



# St Helen's Church

Ashby-de-la-Zouch

Loving God, Loving Others, Loving the World



## Parish Magazine

September 2024

# WELCOME

Hello and welcome to September's parish magazine!



Having taken a break for the summer holidays, it seems that there is plenty to update you all on in this edition. So have your diaries to hand for lots of upcoming dates and events, as the autumn calendar is looking full!

For those of us working to the academic year, we start afresh with a new school/university term. We have also done some fresh thinking about the magazine and are instating a few minor changes. Going forwards, the deadline for submissions will be the 20th of each month to allow it to be printed punctually. There will be some new regular columns featured so keep an eye out for those. For guidance, when writing articles, approx. 350 words will fill one page with a picture.

Hope you all enjoy reading along this month, and thank you once again to everyone who has submitted something.

Emily



Donations can be left in the boxes at the back of St Helen's Church, in the porch of Holy Trinity or the Congregational Church, or at any of Ashby's Co-ops. Thank you to everyone for the continued support.

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## FROM THE MINISTRY TEAM

### **“Autumn is a second spring ...”**

Hello again. I’m writing this shortly after returning from a walk through ancient, deciduous woodland with Helen, where an astonishing display of colours brought to life Albert Camus’ delightful line *“Autumn is a second spring, when every leaf is a flower.”*



For Autumn is very definitely in the air now. The leaves are not just changing colour, but beginning to fall, and crisp mornings and cool evenings are calling for more – and thicker - layers than has been the case for a while!

But when does Autumn begin? Well, that depends on your viewpoint – if you follow the Celtic calendar, it begins on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, in celebration of the early grain harvest. I suspect most of us would tend to follow the meteorological start date of 1<sup>st</sup> September (based on annual temperature cycles) while astronomically speaking, Autumn begins with the Autumn Equinox (Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September this year).

Whenever it begins, Autumn in the natural world is without doubt a season of change, and for many animals and plants, a time of preparation. The change in leaf colour precedes the falling of leaves and both are part of extraordinarily complex chemical and physical processes by which trees prepare and protect themselves for the coming of winter.

Meanwhile in the animal world, smaller mammals pile on weight to prepare for hibernation, both of which sound attractive! And most of us will have seen Squirrels busily gathering nuts and berries over recent weeks. Jays too – did you know that an individual Jay can bury up to 5,000 acorns in a season? They don’t retrieve them all though, making them one of the key sources of broadleaf woodland regeneration.

And what of us? What will our preparations for winter involve? Well, as well as stocking up the log store, and fishing out the winter woollies and hot water bottles, how about using this time before the busy festivals

of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany to deepen our discipleship? Deepening it through time spent reading and reflecting on Scripture; in prayer or by reading about an aspect of our faith that interests or challenges us.

As we return from the holiday season now is a good time to remind us of opportunities that exist in the Flagstaff Family to do that in various groups – or just to meet and share fellowship with one another. As well as our regular services, there is the Open Bible Discussion group on Monday nights; the “Friends, Fellowship and Faith” group on Tuesday afternoons; Café Church on Thursday mornings and Warm-Hearted Spaces on Friday afternoons. As well as these regular fixtures in the calendar, this month there are two “Connections” sessions and a Prayer Walk for the Ashby Statutes. More details about all these are available on your Notice Sheets or from the Parish Office at St. Helen’s.

While Autumn is a time of change, it is a time when we can remind ourselves that as temperatures drop, and changes in our churches, our country or our world, leave us unsettled or worried, God’s love is constant and unending, and we can echo the prayer of the Psalmist:

“Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.” (Psalm 33:22).

God Bless You All  
**Andy Smith**



# HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT... STEPPING STONES?

It's September, which means children in Ashby are back at school after the long summer holidays. It also means that Stepping Stones is returning to St Helen's! Stepping Stones was launched in January 2024 and is a new group for children at St Helen's. Stepping Stones meets every second Sunday during the usual 10:30am morning service. We usually kick off with a game, followed by a story, and then enjoy a themed activity together before heading back into church for communion. At the end of the main service we always share what we have been up to.



Currently run by Sam Blatherwick, Caroline Summers and Cornelia Wright, Stepping Stones is open to all children at St Helen's, whether they regularly go to church or are just visiting. The hope is that it can provide a relaxed, fun group session designed around our young people to help them explore Christianity and grow in faith.

