

Parish Magazine for
Wem, Lee Brockhurst and Weston-under-Redcastle

April 2021



St Peter & St Paul's, Wem
St Peter's, Lee Brockhurst
St Luke's, Weston-under-Redcastle



Rector

The Revd Nick Heron
The Rectory
Ellesmere Road, Wem SY4 5TU

01939 232550

nphm16@aol.com

Retired Clergy: The Revd Mike Cotterell, Preb Rob Haarhoff,
 Canon Dr William Price, The Revd John Tye

Readers Emeriti: Celia Camplin, Cathy Dibben

ST PETER AND ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WEM

Churchwardens:	Elaine Shaw	236575
	Chris Mellings	809521
PCC Lay Chair:	Sybil Farmer	232568
PCC Treasurer:	Caroline Sinclair	232626
Organist & Choir Master:	Rodney Bellamy	01630 652564
Deputy Captain of Bells:	Karen Compton	236561
Sacristans:	June Powell	234412
	& Kath Ridgway	290162
Church Flowers:	Olive Kenward	234774
	& Sybil Farmer	232568
Church Hall Bookings:	Elaine Shaw	07969 511590
Baby and Toddler Group:	Alison Hope	07526 757492

Further details are available on our website:

www.wemcofe.co.uk

Find us on 

@Wemparishchurch

From the Registers of St Peter and St Paul's Wem

At Rest

1 March Frances Patricia Scott

9 March Harry Thomas

11 March Ronald (Ron) Payne

**“Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord and may
light perpetual shine upon them.”**

Book of Remembrance for April

1 st	Edward Henry Jones BEM	13 th	Alexander Howard Pickford
1 st	Sarah Ann 'Nancy' Cliff	14 th	Nathaniel Walter Arrowsmith
2 nd	Cissie Laura Shaw	14 th	Martha Jane Kynaston
2 nd	Ethel May Wilden	15 th	Frank Edward Kynaston
3 rd	Michael Ronald Elson Dean	15 th	Hugh Stanley Robinson, Priest
5 th	Michael Anthony MacElhill	15 th	Richard Paul Dodd
5 th	Thomas Arthur Ashley	15 th	Mark Anthony Winter
5 th	Mike Tipping	17 th	Dennis Tomlinson
7 th	John Edward Johnson	19 th	Philip John Wilden
8 th	Richard William Birch	20 th	Betty Victoria Gwendolen Frances Mayhew
9 th	Ida Mary Brown	24 th	William Edgar Bacon
9 th	Peter Broadhurst	24 th	Nellie Elizabeth Davies
9 th	Ernest Ford Watson Mayhew	24 th	Arthur Bryan Thompson
10 th	Henry James 'Harry' Heffer	24 th	Jessel Elizabeth Jones
10 th	Margaret Jones	25 th	Graham Anthony Hazelwood Atkins, Priest
11 th	Peter Stephen Robinson	26 th	Nigel Elmore
11 th	John Richard Jones Parry	28 th	Marjorie Florence Arrowsmith
12 th	Thomas Carrick Penman		
12 th	David Douglas Price, Priest		

ST PETER'S, LEE BROCKHURST

Church Warden:	Val Lusby	235610
Church Warden and Treasurer:	Roger Ashton	232425
Secretary:	Phoebe Ashton	232425
Vice Chairman:	Tim Wilton-Morgan	07802 735769
Warden Emeritus:	Robert Marsh	200641

ST LUKE'S, WESTON-UNDER-REDCASTLE

Church Warden:	Arthur Fox	01630 685180
Church Warden:	Helen O'Neill	01939 200663
Church Warden (Deputy):	Sylvia Griffiths	01630 685204
Treasurer:	Colin Holloway	01939 200682

The next issue is scheduled to be prepared on **Thursday 22 April** and will be available on **Friday 30 April** after 4.15 pm if we are able to produce a physical magazine. Otherwise it will go out in an electronic version.

Items for the magazine can be left in the drawer at the back of the church in Wem (by 9 am Thursday) or sent to:

pamedgmond@hotmail.com

Any queries about searches in the Whitchurch Road Cemetery or elsewhere

Please contact Mr Tom Edwards of 1 Eckford Park,
Wem, SY4 5HL or on 01939 233932

From the Rectory

Dear Friends,

As I type this on a glorious Spring afternoon it is difficult not to feel optimistic, that first touch of real sun and nature bursting into new life with beauty all around. I'm also looking forward to the wonderful prospect of celebrating Easter and sharing in our Eucharists of The Resurrection. On Palm Sunday morning everything we have missed in worship was exemplified for me as the 9.45 am service in Wem began and 'All Glory Laud and Honour' burst forth – it really hit home that it was the first time I'd heard this live (even if unsung) for 2 years, I was quite choked! Goodness knows how emotional Easter may be?

