couple of art auctions hit the headlines last month. At Sotheby's in London a painting by Austrian artist Gustav Klimt, *Lady with a Fan*, sold for £85.3 million making it the most expensive artwork ever auctioned in Europe. And, at an on-line auction house called Joopiter, a tiny Louis Vuitton handbag, a work of art by a New York art collective, and measuring less than 0.03 inches wide, sold for £48 thousand pounds. The handbag was made on a 3D printer, and to see the LV monogram requires a microscope.



I find it hard to get my head round how works of art, no matter how beautiful or accomplished, can be worth so much money. But then, there are lots of things I can't comprehend. And it's a comfort, really, because if there is so much everyday stuff I can't fathom it feels ok that I can't understand faith stuff either. I mean, how can anyone fully grasp how wide, how long, how high and how deep God's love is for us. How can any words describe such love, or any minds fully understand? It's a challenge!

I wouldn't say I have a brain for maths either. If I did I might try to work out if, inch for inch, these two artworks are about the same price. For those of you who do like to play with numbers, the painting is 39.4 in × 39.4 in.

That sum is just the first of several challenges outlined in this month's magazine: Over the page Revd Sue looks at keeping the Sabbath; on page 5 Bishop Saju asks how we find satisfaction; on page 7 Alan Cross reminds us how much there is to do in the garden in July; I've written about the difficulties of downsizing on page 8; on page 13 there is helpful insight into how testing life is for asylum seekers; and on page 22, in our Do You Know About series, the PRG tell us about themselves and set a task. Thankfully the articles have plenty of answers and solutions too.

For me, the challenge of fitting everything neatly into a magazine each month ended with June's magazine, as Emily and I have produced this one together. The challenge of writing an editorial stops now, although I shall continue to flex my writing muscle with the piece I do for *Ashby Life*.

One final 'editor-fail' before I go - I couldn't find any spare space to tell you about Reverend Stewart Betts being licensed on 2nd October at 7.30pm to be Team Rector in the Emmanuel Group Northampton, or about Revd John Dawson's wing walking for charity! Now that's a challenge!

Jill Chapman .


There will be no magazine in August, and Emily takes over for September's edition.



Revd Sue Field Writes ...

Dear Friends,

We are now approaching the summer holiday season and, as some things take a bit of a break, we, hopefully, can take time to rest and to reflect, to catch up with those tasks that have remained on our 'to do' lists for months whether that be cleaning out cupboards, catching up with friends we have been promising to meet all year or just trying to have a slower rhythm of life.

As we read the Gospels and stories about the life of Jesus, we get the impression of a very busy ministry with lots of demands on Jesus, but one thing we don't always emphasise is that he regularly took time out, away from the crowds and even from his disciples, to spend time with his Father in prayer and stillness.

The idea of sabbath is built into the creation story – God rested on the seventh day – and it still is followed strictly by many members of the Jewish community. I remember visiting Jerusalem 8 years ago and being told that it was very dangerous to walk through certain places on the sabbath because of the way in which the law about sabbath was interpreted. Whilst we wouldn't go that far, I do wonder, now that very few things are closed on a Sunday and we can remain connected via our smart phones, whether we have lost something that is not only good for our life of faith but also for us as humans – the ability to switch off, to rest and to pray without distraction.

A few years ago, I confessed to the then Archdeacon of Leicester at a Quiet Day, that I was struggling to keep my day off each week and, far from getting any sympathy, I was asked robustly whether I thought I was more important than God because even God took a day off! That stopped me in my tracks and made me think a bit more deeply about sabbath.

The keeping of the sabbath is enshrined in Jewish law – remember the sabbath day and keep it holy – is what the fourth commandment tells us. We know that Jesus ran into conflict with the Pharisees because he healed people on the sabbath so it is the principle of having a sabbath day that is important. If we live all of our lives in the fast lane without proper times of rest and of prayer, we become like the fruitless branches on the vine that Jesus talks about in John Chapter 15.

Proper times of rest are essential for us to flourish as human beings for they allow re-creation to happen. That may not mean we do nothing but the point is that we consciously do things that allow us to be re-created and refreshed. We all need those times when we are not driven but instead are

relaxing and doing things that nurture us.

Sabbath is also important for us as Christians as it allows us to spend quality time with God. When we carve out that sabbath time, we can be free from distractions, we can rest in God's presence and we are then better disposed to listen to God attentively rather than always being aware of what we need to do next.

My prayer is that over the next couple of months or so, we may all get times of sabbath – times when we can rest, relax, enjoy the beauty of God's creation and be caught up with joy and wonder as we dwell in His presence and are fed by Him.