As with anything in church, many hands make light work! Sam, Caroline, and Cornelia are therefore hoping to encourage a few more volunteers to join the Stepping Stones team to help. We're grateful to Jenny Hedges, who has already volunteered her time to help with the group, and would love to hear from anyone else who might be interested in getting involved. As Stepping Stones is just once a month, we only need two or three more volunteers to commit to helping just a couple of times a year (especially as Stepping Stones won't be running in December, or during the summer holiday). To find out more, have a chat, or volunteer to get involved, please talk to Sam, Caroline or Cornelia or email [cgvandenbergh@gmail.com](mailto:cgvandenbergh@gmail.com).

We hope to see any regular or visiting children at the next Stepping Stones on September 8th!



# CELEBRATIONS!!



Back in July we were joined by Bishop Saju as he baptised William and Louis and confirmed Anita, Alyssa, William, Sam, Liam, Ebony, Harmony and Laura. A BBQ and time of fellowship was enjoyed afterwards. Please do continue to hold all the baptism and confirmation candidates in your prayers.

In August a birthday celebration for Steph was held in the heritage centre after communion. Many happy returns Steph!



# CHURCH WIRING

For many years now we have been very nervous about the state of the church wiring. The installation dates back many years, probably to the 1950s. The system has had its safety checks and the electricians have been telling us for some time that the wiring is degrading. A couple of years ago their predictions came true and the power to the organ failed. We managed to recover this circuit, but last year the power circuits failed on the south side of the building. The final 'nail in the coffin' was the presence of asbestos in the switch gear which dictated action.

Therefore in 2021 we started with the fitting of new modern fuses and switchgear. The thought here was that installing modern safety trips would protect both the congregation, and the building should any further faults develop. In 2022 we took the decision to replace the key wiring circuits within the building. Several months of planning and conversations with both the electricians and the diocesan advisor allowed our requirements to be fleshed out. The nature and significance of our building means we cannot fit normal domestic wiring. Funding became available thanks to the generosity of our congregation, so in July the latest phase of the work started.



Key to this phase of work was the installation of some new heavy power feeds within the building. The cable demanded by the diocese has proved an absolute nightmare to install. Watching the sweat pouring off the electricians as they tried to force the cables into place was a sobering sight. Much of the new cable is bright white: the only colour available. Over the next few weeks we will be undertaking work to make the cables blend in.



Another significant hurdle was the

main nave lighting. We had hoped to leave these and replace later. Once the scaffolding was in place the dire state of the wiring and the earthing of these lights was clear to see. We had a choice: switch off the lights or re-wire then. We had the scaffolding in place and the pews moved out of the way, so the decision was taken to re-wire. Each of the lighting units has taken about 3 hours to deal with. It has been good to have a team of electricians who work flexibly and with care in our building.

The work is not finished. Power still has to be restored on the south side of the nave, the outer lighting units require re-wiring. This will all happen at the end of September. We also hope to remove some of the unused and unsightly cable. This will put in place the infrastructure to safely support our activities over the coming years. It provides the potential to expand the provision of electrical power in the building.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to complete the work in the chancel. The wiring to the sanctuary lights is 1930's rubber cable and not in a good state. However, the chancel roof is a long way up. Further than electrician's scaffolding can safely reach. The building team will now consider the options and advise the PCC.

**Simon Starkey**

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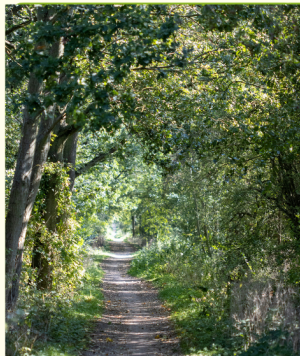
- Grow in their knowledge of the Christian faith
- Deepen their relationship with God
- Explore how to live out faith in the whole of life

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It is open to anyone—there is some reading to do between sessions but you don't need to have done any studying before.

## What does a previous participant say?

"If you want to know more about yourself and your Christian faith, then JiF is the course for you. You'll be welcomed and challenged, affirmed and changed, and you'll definitely be glad you came."



## Course Details

### Introductory Session

Saturday 28th September

9.30-12.30 at St Martin's House

Tuesday evening	St Mary's, Barwell
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Wednesday evening	St Mary's, Nanpantan
Thursday evening	St Andrew's, Aylestone
Thursday evening	Framland



Please consider a donation of £40 per term to cover course costs

## How do I join a course?

For more information email:

[liz.rawlings@leicestercofe.org](mailto:liz.rawlings@leicestercofe.org)

To book a place:

visit the Hub or follow the link

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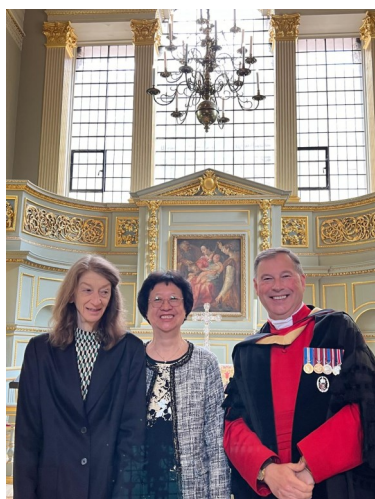
\* I work according to COVID-19 guidelines with a limited  
number of clients \*CRB-checked \*15+ years experience  
\*References available



# THE QUEENS CHAPEL, ST. JAMES PALACE

As some of you will know, Sue is a Chaplain to HM The King and part of that role is to preach at St James's Palace. This year I was fortunate enough to be one of the people accompanying her to London for that occasion.