Yet at the same time I am conscious that not all will be able to come together, perhaps for some time yet; those who do join in-person worship will still be doing so (and quite rightly) with strong precautions that will be strictly adhered to; vigilance is still absolutely necessary and will be our motto for the interim. All of these thoughts are more than a little parochial by way of reflection when set in the context of a pandemic ravaging our world or against our own catastrophic national fatality rate, to say nothing of all the attendant consequences yet to be worked through or addressed. As Bishop Michael writes in his Easter letter: *'We have all been through some very solemn times in the last year, as individuals, as communities, as a nation, as a world'*.

So whilst our Easter will be considerably more corporate than last year in 'Lockdown 1' and although we have signs to be optimistic our Eastertide still has a tragic backdrop, one I would be crass to ignore – but it's not about my sensitivities, it's about the theological truth to the Christian, revealed through Holy Week, which Archbishop Justin speaks eloquently of: *'In His life and death on the Cross, Jesus enters into the pain, uncertainty and confusion that are a part of human life. He lives amongst the sick, the broken and the suffering. He ministers to the outcast and the marginalised. There is no space between us and the God who comes to live among us. God has been close to us in our suffering this year.'*

It is this Christ who God raised to give us hope both for now and all eternity and our Easter proclamations are 'earthed' in an Incarnate faith. The Christ known in the Upper Room to Thomas and the other disciples still bore the scars of his crucifixion. Thomas still proclaimed

‘My Lord and my God’ and so may we on *the* great day and throughout the coming season.

Christ yesterday and today, the beginning and the end,
Alpha and Omega,
all time belongs to him,
and all ages;
to him be glory and power,
through every age and for ever. Amen.

With every good wish,

Nick

The Children's Society

I hope that those of you with Children's Society collection boxes have been able to continue to contribute to them. If you do not have a box but would consider making a donation that would be very welcome. Last year from across the Benefice we were able to send the Society in excess of £100 and it would be good if we could do that again this year.

I am happy to co-ordinate a collection. If anyone from any of the three churches within the Benefice would like me to collect their box or any cash donation I will gladly do that. Please phone me on 01939 236807. Thank you.

Thanks also to those who donated to the World Day of Prayer collection.

Penny Naylor



COVID PROTOCOLS TO KEEP US ALL SAFE

As we now gather across the benefice for Sunday worship it is important to stress that the protocols for covid-safety will remain exactly as when we last met, that is:

A record is kept of all attenders for track and trace, if you have the app on your mobile phone do use the QR codes provided and prominently displayed

Always sanitise hands on entry, after touching anything 'communal' and before Communion

Wear your mask whenever attending worship

At all times keep to physical distancing – the 2 metre rule

As you would expect Communion will remain in 'one kind' and as yet we are not able to sing

Follow any other guidance of the church wardens or sidespeople

There is now the caveat that *all must leave directly after the service* and not 'mingle' in church - outside the 'rule of 6' applies as everywhere else [which sadly doesn't mean talking to 5 others and then moving on to talk to another group].

If or when matters change all will be informed as promptly as possible through both our email system and through the parish notices.

Equally should there, though clearly the last thing we would wish, be an increase in the local R number we will have to re-consider our policy apropos public worship.

As always up to date information may be found on the Church of England website and latest updates on guidance are also on our diocesan website.

Each parish church, has its own Risk Assessment displayed for any to see.



Archbishop Justin Welby's Easter letter to partners and heads of churches around the world.

**"Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living;
for to him all of them are alive." (Luke 20:38)**

This past year has, undoubtedly, been one of the strangest we have ever known. The Covid-19 pandemic transformed the way we live around the world. It has been a year of much loss, grief and suffering for many all over the globe, made worse by our inability to comfort one another in the usual ways. We have been confronted with our mortality and our fragility as human beings, but also with our interdependence and interconnectedness.