With my prayers and best wishes

Sue

Bishop Saju's sermon from the installation of Rev. Sue

On the 6th of May 1965 Mick Jagger sang this song for the first time and it went like this:

*I can't get no satisfaction,
I can't get no satisfaction
'Cause I try and I try and I try and I try
I can't get no,
I can't get no*

58 years on Mick is singing the same old song. The last I heard him was in Chicago, after his heart surgery... he was singing

*I can't get no satisfaction,
'Cause I try and I try and I try and I try*

Do you see Mick's problem? You see, this is not just Mick Jagger's problem. This is all our problem. How do we explain the yearnings of the human heart? How do you make sense of the longings of the soul? What do we make of our restlessness? I wonder with Bruce Springsteen if "everybody has a hungry heart"? We all search for home.

We might defines it parameters differently, but human beings look for a place where:

identity is cultivated,
purpose is found,
meaning is framed,
belonging is nurtured
and where seeds of destiny is sown.

I have lived ½ my life in South India and ½ my life here in England and I am

sometimes homesick! When I first came to England everything seemed strange to me... the English 'reserve', 'politeness', 'weather-talk', 'queuing', 'tea-drinking' - I am having a terrible day... lets put the kettle on... how strange!

Then you have the passive aggression (it took me 15 years to understand passive aggression!) so when the English say, — “with the greatest respect” what the English mean is: — ‘you are an idiot!’ "Very interesting" means ‘utter nonsense’ "That is a brave proposal" means ‘I have never heard anything more insane in my life!’ “I’m sure it is my fault” actually means “It is your fault...”

Then one day in 2001, I discovered the shipping forecast!!! Is there anything more boring on earth than this - it gives you sea sickness by listening to it! Don't listen to it while driving, or operating heavy machinery.

Yet, despite all this, I love the English. I love the English so much I married one! You know why, I found myself being at home with her. We all search for home. Searching for home is not just the experience of people who move from one part of the world to another or being displaced.

Walter Bruggeman wrote:

“The sense of being lost, displaced, and homeless is pervasive in contemporary culture. The yearning to belong somewhere, to have a home, to be in a safe place, is a deep and moving pursuit. Loss of place and yearning for place are dominant images... We in America (Britain!) have become a "nation of strangers"; very mobile and highly rootless...

Bruggeman goes on to say something fascinating:

Remarkably, the same sense of loss and the same yearning for place are much in evidence among those whom the world perceives as being well rooted and belonging, the white middle class at the peak of success and productivity. Those whom we imagine to be secure and invested in our time experience profound dislocation and we are, young and old, rich and poor, black and white “as having everything, and yet possessing nothing” (see 2 Cor. 6:1) as Paul put it.

As we think of location/ home we find God has a location too. Consider our reading - **Behold, the tabernacle of God is with human beings. Behold, the Home of God is with Humans!** This is the golden thread that runs through the pages of Scriptures.

Creation
Tabernacle
Temple
Incarnation
New Creation

Is the story of the **Home of God with Humans!** In our reading it is as if John is saying, when all things considered, as we home in, when scriptures reach its climactic crescendo, here at the final consummation of the world in the creation of a new heaven and new earth, when all things are made new, when death is bought to nothing, and mourning and crying is no more- what we have is a home! This home is the home of God. This home is a home with human beings. I wonder: if our search for home with its unique parameters and bewilderments is found in the person of God who tabernacles among us.

You can't help but think- if our culture's quest for happiness, pleasure, elation, euphoria, ecstasy and thrill is actually a quest for home.

St Augustine: *"Lord you have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until it finds its rest in you"*. And the source of rest in this passage is the person of Jesus: **Alpha and Omega, the beginning, and the end. Jesus Christ identifies himself ALPHABETICALLY: "I am the Alpha and the Omega" (verse 8).**

Eugene Peterson says:

"He is the alphabet, all the letters from A to Z, that is, the stuff, the vowels and consonants, out of which all words are made. Jesus speaks in such ways that the brokenness of the world [our homelessness] and our experiences develop into a dazzling holiness that evokes worship on a grand scale, involving everything in heaven and earth"

This means, SING: he has the whole world in his hands... all history is in God's hands - the future as well as the present (1:8); thus, his people need not fear as if something will happen to them apart from God's plan. **Jesus is the "the Alpha and the Omega," just like the one "who is, and who was, and who is to come"**. There is a home for every one of you in the heart of God. **Keziah. Home! Lord you have been our dwelling place from of old. Amen.**

July Gardening Tips

July is one of the most productive months of the year in the garden, although there is plenty of time to plant out new things, as well as enjoy the established garden scenery.

Prune early flowering shrubs such as Philadelphus, Ribes and Weigela after they have flowered so that they can put on new growth this year which will hold



the flowers next year. This cutting back will also help determine the shape.

In order to keep your perennials flowering throughout July you must continue dead-heading them, especially your Roses, Sweet Peas and other bedding plants. The flowers on Dahlias will need to be cut off once they have started to fade.

This is the last month to sow any further annuals such as Nigella and Cosmos in the flower beds. Also, many of the cottage perennials such as Delphiniums, Foxgloves and Lupins are starting to look past their best. Cut them down and they will resprout but they may not flower again this year. However, they will look a lot better. We have had to cut to the ground some of our Lupins due to the persistent presence of Woolly Aphids. We made many attempts to remove them organically which were not successful. They are growing again but we will have to wait until next year, for what is normally a lovely display.