The excitement and anticipation was palpable in Sue's car as Caroline (a friend of Sue's from Loughborough), Liz and I set out at the crack of dawn for St James's Palace in London. The drive down was smooth despite lots of roadworks on the M1. I, in particular, was extremely excited, not knowing much about The Queen's Chapel, or for that matter, anything about St James's Palace.



We arrived early and were welcomed by a charming man with a long illustrious title, John, who after introducing himself, said, "In other words, I am the Verger". He was really kind, warm, humorous and attentive. He offered us refreshments and after that, showed us the Chapel Royal, built around 1520. What really struck me were the magnificent stained glass windows above the altar, so delicate and yet very striking; also the richly decorated ceiling with royal initials and coats of arms, believed to have been painted by Holbein. He drew our attention to an exceptionally "clean" panel which is dedicated

to our late Queen, with heads of her favourite Corgis incorporated in the design. How endearing it is!

While waiting to be taken to The Queen's Chapel for the Service of Choral Matins, I took the opportunity to roam round the various courtyards : a lovely clock made in 1832 still telling the correct time, each lamp mounted on the wall adorned with the Royal Crown, car park spaces reserved for Princess Anne, Princess Beatrice, and Princess Alexandra. Everything looked immaculate, polished and well maintained.



Of course, the highlight of our visit was to attend Choral Matins in The Queen's Chapel. We were all privileged to be shown to the front pew where we had an unobstructed view of the whole proceedings. The choristers in their colourful robes, Chaplains with their numerous medals, the beautiful painting behind the altar are all a feast for the eyes. The music, hymns, anthems, canticles, even the responses were so beautifully sung that I thought, many a time, I was in a concert, not a Sunday service. Sue preached an excellent sermon, encouraging us to serve others and to serve God with dedication and selflessness. I was rather reluctant to leave when the service ended with a rousing Organ Voluntary, just to savour the moment a little longer.

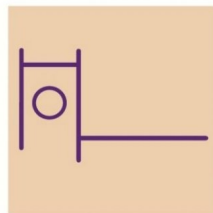
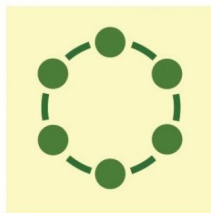
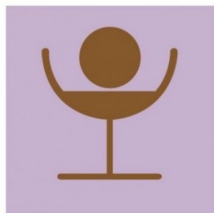


Sitting in the midst of the majesty and splendour of the Chapel, I sense very strongly God's presence and the "peace that passes all understanding" that Paul spoke about in his letter to the Philippians. It was in so many ways an unforgettable experience for me, uplifting, deeply spiritual and truly memorable.

Thank you Sue for taking us with you.

**Eileen Coombs**

# PARISH GIVING SCHEME



## PARISH GIVING SCHEME

Back in January, we had a special service of thanksgiving at which we heard from Sue Field and Andy Smith about St Helen's finances and how donations help make the life and ministry of our church possible. The service also provided an opportunity to share more about the Parish Giving Scheme, or PGS, and we were thrilled to see a number of people begin giving or switching their giving through the scheme! A few months have passed since then, so this is just a brief reminder about PGS and encouragement to consider signing up if you haven't already!

The PGS was created by an Anglican diocese in 2008 to simplify giving for congregations and reduce the administration required of churches. It is now used by hundreds of parishes across the country including St Helen's to support generous and efficient giving.

Regular giving through the PGS is similar to giving by Direct Debit or Standing Order, allowing you to give regularly at a frequency and amount of your choosing to St Helen's in Ashby. By signing up, you will have your own giving account which is easy to use and gives complete control over your regular gifts. As well as being extremely simple to sign up and use, the PGS also makes it easier for St Helen's to claim and receive Gift Aid on your giving. This is because Gift Aid is claimed by the PGS on our behalf, meaning we receive Gift Aid for your gifts automatically rather than having to submit a manual claim, bringing in an additional 25% on top of your gifts without the extra admin! You can also optionally choose to increase your giving in



line with inflation each year; a small increase which can make a huge difference over time, and that you can opt in or out of at any point.