In His life and death on the Cross, Jesus enters into the pain, uncertainty and confusion that are a part of human life. He lives amongst the sick, the broken and the suffering. He ministers to the outcast and the marginalised. There is no space between us and the God who comes to live among us. God has been close to us in our suffering this year, He has heard our cries, and He has felt our pain. We have not suffered alone.

In Christ's passion and death, He experiences the depths of humanity. As the Father raises Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit a new day dawns for the world. Death is conquered and overcome, and the one who was dead but is now alive transforms despair into hope and hatred into love. By His resurrection, He calls us all to eternal life with Him. He reveals the truth: that death lies to us. It does not have the final word.

Across the world we look towards the promise of the vaccine, and rebuilding society after the tumult of the last year. We take our places as salt and light in the world, remembering that, as Christians, we are called to keep our eyes fixed not on 'normal' life, but on the eternal life Jesus promises us in His Kingdom. That is our ultimate hope and our salvation. May we find comfort and hope in the God who died for us, and may we proclaim His name in the confidence that He is risen indeed.

+Justin Cantuar:

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby.
Archbishop of Canterbury

Easter Morning

The Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave, reflects on an Easter morning mishap last year and the growing hope that we share as lockdown restrictions begin to lift:

Every year our Easter celebrations begin by lighting a candle, while it is still dark, as a sign of the light and the hope that the risen Jesus brings to us. Most years, we do that just outside a church, with a crowd of people gathered around. Last Easter, all our churches were closed, so early on Easter morning I lit a candle in the shelter in our garden while hundreds of people watched online. It was a solemn moment as I declared: 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever; all time belongs to him and all the ages'. Then I dropped the candle on the floor and it smashed as hundreds watched. It was no longer a solemn moment. For me, it was a moment when I wondered if my world had come to an end. For everybody else, it was a moment of unexpected comedy.

We have all been through some very solemn times in the last year, as individuals, as communities, as a nation, as a world - times far more serious than being embarrassed publicly online. It has sometimes felt as if our world was coming to an end, as all our plans have been shattered. For so many there has been grief, sorrow and loss. Those were also the feelings of Jesus' first friends two thousand years ago as they saw his battered body shoved into the ground. But then something totally unexpected happened, and they found a hope they could not have dreamt of. The world became a different place for them, as they lived their lives with a new sense of purpose and care. Many of us are on the brink of that feeling this Easter. There is a new hope abroad as vaccinations spread, as restrictions are lifted, as the world opens up to us again. We still carry burdens of sadness and anxiety, but we can see a way ahead and we can look forward to meeting and greeting one another again. As we start to do that, we remember that we all belong to one another across our one world. We have together been through a *pan-demic*, which means literally something which affects *all people*. None of us can think of our own safety alone, and our joy is not complete until all have come through this terrible ordeal. To express that practically, you might want to mark your vaccination by making a donation to Christian Aid, in a project supported by the Church of England and the Methodist Church jointly:

<https://giving.tapsimple.org/online/christian-aid/diolichfield>

Many of our churches are open this year, but I will be in my garden again early on Easter morning, online with my candle at 5.45am. I will try not to drop it this time, but whatever happens I know that this great feast will bring joy and hope into my heart. I pray that it may be the same for you.

The Reflections for Mothering Sunday at Saint Peter and Saint Paul's.

What a lovely surprise when I received the email with the Reflections on the Friday before Mothering Sunday. My own worship during this last year was becoming a little stale and when I read them I knew I could make them the focus of my Sunday worship, thus making Mothering Sunday special even in this time of lockdown.

The mix of readings, prayers and pictures was just right, something to remember well into the future. Mothering Sunday is always a special time for everyone as we remember our own mothers as well as meeting or greeting our own children. Unfortunately this year many families were not able to physically get together but I'm sure we all had our own way of celebrating, this year I actually had a card from each of my family on my mantelpiece, something that hasn't always happened in the past, due to the circumstances at the time, service in the Army and abroad or two occasions at least when I was away.

Olive Kenward

Having heard it was very good, I caught up with the Mothering Sunday Reflections which I enjoyed: nice singing and nice to hear familiar voices. They have been so much missed.

Penny Naylor

Our thanks to Fr Nick, Ruth Empson and all who contributed to the beautiful Reflections for Mothering Sunday. If the Reflections triggered thoughts of Mothering Sundays past or present we would love to hear from you.



Our Lord has written the promise of the resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime. – *Martin Luther*

JOSEPH'S EASTER by Canon W. H. Vanstone.