Feed and water all vegetables regularly, especially tomatoes and cucumbers, to avoid problems. Don't forget to tie them onto canes and pinch out the tomato side shoots if necessary. You can still sow french beans and carrots now. Also keep sowing for salads (just a few at a time) as well as Autumn crop peas, cabbages and turnips. Just keep three to four apples and plums on each stem. Strawberries will be ripening now but remember to keep the fruit off of the soil with stones and straw. Now is a good time to peg down the runners and transplant them later in the Summer to create new plants.

It's a good idea to pick and freeze herbs so that they can be used later. Harvest courgettes and keep digging up potatoes when you need them.

Finally, keep mowing the lawn if it is not parched and, if it is looking tired, this month is the last opportunity to apply a Summer fertiliser.

Now that your gardening jobs are under control why not visit some of the local village Open Garden Schemes. Also have a look at the gardens open with the National Garden Scheme (NGS) as there are many gardens worth visiting which you can find in their Yellow Book.

Alan Cross

Pre-loved to re-loved

While we've been downsizing ready for our house move we've had mountains of stuff to dispose of, and each week some of it gets taken to the tip, and some is dispersed between Ashby's charity shops.

During this process we've been really pleased to discover businesses or charities where our discarded possessions can be restored, renovated, or

repurposed. Our first discovery was via this magazine, whereby a very talented furniture restorer who advertises here made some much loved (but also very battered and warped) mid century dining chairs usable and attractive again, and ready for a new life with new owners.

Our next find was Everywhere We Grow. This is a charity run by a young mum in Barwell who decided she wanted to help to protect the planet for her little ones' future. Her vision is twofold – to give everyone the accessibility to buy beautiful clothes and toys at rock bottom prices, while reusing, recycling & reliving thousands of items which would otherwise end up in landfill. As well as clothes she had our slide, sandpit and a ride-on tractor and trailer. And, very obligingly, she came to collect them from us.

One of our biggest challenges has been how to dispose of disposed of 6 less-than-immaculate bicycles in a 'green' manner. We were very pleased to hear about The Bike Project charity, which takes in second-hand bikes, refurbishes them and donates them to refugees and asylum seekers, providing cycling lessons too when required. As they point out on their website, a bike provides a means to travel in a cost-efficient way, making refugees and asylum seekers' money go further and giving them a chance of sustaining themselves until their future is settled. Cycling also provides refugees with independence, an increase in self-esteem, and a boost to physical and emotional wellbeing. Handily for us, one of their volunteers, Simon, lives in Ashby and is a drop off point at which we could donate all the bikes. Their condition wasn't an issue as those not suitable to be refurbished are used for parts at the charity's workshops. Their website is worth a visit - <https://thebikeproject.co.uk>

Our most recent success has been with our seemingly endless supply of building, decorating and gardening tools which we've been pleased to donate to a charity called TWAM – Tools With A Mission. They are a Christian charity that collects unwanted usable tools, refurbishes them,



sorts them into trade tool kits and sends them to the developing world. A volunteer based in Barton Under Needwood came to evaluate our items, and the good news is that even tools not suitable to send abroad can be repurposed. They've calculated their work keeps over 400 tonnes of tools out of UK landfills every year. Read more at www.twam.uk

Jill Chapman



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Messy Church

It was lovely this month to enjoy all sorts of Messy Church activities (some outside in the sunshine!) around the story of Noah's Ark. Adults and children alike enjoyed 'getting stuck in' to all things creative and even a very welcome spot of water play - and then re-enacting the story with great gusto! Messy Church now takes a break for the summer, but keep the date of 20th August free for a Messy Church picnic (weather permitting, of course!!) More details later.





JP SPRINGTHORPE & C^o

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What A Coup!

Quite a few of us remember the big archaeological dig we had here at St Helen's a few years ago, prior to the building of our Heritage Centre. For many in St Helen's, and in Ashby, who were not already enthused by the subject, it ignited an interest in archaeology, and it has been our pleasure to host various events and children's digging workshops in July of each year since, as part of the Festival of Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeology, and the National Festival of Archaeology.

This year is no exception, with three events planned (see back page). But this year *is* exceptional, in that we have a particularly exciting speaker coming - Neil Redfern, who is the Director of the Council for British Archaeology, will join us on Wednesday 26th July at 7.45 pm to present a talk entitled 'From Find to Mind: archaeology and the importance of creativity.'

As he explains, 'The material we find in the ground is not archaeology; it is not a precious artefact; it is not treasure – it is just 'stuff'. It is the thoughts and ideas of the archaeologist and people that gives this 'stuff' meaning and value.'

His presentation will explore how contemporary culture, ancient philosophy and our own lived experiences are essential in communicating what archaeologists do and achieve. It will show how archaeology is a process with a need for imagination and creativity at its heart.