If you have any questions about the PGS, including how it works, why it could benefit you and St Helen's, or how to sign up, please feel free to ask me at church or by emailing [cgvandenbergh@gmail.com](mailto:cgvandenbergh@gmail.com). You can also visit [www.parishgiving.org.uk](http://www.parishgiving.org.uk) to learn more, and can easily sign up today using the 'Find your Parish' tool - just search for 'Ashby de la Zouch St Helen' and click 'Give now'!

Thank you to everyone who already generously gives, whether through the PGS or other means, to help support the varied service and mission of St Helen's in our local community!

**Cornelia Wright**  
**Parish Giving Officer**

## **ASHBY YOUTH FOR CHRIST**

*If you would like to sign up for regular updates either follow this link <http://eepurl.com/dvVqri> or email [helen.davis@yfc.co.uk](mailto:helen.davis@yfc.co.uk). Alternatively you can scan the QR code.*

*Thank you for all your prayers and support.*



The start of a new school year sees a return to all of our usual activities. Sk8ers and Rock Solid will both resume after the summer break with a chance to see which members return to us and who might join for the first time. Please do pray for the continuation of strong connections with all our existing young people and for us to be able to offer a warm welcome to new members.

## A WEEK AT CASTLE HEAD

This summer I had the privilege of spending a week volunteering at Castle Head, a Christian summer camp run by CPAS. Heading up to the Lake District with nine young people from Ashby to join around 100 other teenagers and volunteer leaders, we embarked upon a week of outdoor activities and learning about following Jesus.

Over the week the young people had the opportunity to form strong friendships with their peers from around the country as they took part in a wide range of activities including stand up paddleboarding, kayaking, ghyll scrambling, rock climbing, kiting and bushcraft. It was amazing to see them taking on some big challenges and, by encouraging each other, overcoming their fears.

The scriptural focus of the week was Matthew 22:37 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind and love your neighbour as yourself'. Each evening we gathered together to unpack how to practically live out each element of Jesus' command and several young people contributed to the musical worship across the week, as well as one of our Ashby young people leading a prayer in front of the whole camp. What a beautiful moment.

The young people in my group collectively stated 'meeting new people', 'making new friends', 'having a proper routine' and having 'opportunity for adventure' as their highlights of the week.

Emily Darlington



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## OUR WORSHIP IN SEPTEMBER

	am	pm	Wednesday
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday</b> 1st September		<b>3.30pm</b> All-Age Worship <b>6pm</b> Evensong + Soiree	1st Wednesday-4th Holy Communion 10.30am In Church
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday</b> 8th September	<b>10.30 am</b> Holy communion with stepping stones children's group		2nd Wednesday 11th Holy Communion 10.30am Prior Park Community centre
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday</b> 15th September	<b>10.30 am</b> Morning worship		3rd Wednesday-18th Morning prayer 10.30am In church
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b> 22nd September	<b>10.30 am</b> Holy Communion	<b>3.30pm</b> Messy Church at Viscount Beaumont's school	4th Wednesday-25th Holy Communion 10.30am In church
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b> 29th September	<b>10.30 am</b> Team Service of Holy Communion @ St Helen's		

### Regular activities:

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Monday mornings           | - Little Fishes 9.30 - 11.30am during term time  |
| Mondays                   | - Monday Group – 8pm                             |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday   | - PCC meeting – 7 till 9pm                       |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday | - Knit and natter – 2 till 4pm                   |
| Thursdays                 | - Choir practice – 6.30 till 8.30pm              |
| Fridays                   | - Heart- warming Space 1-4pm                     |
| Saturdays                 | - Parish Prayers – 9.30am in the Hastings chapel |

# **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY// SEPTEMBER**

## **SUNDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER– EVENSONG AND SUNDAY SOIREE– 6-8PM**

Join us for a service of choral evensong, sung by St Helen's choir, followed by refreshments then a cello and piano recital as Tori Norman and Jeremy Kimber play Rachmaninov's Sonata for piano and cello.

## **THURSDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER– MINSTER COMMUNITIES OPEN MEETING– 7-9PM— ST HELENS HERITAGE CENTRE**

Please do come along to hear from Beth Cluer, one of the Diocesan leads for the Minster Communities project, about the next stage in the development of our allocated Minster community. There will be space to ask questions and consider whether you might have something to contribute to one of the working groups that are forming. Refreshments will be available.