'He's gone,' says Joseph: and, with Pilate's leave,
Eases the nails and lowers him from the tree,
Wraps him in reverent and tender thoughts
And lays him in the cave called Memory.

That cave is deeply hewn in Joseph's heart:
All that's within will always be his own:
In memory's cave the treasure of his past
Is safe forever, walled and sealed by stone.

He's safe,' says Joseph, 'safe in this cool place,
And no one now can take my Lord away:
In years to come I'll still see his dear face
As clearly as I saw it yesterday.'

He's gone,' cries Joseph later, in despair.
But Mary says, 'He's left this word for you:
He cannot rest content to be your past-
So he has risen, to be your future too.'

Sent to us by Olive Kenward

Church Bells

One of the many joys of our English parish churches is their bells, I believe a poll of favourite sounds of England had church bells right up there with other favourites - steam trains (which will gladden a few clerical hearts), the cricket sound of willow on leather, bird song and Big Ben. Some degree of nostalgia in that list, I think.

However the bells in Wem are anything but nostalgia: - they have been rung periodically, or tolled, through the pandemic at significant times; when we couldn't gather for Remembrance Sunday their muffled peal resounded through the town for many to hear; soon we hope to rejoice to hear again their celebrations of weddings; of course their primary purpose is to joyously call the faithful to worship.

None of this happens by 'accident' and Gareth Jones the Tower Captain works incredibly hard to keep the Wem tower in splendid order. Not for nothing did our Quinquennial architect, who has seen many a belfry, single the Wem one out for praise!

Gareth is always on the lookout for new ringers to train and warmly encourages anyone interested to contact him; I've no doubt a 'taster' session could be arranged in due course. Apparently it is really good exercise yet well within the scope of most. Equally I know he would be only too happy to show anyone around the tower which is his, and should be Wem's, pride and joy once covid restrictions permit.

The latest tower report to Wem PCC is below:

Tower Report

Over the past 6 months the tower has undergone some changes, due to Covid I have taken the opportunity to carry out maintenance not just on the bells but also to the clock room and ringing room.

Tolling hammer on the tenor has been put back in action, New ropes for both of the hammers have now been fitted and should last years.

The bell wheels have been treated with an oil-based treatment that has also been applied to the stays (this was carried out 5 years ago and it is recommended that it be done every 3 to 5 years). The frame and bell fittings have been tightened and greased where necessary, the bells have then been coated in a protective paint. Clock hammers have been painted and greased in accordance with George Edge's recommendations.

The clock room has had a good sort out, rubbish removed, a place for the flag to hang when not in use, tools sorted and placed into a box. Clock hammer pull off have been rewired and new pull off rings have been made by George, fitted by Gareth.

The ringing room last painted 4 years ago has been touched up, the old bulky table has been replaced with a smaller one as well as a new chair and cabinet (old wardrobe succumbing to woodworm). I have gifted a clock to the tower dated 1900 as part of my 30th birthday. Pull off hooks all painted red (for safety) and the two tolling hammers now have a ring they can be fastened to when ringing is taking place. New lighting, plug socket and light switch has made a huge difference to this room and we look forward to when we can open the tower to potential ringers.

The staircase lighting has undergone much improvement, light at the bottom of the stairs, lights all the way to the top of the tower with a bolt and padlock on the top door.

Again, I would like to thank all for their support and hope that soon we can ring again and train the new recruits that have expressed an interest to learn.

Gareth

The Church in Wales

One of the results of the pandemic and lockdown has been an intermittent ban on visiting Wales, the land of my birth and of my ordination, where I spent 28 years in ordained ministry. Apart from a day visit to Bala in September 2020 I haven't been to Wales since October 2019, and I long to go there again.

The Anglican Church in (not of) Wales became a distinct Anglican Province when it was disestablished on 31 March 1920, almost 101 years ago, when Wales ceased being part of the Church of England. The Church in Wales has six dioceses (Bangor, Llandaff, Monmouth, St Asaph, St Davids, and Swansea & Brecon), six cathedrals, and six bishops, three of them female, the highest proportion of female bishops in a Province of the Anglican Communion.

The chief pastor is the Archbishop of Wales. The seat of the Archbishop is not fixed in one city, like Canterbury or York, but one of the bishops is elected Archbishop and remains Bishop of his (so far his) diocese. The present Archbishop is the Most Reverend John Davies, Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, with his cathedral at Brecon. He will retire this summer, and then the next Bishop of Swansea and Brecon will be elected (by an Electoral College made up of bishops, clergy, and laity from all over Wales). After that the new Archbishop will be elected (by another Electoral College). Only the six bishops will be candidates to be Archbishop and the successful candidate will remain Bishop of his or her diocese.