Jill Chapman

How to sponsor an ice-cream



Never a dull moment at Loughborough Town of Sanctuary!

We're currently celebrating the birth of a new baby boy to one of the families we support and we have been overwhelmed with the generosity of people offering baby clothes and equipment. (No more for the time being please!)

English conversation sessions continue, with some of our students showing greatly improved confidence in spoken and written English, which is very encouraging. Styles of teaching vary but we like to include some games and some laughter: all important ingredients and a bit of light relief for those with so much on their minds!

Some of the most encouraging news is that a number of other local Loughborough organisations are coming forward to help the asylum seekers in various ways, including the provision of a much appreciated celebration meal (with some LToS members helping out) to celebrate the end of the Muslim fasting period. Another community organisation is setting up a gardening club at the other hotel in Loughborough and we hear that a group

of other volunteers, in response to recent protests there, is now working to improve life for those living in Quorn.

Most, but not all the children in Loughborough have been found school places but unfortunately some of the families have already been moved on elsewhere, including those whose children are already in school. New arrivals seem to arrive to replace them, but nobody seems quite sure about the rationale behind these arrivals and departures! We're told that the government now has a plan in mind to 'streamline' the processing of the enormous backlog of asylum applications but - forgive me if I say this: we're not exactly holding our breath!

Probably the most pressing problems for those waiting - often for two years or more - for a decision, is the endless tedium of living for so long in cramped conditions with absolutely nothing to do. (I've seen headlines that talk of 'luxurious lifestyles' in 'plush' hotels: trust me, those two adjectives are very, very far from the truth!) So sadly, many of our young families have been getting pretty down.

Many of them have been through hell to get here, but it seems to me that these seemingly endless purposeless days are in themselves a torture. The allowance they are given doesn't even cover a few toiletries, so there is no way that even buying the children an ice cream is an option, let alone paying for any kind of entertainment or even catching a bus for a change of scenery. Even more frustratingly, given their countries of origin, it's very likely that most will ultimately be granted asylum anyway. In the meantime then, our aim is to try to break the tedium, and support their mental health as best we can.

Our volunteers have introduced them to local parks and to any free options in the town, but the most popular activity is the weekly trip to the local swimming pool, funded by some very generous donations - including from yourselves!! THANK YOU!

Our ever resourceful Chair-person has also organised some fun in the park, ball games and races at half term.

And these were of course be followed by that all important ice cream!

It would be wonderful if there were any young families who would be prepared to befriend one of these families and take them out now and then for a trip to the park or similar. If you feel you might like to explore this further, please contact me and I will arrange for you to talk with Mo about it - no obligation at all!

Meanwhile, the original work of the LToS group continues, 'meeting and greeting' those already in the system (and also not allowed to work) who are required to report from cities across the Midlands to the Immigration Enforcement Centre in Loughborough each week. Volunteers offer a friendly

chat and smile, a meal voucher and a £5 Superdrug voucher - and signpost people to organisations who can help them with legal advice and other support near to where they are living.

So - is there something *you* can do to help us?

Please do continue with those all-important prayers, of course, keeping in mind the issues raised above.

And think about whether you can help in any of the following ways, either occasionally or regularly.

Here are some suggestions:

- Support Mo with the swimming sessions on Tuesdays at 2:30: we need women volunteers who are happy to go into the water.
- The 'meeting and greeting' happens for one hour, Mondays to Thursdays. You receive a rota and simply sign up to whatever you can manage. It doesn't need to be every week.
- There is a real need for young families who would be willing to befriend one of 'our' families and take them out occasionally to the park or similar for a treat. Nothing extravagant! Contact me if you would like to explore this - with no obligation - and I will introduce you to Mo, who has regular contact through the SERCO representative, with all the families at the hotel.
- If anyone has a child's scooter no longer needed - this would be much appreciated as, for some of the younger children, the walk to school is a long one!
- Children's back packs for school purposes are needed please, in good condition.

Needless to say, ice creams, swimming costumes and back packs don't grow on trees, so if you'd like to donate, see the instructions below.

Do drop me an e mail if you want to know more - pat@destafford.co.uk

Please NO MORE TOYS or baby clothes for the time being as people have been very generous and storage space is limited.

Donations will be much appreciated and put to very good use!

- Text LTOS5 to 70085 to donate £5 or any amount up to £20
- Text LTOSMONTHLY5 to 70085 to donate£5 a month
- Make a donation by cheque made out to Loughborough Town of Sanctuary
- Make a direct payment donation to HSBC Sort code 40-30-24 account83879542

The text options above will give you the option to gift aid, but if donating by cheque I can provide you with a gift aid form.

Many thanks for all your support,

Pat Stafford.