## **SATURDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER– ASHBY CHURCHES PRAYER WALK– 10am**

We would like to invite you to join us for a prayer walk (or cycle). Coinciding with Ashby Statutes and Ride and Stride we are planning routes around Ashby, taking in all the churches, to pray for our churches, our people and our town. Meeting at Holy Trinity at around 10am till around 12 noon– routes will vary in length taking from 30 mins to an hour or so. A fun family route will be available with a treasure hunt. And if walking isn't your thing, please come and partake in our 'Prayer Sit'– same time and place. Contact [beth@lunt.email](mailto:beth@lunt.email) for more details.

## **SATURDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER– CELEBRATING SUSTAINABLE FASHION WEEK– 10am-2pm**

A drop-in event to include a clothes swap rail, craft sale, accessories bring and buy sale, simple repairs and alterations, knit and natter corner, 'How Sustainable Is Your Wardrobe?' interactive challenge and refreshments.

## **CONNECTIONS SESSIONS:**

### **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September 9.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. The Return of the Prodigal Son**

Henri Nouwen day is later in the month. A chance encounter with a reproduction of Rembrandt's "The Return of the Prodigal Son" led Nouwen on an unforgettable spiritual adventure – might it do the same for us?

### **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September – 1.00 – 4.00 p.m. Marking the Autumn Equinox**

A guided walk in Charnwood Forest to mark and reflect on the Autumn Equinox which follows a few days later.



## **GARDENING TIPS FOR SEPTEMBER**

September marks the first month of Autumn. With the weather becoming cooler and damper there is plenty of jobs to add to your gardening checklist.

There is still lots to do in the fruit and vegetable garden but not so much in the coloured flower areas. That is not the case if you are redesigning or starting a garden from scratch.

Hopefully, you will be gathering the fruits (and vegetables) of your labour whilst getting out to start planting Spring-flowering bulbs for next year. Bulbs make a lovely Spring display when planted in containers or in borders, especially Snowdrops, Daffodils, Crocus and Hyacinths. Make sure you choose bulbs which are firm, plump and free from mould. It can be incredibly rewarding that you're growing these bulbs in your beautiful garden yourself.

There are lots of other jobs to do in the garden this month. If you have a pond, then it is best to spread a net over it in order to reduce the amount of Autumn debris (mainly dead leaves) entering the water. You may want to cover your pond with a Heron Net to protect your fish from Herons as we have done. Our fish are still thriving despite numerous visits from (probably) the same Heron.

Start to reduce the frequency of house plant watering. You can reduce your indoor watering even more if you have Succulents.

In the flower garden, continue to dead-head annuals, hanging-baskets and containers as they will go on until the first frosts.

Many perennials look tired and have brown leaves. When the frost strikes, some of them will just collapse into a brown mess. However, some remain in good shape. Sedum looks good as it fades, but plants such as Hostas can look awful, but don't remove dead foliage until they fully die off.

September is a great time to harvest ripe seeds from any Summer-plants that you want to grow again next year. However, it's important to only harvest seeds from flower heads when they are hard and brown. Make sure they are completely dry before you store them.

Divide herbaceous perennials which will help re-energise themselves so that they return with even more vigour next Spring. Also, dividing these perennials will give you a lot more of your favourite plants next year, or to

share them with friends and family. Some examples of these are Salvias, Helenium, Helianthus and Japanese Anemones which will divide well in September.

Finally, the vegetable garden is still active. You can plant onion and garlic sets to over-winter and pot up plants of Basil, Coriander, Dill and Parsley to grow them on the kitchen/porch window sill for a supply of herbs during winter. Keep picking Sweetcorn, Courgettes and Peppers whilst young, fresh and tender. Dig up remaining main crop potatoes before slug damage spoils them. They do need to be stored somewhere dry and, most importantly, dark. Hessian sacks are ideal for storing them. Potatoes can go green very quickly when exposed to light, even if left in a greenhouse or conservatory for 24 hours after harvesting. However, they have to be dry before putting them into sacks otherwise they can rot. Tidy up your strawberry plants and clear away any used straw as this will harbour pests and diseases over Winter.

September can also be the ideal time to plant other vegetables and most can be sown or planted outside. Onions, Garlic and Radishes are popular choices.

This month marks the beginning of apple picking season, so get ready to make some room in your fruit bowl. You will know when they are ready to pick when they come away easily after giving them a gentle twist. You can use the same technique for your plums.

It's now getting darker earlier in the evenings so we need to get out and enjoy our gardens – WHEN WE CAN!

**Alan and Alison Cross**



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## A RETREAT IN JUNE

It can be good to take time out to refresh yourself. One way to do that is to go on a retreat, an old-fashioned word to describe going away to a quiet place.