One big recent difference between the Church in Wales and the Church of England is that there are no longer any parishes in the Church in Wales. Churches are grouped into Ministry Areas (or Mission Areas in our neighbouring diocese of St Asaph). These can be made up of any number of previous parishes, sometimes up to twenty or more, served by several priests and licensed lay ministers. A Ministry/Mission Area has two churchwardens and a

Ministry/Mission Council, replacing Parochial Church Councils. There is a Ministry/Mission Area Treasurer and one bank account for the Area. Each church may have a local Church Council, but the Ministry/Mission Area Council is the legal authority. Each church has a named cleric as its parish priest, usually shared with other churches. Couples may marry in any church in the Ministry/Mission Area after the banns are called in one of the churches.

I wonder how church life would be different if this Rural Deanery of Wem and Whitchurch with its 20 parishes and 21 churches was a Ministry Area, served by a team of clergy and lay ministers. Or perhaps two Ministry Areas, one around Wem and another around Whitchurch. Would we miss having separate parishes? Could the loyalty to one parish church be transformed into loyalty to a group of churches in a Ministry Area? Is there an advantage to churches being more closely linked to one another so that they can combine more easily to offer their special talents in sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with wider communities?

In a Ministry Area resources are shared and ideally churches join together in their common life of faith and worship, witness and service. I expect that there must be in Wales people who would never attend a church a few miles away from the one they've attended for years. (I know it's true in this part of the world!) The Church in Wales embarked on this restructuring because it was clear that many churches were dying from lack of members. The hope is that much more collaboration between clergy, lay ministers, and congregations will, under God, enable churches to encourage and strengthen one another in their worship and witness.

In the coming years we can look to the west of us and see the results of this new venture.

William Price

BUILD YOUR IMMUNITY - UPDATE

Having written about immunity almost exactly a year ago I thought it opportune to write an update. It has become very apparent to me in the past few days (with reference to the vaccination progress, its efficacy, challenge of new variants and an ongoing programme of annual or even bi-annual jabs to keep this terrible virus at bay) that even with the brilliant technological and scientific work being done, the building of your own personal immunity is the vital element in this unprecedented situation.

The vaccine is not a 100% guarantee of stopping Covid 19 in its tracks although it definitely does reduce the chances of death. Underlying health issues will still bring wellbeing challenges so maximising your mental, physical and nutritional health is definitely a priority daily target, particularly as lockdown is relaxed and social contact expands.

Of course the standard rules for masks, sanitising and keeping your distance in appropriate circumstances will be ongoing for the foreseeable future but human nature, being what it is, will weaken this, so again it is so vital to apply some discipline to building your own personal immunity, not only for yourself but to protect others particularly those who are more vulnerable.

Roger Ashton

Te Whare Tapa Whā

(Te Whare - of the House; Tapa - Walls; Whā – Four)

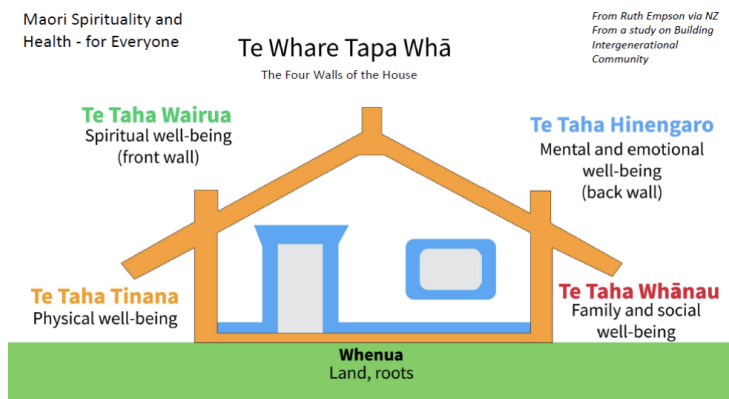
The Four Walls of the House (Mason Durie) represents a native NZ, Māori, philosophy of health and well-being, also called *hauora*. The idea is that if any one (or more) of the four dimensions, or walls, is damaged in some way, then a person, or a collective group of people, can become unbalanced and sick.