Our Worship in July

	8.30am	10.30am	pm
1st Sunday 2 nd July			3.30pm All-Age Worship 6.00pm Evensong
2nd Sunday 9 th July		Holy Communion	
3rd Sunday 16 th July		Word & Worship	
4th Sunday 23 rd July		Holy Communion	
5th Sunday 30 th July		Flagstaff Team Holy Communion at Worthington	

Our usual pattern for services:

- **Sundays**
 - First Sunday of the month -
3.30pm All-Age
6pm Choral Evensong
 - Second AND Fourth Sundays of the month -
10.30am Holy Communion
 - Third Sunday of the month -
10.30am Service of the Word
 - Fourth Sunday of the month
3.30pm - 5pm Messy Church (alternation between Viscount
Beaumont School and St Helen's Heritage Centre.)
- **Wednesdays - Holy Communion - 10.30am**
 - First Wednesday of the month - Holy Communion - in church
 - Second Wednesday of the month - Holy Communion -
at Prior Park Community Centre
 - Third Wednesday of the month - Service of the Word - in church
- **Saturdays - Parish Prayers - 9.30am in church (Hastings chapel)**

Regular activities:

Monday mornings, term time

Mondays

First Tuesday of the month

Third Tuesday of the month

Third Tuesday of the month

First Wednesday of the month

Thursdays

Fridays

– Little Fishes 9.30 - 11.30am

– Monday Group - 8pm

– MU meeting 7.30pm - 9pm

– MU meeting 10.30am - 12 noon

– PCC meeting 7 - 9.30pm

– 'We're In Stitches' Knit & natter 2 - 4pm

– Choir practice 6.30-8.30

– Heart-Warming Space 1 - 4pm

July Diary (SIDTI = Sew It Don't Throw It, NFA = National Festival of Archaeology)

Saturday 1st 2pm

Saturday 8th 1.30-3.30pm

Tuesday 11th 7pm

Saturday 15th 2.30-4.30pm

Wednesday 19th 2pm

Saturday 22nd 2-3.30pm

Monday 24th 9.30 –noon

Tuesday 25th 11am-12.30

1.30-3pm

Wednesday 26th 7.45pm

SIDTI Talk - Making From Waste

SIDTI workshop - No-zip cushion cover

SIDTI Talk - One-Armed Sewist

'Off the Record' concert at Worthington

NFA Guided Tour of church

SIDTI workshop - Basic sewing skills

NFA Children's archaeology workshop

SIDTI workshop - Make a peg bag

SIDTI workshop - Mending & Repair

NFA Talk - From Find to Mind

From The Albums :



Caleb's dedication on Easter Sunday



Nell Grace's baptism last month.



Emily was ordained priest in June

**The
What's
On
Notice board**



St Helen's Heritage Centre
Ashby de la Zouch



"How learning to sew helped me transform my life"

Gill Thomas will share her sewing journey, why and how she learnt to sew, taking part in the Great British Sewing Bee, and how learning to sew helped her face her biggest fears and transform her life.



Tuesday 11th July
7pm
- doors open 6.45 -
£5 admission
including light refreshments

To book: https://www.sthelensashby.net/Groups/335533/hats_coming_up.aspx

St Helen's Zouch, Leics, LE67 1AA
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Centre



**Lynne and Geoff from La Zouch
Restaurant
would like to invite you to a
Cornish Cream Tea to raise funds
for Ashby Youth for Christ**



**Saturday 19th August
2:30pm**

£5.50 per ticket

Scone, jam, clotted cream
and a pot of tea

Booking essential

Tickets from La Zouch (cash only)
or online <https://ashby-youth-for-christ.sumupstore.com/product/19th-august-la-zouch-cream-tea> For more information: helen.davis@yfc.co.uk



**ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH,
WORTHINGTON**

Come along and enjoy an afternoon of light music performed by a local group of friends known as "Off the Record"



Saturday 15th July 2023

2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Light refreshments will be served in the interval.

Tickets **£5.00** available from Christina Walmsley 01530 413797 or in Church when open or from any band member.

Children Junior school age and under £2.50
Age 3 and under free.

Safeguarding

There are local safeguarding training courses with spaces:

Course: Foundation (8 spaces)

Course Code : LF2FF4130723

Date: Thursday 13th July

Time: 1-4.30pm

Location: Christ the King Church, Beaumont Way, Leicester, LE4 1DS

Renewal Date: 13/7/26

Course: Foundation (10 spaces)

Course Code : LF2FF3110723

Date: Tuesday 11th July

Time: 1-4.30pm

Location: St Bartholomew's Church, Church Lane, Quorn, LE12 8DP

Renewal Date: 11/7/26

Course: Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse (8 Spaces)

Course Code : LRADAF2F6100723

Date: Monday 10th July

Time: 1-4.30pm

Location: Christ the King Church, Beaumont Way, Leicester, LE4 1DS

Renewal Date: 10/7/26

Course: Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse (5 spaces)

Course Code : LF2FRADA5250723

Date: Tuesday 25th July

Time: 1-4.30pm

Location: St Bartholomew's Church, Church Lane, Quorn, LE12 8DP

Renewal Date: 25/7/26

Please see <https://www.leicester.anglican.org/training-and-events> for more information, including the booking form, or contact Liz Smith.