Mo and I went on a day away in Derbyshire recently. It was organised by Cameron Butland, a retired but still active Anglican priest. The venue was St Helen's church in the village of Darley Dale. Our group was in the church hall that is directly linked to the church building. About 35 people attended, some from the local area and some, like us, from WCCM, the World Community for Christian Meditation.

When we arrived at about 9.45am, 15 minutes before the start, we noticed several mothers with their toddlers. Saturday morning was usually a coffee morning and the mother and baby group attended. Soon they moved to the children's corner at the back of the church itself.

Then our day started. A retreat will go well with a good leader, and Cameron is one of the best. For his short talks, he gave an overview of Ignatian spirituality, livened up with anecdotes from the desert fathers and mothers, many of whom lived in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, about 1700 years ago.

One such anecdote was this:

The brothers of a nearby monastery came to Abbot Anthony with a complaint, 'Our Brother James always goes to sleep during prayers. What are we to do?' Anthony replied, 'When that happens, I fold a blanket, put it on my lap, and allow the man to rest his head.'

We also heard about Mother Theresa of Calcutta. She once gave a talk called 'Anyway'. It starts like this, 'People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centred; *Forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; Be kind anyway...*' And you get the gist of it.

Cameron started with a brief introduction, and then we had the first 20 minutes of silent meditation. After only a short time there were a few footsteps and silence again. I half opened my eyes to see who it was. There in the middle, sitting on the carpet, upright and cross-legged, with her doll

on her lap, was a three-year old girl. She looked quite at home in our group of mainly retired folk!

I closed my eyes again. After a few minutes and more footsteps I peeped out again. She was gone. Presumably back to the play area in the main church.

the course of a week, unusual incidents like this happen to us many times. On reflection, they are like diamonds, and worth more than much religious talk. Indeed the gospels are peppered with incidents from the life of Jesus. That's what makes the bible so interesting.

**Richard Vann**



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# FAITH INSIDE THE PRISON SYSTEM

**The second instalment of Bob's testimony, the first of which can be found in the July edition.**

'[Bob was spending time as a peer mentor in the multi-skills workshop when he was stabbed multiple times by another prisoner] I was in shock and could not speak but my inner voice recalled the gospel song 'what gift of grace is Jesus my redeemer, there is no more for heaven now to give'. And in particular the second verse:

The night is dark but I am not forsaken  
For by my side the saviour He will stay,  
I labour on in weakness and rejoicing  
For in my need, His power is displayed.  
To this I hold, my Shepherd will defend me;  
Through the deepest valley He will lead.  
Oh the night has been won, and I shall overcome:  
Yet not I but through Christ in me.

[Bob was stabbed several more times in the same incident before two others intervened]. As the first stab happened, somewhere in the back of my mind calmness remained and I called out to the Lord to help me, protect me, whatever happens was what he wanted, my life was in his hands. When I had prostate cancer I had prayed to the Lord to send the Holy Spirit to heal me and I gave Him my life. In both instances I used the following verses from Psalm 107:1&6 'Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever.' 'Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.'

Even though I had been stabbed 10 times, I was only bleeding from one, the one at the side of my nose. I sat down as I was finding it hard to breathe, and I could feel pain as I breathed but nothing else. I was calm as around me staff and then nurses came to see what had happened and how bad things were. Then the air ambulance doctors arrived and hooked me up to heart and blood pressure monitors. At one point I heard my blood pressure was '188 over' and my oxygen was around 90%. I was placed into the



ambulance and given liquid paracetamol as pain relief as we raced to the A&E at Ipswich.

Going straight to the trauma area and then an MRI, I was then told that they were going to keep me in overnight and do a check in the morning and if everything was good I could go. I thought I must be better than I feel and the escort staff looked at me and agreed I did not look good. I was moved to the A&E department to wait for a bed. This was at 6pm and no one had touched me while inside Ipswich, not even to clean my wounds. Whilst there, I was asked who I would like to be told about what had happened and I said Pam. I knew she would pray for me and would ask the prayer group to pray for me as well. At 12:00am I was taken up to the ward where I was placed into a single room with my 2 escorts. At 12.05am a nurse came in to take bloods. Since I had been nil by mouth since being stabbed I was seriously dehydrated, and she wanted one of the vials to be arterial blood. At 12.15am a senior trauma consultant came in; he had spotted a problem in my scans. I was to be transferred to Addenbrookes immediately with blue lights and sirens all the way. Ipswich could cope with 2 serious problems but not 3 and so I was off down the A14 and that was a traumatic experience in itself. Lying on a stretcher in the back of an ambulance doing more than 70mph over bumps and single lanes through roadworks, no safety belt, wow!