Rorke's Drift Hero

If you have walked up what might be described as “the lonely end” of Ashby cemetery recently, you may have thought that there had been a new burial up there. In fact, the occupant of the grave in question has lain there in an unmarked grave for 124 years. He was Private John Smith, a member of the 2nd Battalion, 24th Regiment of Foot who fought in the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879. The Zulus were defeated after a series of particularly bloody battles, one of which took place at Rorke's Drift. Private Smith was there and survived.

Although the grave was known to Ashby Town Council and is mentioned in the cemetery leaflet available from the Council website, the Whitwick branch of the Royal British Legion recently came to know about it and decided to find out more. Gary Johnson, Mark Brown carried out research into the life of Private Smith.

They discovered that during the night of 22/23 January 1879, a small garrison of British soldiers, including Private Smith, lay behind a makeshift barricade of bags and boxes and successfully defended the storehouse and field hospital at Rorke's Drift. They faced an army of Zulu warriors who outnumbered them by about twenty to one. Smith was wounded in action by "an assegai contusion to the abdomen", a Zulu spear to the stomach.



He recovered from the wound and in April 1879 he was granted good conduct pay of a penny per day. In July he needed treatment for a sprain as a result of an accident and was sent to hospital in Pietermaritzburg where, in August, he was recommended for a change of climate. He seems not to have settled into civilian life, and eight months later re-enlisted for the 46th Brigade General Depot Duties and was sent to join the 2nd battalion, 97th Royal West Kent Regiment.

In 1899, he took his own life on Heather railway station and it is thought that he may have suffered from a form of PTSD. It is not known why he was buried in Ashby and in an unmarked grave, but having a name like John Smith makes further research difficult.

When the location of the grave came to the attention of the Whitwick branch of the Royal British Legion earlier this year, they felt that it should not remain unmarked. With help from the Ashby branch and from Ashby Town Council, they planned to mark the grave properly. English Rose Memorials of Loughborough offered to engrave and donate a headstone for the grave, which can be seen in the photograph here. On the back is a QR code which can be scanned in order to read more about the history of Private Smith and the Zulu wars.

The headstone was unveiled in a special ceremony on 27th May this year. The service was attended by representatives of the Royal Welsh Regiment and the Royal Engineers. A bugler from the latter played the Last Post before a minute's silence was observed. Members from both branches of

the Royal British Legion also attended and spoke at the service along with David Sutcliffe who had worked as a guide for the KwaZulu-Natal region and now lives in Burton on Trent.

A book entitled “The Rorke’s Drift Men” by James Bancroft has been published and tells more about Private Smith and others who fought at Rorke’s Drift. The hardcover edition is advertised for sale on Amazon at £123.39 so you probably won’t be rushing out to buy it, but there is a Kindle edition at £9.99. However, you can read more about Rorke’s Drift and about the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879 for free online.

If you go to visit the grave, you might wonder why that section of the cemetery appears to be mainly empty. In fact, it is filled with the bodies of the people whose families could not afford a headstone or other grave marker. Some, but by no means all, will be former residents of the workhouse, and there is also a large number of children buried there in unmarked graves. By contrast, there are a few graves with elaborate 19th-century headstones. They may have been buried there because the first section of the cemetery was nearly full.

Wendy Freer

Some of the successful ‘makes’ at June’s Sew It workshops



Continuing our peep into the many and varied things that God does within our church:

Do You Know About ... The Priest Room Gang?

We are the Priest Room Gang - We are the PRG!

Our strapline is: ***Hospitality and supporting and serving others.***

We are a group of young people and we meet on Thursday evenings 5.00-6.30pm once a month (and sometimes more often) in the St Helen's Community Heritage Centre.

We meet to be together, share stories and experiences and to give each other support. An important part of every meeting is making and sharing food together. Visitors are always welcome to come and join the group for food. We keep in mind the knowledge that Jesus shared food with all kinds of people throughout His earthly ministry and welcomed strangers.

The group has a heart for charity and supporting others and we will be introducing our next project in August/September.

We will be setting you a challenge each month!.....

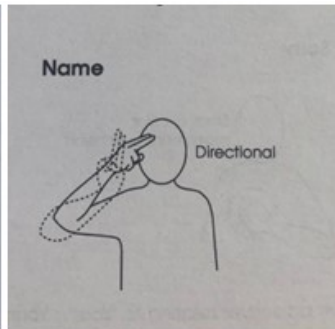
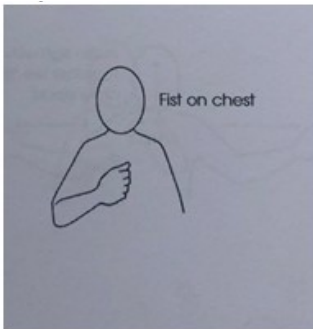
This month's challenge is....

Learn to say -

'My name is

Instructions:

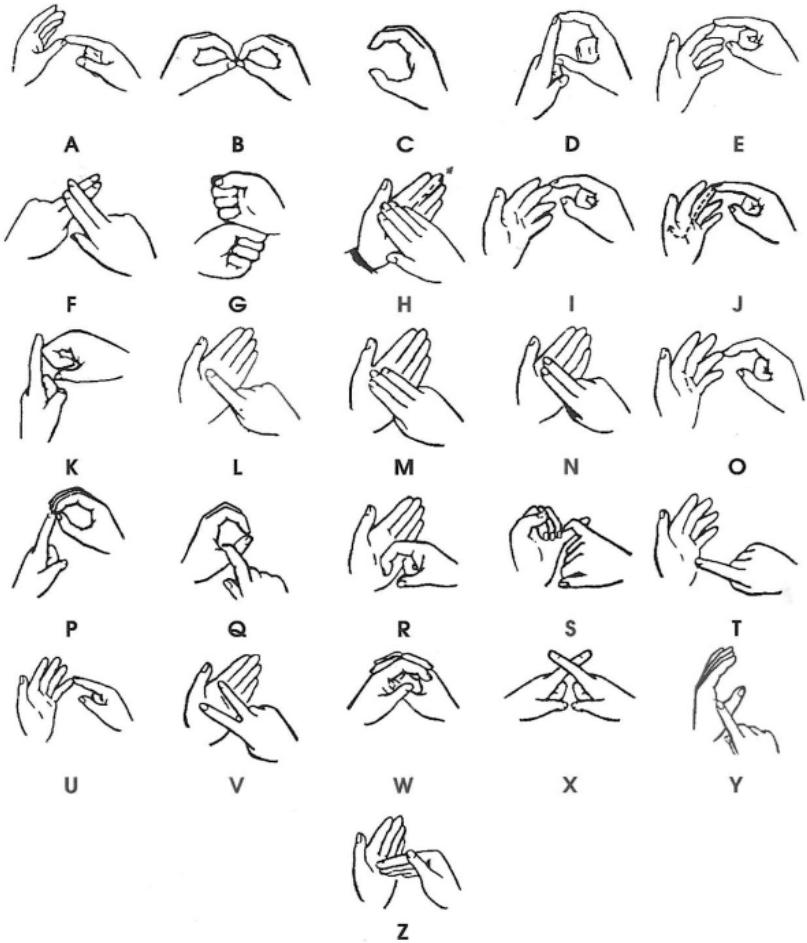
1. My name is



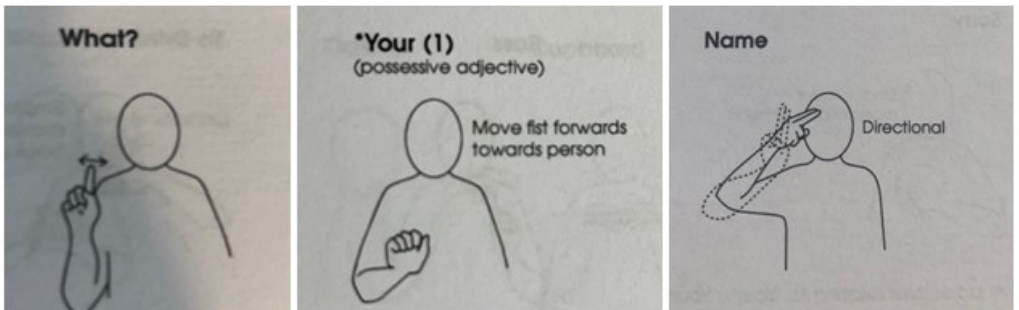
You do not sign 'is' but speak it.

Names are signed by using the first initial of your name using the BSL alphabet.

If there are 2 people with the same initial then sign the first letter of your Christian name and the first letter of your surname



2. What is your name?



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Some Musings From Vernon...

Jesus entered Jerusalem on a young donkey. The people seem to welcome him as King but a week later reveal their fickleness by democratically condemning him to death. This story is usually read as a reminder of Christ's restraint - of his power - for the sake of faithful service of his Father and his people. Another amazing facet of the passage is Jesus' dependence. Jesus didn't even have his own donkey. He chose to be dependent on someone and an animal for the fulfilment of an Old Testament prophecy. How could he take such a risk when the importance of him perfectly revealing himself as Messiah was at stake? Surely the responsible thing would have been to buy his own, insure it, tax it, MOT test it, train it, rehearse the gig many times, have a second foal of a donkey in reserve, lose sleep, become anxious... Apparently not. Being dependent on people to meet his needs seems to have been a deliberate strategy and an expression of worship of his Father.

I am OK with serving people from a position of strength or riches. I like teaching people how to stay alive up mountains, identify invertebrates, pick my nose and other things about which I am expert. Giving is fun, investing is exciting. Conversely being dependent on other people is nearly terrifying. It certainly feels childish and irresponsible. Popularly celebrated men - like James Bond - save the world with minimal support. They are exalted as ideal men because of their independent resourcefulness and resilience.