We arrived at Addenbrookes and went straight to the trauma unit in the A&E to be met by a consultant who asked me some questions and then told me that a consultant for each area of damage would come and see me. He looked at my wounds and was not impressed that none of them had been cleaned or repaired. He was a lung specialist and wanted a scan of my left lung as he could hear something. Then came the heart specialist who did tests and orders scans of my heart. Then came the brain specialist who looked for responses of nerves around my body and ordered a scan of the front of my brain. Then walked in the ENT specialist who looked at my nose and neck wounds and ordered more scans before finally a nurse practitioner came in to clean my wounds and glue them together.'

To be continued...

**Bob**

# SUMMER FUN

## MESSY CHURCH AND LOTS OF HATS!



A lovely sunny meet-up of some of our Messy Church family in the Heritage Centre garden back in July. (Didn't get any photos of the ice creams as I was too busy enjoying mine!!)

What was so pleasing was to see some of our 'founder members' (some now officially 'young leaders') having fun with our youngest recruits and another (now teenaged) young woman from our earliest days, who popped in with Mum to update us with her latest news.

And of course - a chance for adult team members to relax together too. The next Messy Church is **22nd September at Viscount Beaumont's School**. See you there!



Fun was had by children and adults alike at our recent 'Hats Hats Hats!' workshop for the summer holidays.





# St Helen's Community Heritage Centre

Ashby-de-la-Zouch

## Heritage Talks 2024—2025

October 1st	Gay Evans	<i>Annoying Ancestors</i>
October 29th	Rachel Askew	<i>The Anglo-Saxon Sculpture of Breedon Priory Church</i>
November 26th	Anthony Yates	<i>The Bate &amp; Kirkland families of Ashby: lives, ancestry &amp; descendants</i>
January 28th	Claire Strachan	<i>Small Things Forgotten: Churches &amp; the little stories of Parish Life in Post-medieval England</i>
February 25th	Peter Liddle	<i>tbc</i>
March 25th	Lesley Rowe	<i>Samuel Shaw (1635-1698) : Little man with a big impact</i>

*Tuesdays at 7.30 pm / £4 including light refreshments*

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# LEFT OR RIGHT WING– WHATS IT ALL ABOUT?

Since I wrote my last article about politics, there has been a general election and a change of government. There has been lots of talk about a “change of direction” and the right wing press like the Daily Mail and the Telegraph have been full of dire warnings about what a left wing government will do to the economy and the country.

So I thought it might be interesting to look at the general ideologies of the left and right wings of political thinking. These are generalisations, maybe even caricatures, but let’s try to sketch something out. The right wing politician believes that individuals should be as free as possible to follow their aspirations with minimal interference from the state. Those who work hard in the competitive free market will succeed and make a good living. Having earned their wealth, they believe it is only just that they should keep as much of their income as possible and so their aim is to keep taxes low.

The converse also applies, that those who don’t work hard will be left in relative poverty - and benefits are deliberately kept low as an incentive to work hard and contribute to the economy. The super rich are held up as examples of what can be achieved by enterprise and hard work and the theory is that the rich will spend their money, which will “trickle down” to those less well off and so everyone will benefit in time.

The left wing politician believes that unchecked free market capitalism is completely amoral, and can lead to severe problems in a society. Thus it is necessary for the the state to intervene and impose some checks to ensure a degree of fairness and that the wealthy don’t just become richer at the expense of the poorest . As an example, the unregulated free market made huge bonuses for the bankers in the 1990s and early 2000s, but when the banks collapsed in 2008, the government had to use ordinary citizens’ taxes to rescue the banks.

Left wing politicians would emphasise the common good of a society, served by shared infrastructure like hospitals, roads, schools and justice system. They would say that a competitive market is all well and good but it

isn't a level playing field. There are less well off families, where chronic illness prevents work, or chronic anxiety leads to alcohol or drug addiction, or education isn't valued. The children from such families may struggle at school, are less likely to go to university and aren't likely to come top in the competitive jobs market and earning potential.

The left wing would argue that rather than taxes being a "burden", they are the foundation of a civilised society and can fund the public services that make a society worth belonging to.

Our weaknesses are often our strengths taken to extremes. The strengths of right wing policies can lead to lack of compassion. Theresa May said the Tories were in danger of being the "nasty party". The strengths of left wing policies can lead to situations where it is easier and financially better not to work - giving the "scroungers" so loved by the tabloids! If there is complete job security and no chance of redundancy, what incentive is there to work your hardest and do your best?

How might our Christian values play into our choice between these options. Where did Jesus's sympathies seem to lie when he encountered people and situations as told in the Gospels? Does he side with those who made great wealth at the expense of the less well off? What is His attitude to the poor, the ill, the downtrodden or outcast? How do these attitudes translate into left wing or right wing thinking and policies?

Sometimes in making decisions it can be helpful to look at which is the lesser of the evils.

Is it better to have a society where government policies lead to a small percentage of citizens gaining a lot of benefit, but the majority are becoming relatively poorer, or is it better to have society where the government policies aim to help the majority of people with their education, health and policing, but there is a risk that a small percentage will take advantage of the system and choose not to work and contribute to society? I will leave you to ponder on that one !!

Next time, I will be thinking about the "Far Right" movement which is gaining support in the USA and throughout Europe. It could get scary !!



**JP SPRINGTHORPE & C<sup>o</sup>**

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## MORE CEMETARY STORIES

A few months ago, I wrote about some of the impressive tombstones in Ashby cemetery, and at that time I said that there was one more obelisk gravestone which I would write about in another month – so here it is.

One gravestone to come to my notice more recently is one to William Matthew Bobart. I noticed it because the rest of the cemetery was so neatly trimmed and well-kept but this grave was covered and surrounded by long grasses. I was also intrigued by the unusual surname and the fact that he had died at such a young age, 28.

William was born in Ashby in 1840. His mother was Elizabeth Bobart and his father had the unusual name of Telleman Hodgkinson Bobart. The family were living in Wood Street in 1861 and Telleman was a land agent.

William was registered as a medical practitioner in December 1863 and in December 1865 he passed the examination to become a “licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries.” His application to become a surgeon at the Derby General Infirmary was unsuccessful, but in January 1866 he became the medical officer and public vaccinator for Derby Poor Law Union. After his death in July 1868, the Derby Mercury published an article in which he received much praise from the Poor Law Guardians of that Union. They said “Mr Bobart was peculiarly adapted for the office of poor law medical officer: his quiet unassuming manners and kindly disposition could not but beget confidence and esteem amongst the sick poor whom his professional duties brought him into contact with. The guardians have, by his death, lost a valuable medical officer and the poor a kind and sympathising medical attendant.”

One cannot help but wonder what caused his death at such a young age, but unfortunately the article does not say and I have found no reference to it elsewhere.



*Headstone of William Bobart*

This impressive obelisk marks the resting place of the Staley family and is inscribed to the various members on all four sides. Two family members who are commemorated on the base, but who are not buried in Ashby, are Mary Jane Buck, nee Staley, and brother Daniel Stanley. They died in the sinking of the ship the Empress of Ireland off Canada in 1913. That disaster was the subject of an earlier article in this magazine.



*Staley Family Obelisk*

William and Elizabeth Avery.

The oldest family member to be commemorated and buried in the cemetery is John Staley, born in 1845 to Joseph and Frances Staley. In 1851, he was listed as the fourth of six children living with the parents on The Green. His father was a blacksmith, but no-one else in the household had an occupation. Another brother, Paul, was born in 1851, but his mother died in 1854. In 1868, John married Elizabeth, a dressmaker from Woodside in Staffordshire and they had a daughter, Frances, born the following year. John was working as a blacksmith and the family were living in Derby Road with John's sister-in-law, Elizabeth, a 7 year old cousin William Bissell, and two lodgers,

By 1881, the family had moved to North Street. There were now three more children, Mary 7, John 4 and Daniel 1. (Mary and Daniel are the siblings lost in the disaster mentioned above). Also in the house were uncle John Stanley and cousin William Bissell. John, his uncle and cousin, were all working as blacksmiths. Frances was not at home. She was staying with her aunt, Elizabeth Staley, an unmarried woman working as a grocer in Derby Road.

By 1891, the family had moved to Doles Farm House, near Old Parks, and John was working as a blacksmith and farmer. Two sons, John Joseph and Daniel were still at home and a farm servant, Albert Miller, was also in residence. Daughter Frances, however, was still living in North Street with

her sister Mary and two brothers William Broadhurst, and Bertie.

By 1901 they were back in North Street with John still working as a blacksmith. Two sons, John and Isaac, now lived with them. John junior was a blacksmith but Isaac was only 14.

In 1911, John and Elizabeth were living in North Street in a 6-roomed house. John and his wife were working as hardware dealers. Also in the house was Isaac, unmarried and working as a bricklayer, and granddaughter Frances Staley Buck who was still at school. Elizabeth was recorded as having given birth to 6 children, 2 of whom had died.

John died in 1919 and was buried with his eldest daughter, Frances, who had died a spinster in 1894. Elizabeth did not die until 1939, age 91. She was also buried in the family grave.

John's son, John Joseph, continued to keep the general store in North Street for many years. He served on Ashby Urban Council for 35 years and became the Chairman before retiring in 1957. He died at home in North Street on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1959 at the age of 82.

**Wendy Freer**



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