A recent experience was highly disorientating, unsettling and wonderful. I am an offence to British manhood. Most real men buy their first car in their late teens or early twenties. At 51 I have only just done so. It started with a prayerful internet trawl for a



suitable vehicle. When I say prayerful, I mean I paused every now and then to pray a plaintive, 'help' or a whingey, 'I can't do this, it's too hard'. I asked God to give me wisdom but what I really wanted was an out of the blue notification that I had inherited a patent for a working CO2 powered teleport design. (Can you inherit patents?). What I received was better. I had most of a day feeling pathetic, bewildered, uncertain and alien - visiting a Muslim community celebrating Eid to look at a car which had several thousand parts designed to intimidate and confuse me. But, in all this I was accompanied by a very good friend who does know cars. God's gift of my friend's prayers, presence, knowledge and counsel made me feel richer than any amount of cash, self-sufficiency and expertise would have.

We can now carry lots of people or gear. The vehicle will allow us to:

- Travel as a family
- Get me and gear to outdoor activity leader coaching appointments
- Get young people, me and gear to outdoor activity sessions.

Please pray that I wouldn't spend 'my' life attempting to work myself out of a learnt shame of indebtedness and instead accept the riches of being part of something / someone greater.

Vernon Bayliss

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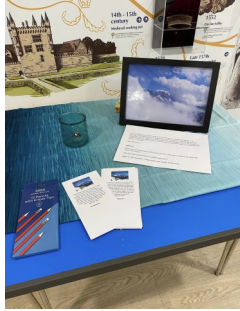
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Quotes for the Month

'Grace for those of us who need four-letter words for our rage and grief, be blessed because there is a long and holy lineage of this ... Grace for the forgiven and for the forgiver and for the maybe-someday-but-not-yet and for the never-forgive-never-forgets, too.'

Sarah Bessey, Field Notes, <https://substack.com/@sarahbessey>, June 6th

'I thought it would be nice if I came and shared my confusion with you.'

John Cleese, The Archbishop Interviews, BBC Radio 4, June 7th

'Christians shouldn't be attacking Phillip Schofield ... Rather than joining the chorus of outrage, Christians should be counter cultural in showing love.'

Steve Cox, www.premierchristianity.com/opinion, June 6th

'The popular bus route 666 to Hel in northern Poland is being changed to 669, after long-running complaints by religious conservatives in the country.'

www.bbc.co.uk/news, June 15th

'You know that you live a slightly odd life when you get a knock on the door and not one but two diocesan bishops are paying you an impromptu visit. Thank goodness we hoovered yesterday!'

Father Paul, Twitter, June 17th

'The hymns I have sung throughout my life will never let me go.'

Nadia Bolz-Weber from The Corners, substack.com, June 18th

'One of the things I have found difficult to grasp since the period of Covid lockdowns is that, for some people, worship online was and remains preferable to worship in person.'

Fr Craig D'Alton, Church for Introverts?, humanecatholic.net/blog, June 6th

'We ... know we need to find ways to both oppose all that is evil and love all that is good, even when they are both simultaneously expressed in the same person.'

Senior pastors Tom & Lesley Thompson, Helping to navigate the news about Mike Pilavachi, Croydon Vineyard blog, June 6th

The Anglican Communion ... has always affirmed the God given dignity and value of every person, wonderfully made in the image of our creator God. When we treat people differently or worse criminalise them for merely being who they are, we mar that image.

Archbishop Stephen, Statement on the Ugandan Church re LGBTQ+ people, June 9th

'I wanted to start by acknowledging that what the Church calls Good News and what journalists call good news are entirely different things.'

Archbishop Justin's Speech at the Religion Media Festival, June 12th

'When it comes to the programming, I think [religion] is better thought of not in a silo and something slightly over there, but as something that can be part of any content, any other style, any other form.'

Daisy Scalchi, head of religion & ethics for BBC television, Religion Media Festival, June 13th

'Rising inflation has left many clerics struggling to cover household bills and other essentials.'

Revd Sam Maginnis, Clergy need a stipend that alleviates hardship, Church Times, June 16th

'I am humbled & excited ... I am passionate about helping individuals & communities meet Jesus and follow him.' - Rev Canon Rachel Mann

Church of England appoints first transgender archdeacon, The Times, June 17th

'The Church will follow not just the science, but our faith – both of which call us to work for climate justice.'

Archbishop Justin Welby, re Church Commissioners and CofE Pensions Board announcements re fossil fuel disinvestment, June 22nd

'Watching Lewis Capaldi at Glastonbury reminded me of the story of Moses... it was beautiful.'

Lauren Windle, www.womanalive.co.uk, June 26th

'Fearless former Ashby vicar, 80, completes daring birthday wing walk for Mercy Ships.'

<https://ashby.nub.news>, June 29th

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Festival of Archaeology Talk

by Neil Redfern, Director of the Council for British
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