Many Māori feel that modern healthcare and health services do not recognise or practice any spiritual dimension of their wellbeing, including their family and their mind (*whānau* and *hinengaro*), and that deficits in

either or both of these lead to decline in their physical health. Mason Durie developed the four walls model to help the NZ healthcare workforce to better understand these Māori (and everyone's) needs.

Despite this, sadly, Maori people do experience greater risk of sickness and morbidity from many (often Western) diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, stroke and depression, and this is seen by Maori as representing an imbalance of their whole, individual and collective, well-being.

Perhaps part of the reason for the imbalances lies in the historical theft and desecration of the critical, but often forgotten, FIFTH wall of the house, the land, or *whenua*. The land, the ground, and all nature, are deeply and mystically embedded in Māori culture, spirituality and language. With the ongoing return of lands from the NZ Crown to the Maori tribes it is hoped that reconciliation and healing will help restore the remaining four walls of the house and improve the lives of all NZers for generations to come.



Can we as witnessing Christians learn something from this in our UK culture of today? We remember the centrality of love and forgiveness in our lives for restoration of all relationships, and how critical this is for health, well-being and healing. And only possible through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and the movement of the Holy Spirit amongst us.

Ruth Empson

Lee Brockhurst WI

'After you are dead' sounds a morbid topic for a W.I. meeting but, on Tuesday 16th March, published historian Eric Jackson from Pontefract revealed the astonishing history of how the demand for bodies to dissect led to grave robbing sometimes on a massive scale – several thousand bodies were stolen annually across the country. In some graveyards bodies did not remain interred for longer than one night but theft of a body was never a criminal offence and this remains true even today. Lee Brockhurst WI were joined by two new members, Gail and Beryl, plus friends from neighbouring Loppington WI for this meeting after which each WI went its separate way for the business section. For Lee Brockhurst this included a limerick competition with 17 entries (half the membership!) This is Ann Hall's excellent winning entry:

There was a grave robber from Lee,
A coward, between you and me.
He never felt brave
When he ransacked a grave
So fled home for a large G & T!

We are all feeling nostalgic about holidays we have enjoyed, and childhood memories for some are of Butlins holiday camps and their famous redcoats. Entertainment entrepreneur and former redcoat, Stephen Wells, will be speaking to the Wem Group of WIs (Clive & Grinshill, Cockshutt, Hadnall, Harmer Hill, Lee Brockhurst and Loppington) about the rise and fall of the Butlins empire, including anecdotes of famous entertainers with whom he has worked, on Wednesday 24th March at 7.30pm.

In complete contrast, at 7.30pm on Tuesday 20th April, Lee Brockhurst WI will be enjoying a (virtual) guided tour of Cambridge in the company of Green Badge Guide Murray Jacobs – and we don't even have to dodge the bicycles! His presentation, 'The Must-See Street in Cambridge' includes stories of a rather eventful visit by a monarch, student antics that hit the front pages and intriguing details of King's College Chapel. If you are missing your days out, or enjoy history, or would like a relaxing evening in the company of like-minded ladies, then you would be most welcome to come along as a guest to this event and give Lee Brockhurst WI a trial run!

Finally, our Brockhurst Bookworms will be debating 'Dubliners' by James Joyce on Monday 12th April at 8pm, and receiving 'Somnambulist' by Essie Fox to be reviewed in our May meeting.

For more information on any of the above, or about Lee Brockhurst W.I., please contact our secretary Julie Woolfenden on 01939 200237 or jjwoolfenden@gmail.com who will be very happy to help you.

Alphege

Alphege is a saint for anyone who refuses to let others suffer on their behalf. His is a tale of courage and self-sacrifice, with some details that are still poignant, even down 1000 years of history.

Alphege began like many other leading churchmen of his time; born of a noble family, with a good education, he decided to become a monk. Alphege joined the Benedictine Abbey at Deerhurst in Gloucestershire, and then became a hermit at Bath, before becoming Abbot of Bath. From there, he was appointed to be Bishop of Winchester, where he was loved for his frugal lifestyle and great generosity towards others.

In 954 King Ethelred the Unready sent Alphege as a peace envoy to the Danes, seeking some relief from the constant Viking raids against England. Alphege secured a time of peace, and in 1006 was made the 29th Archbishop of Canterbury.

But the Viking raids increased again, until the south of England was largely overrun. In 1012 they surrounded Canterbury, and with the help of a treacherous archdeacon, Elfmaer, captured and imprisoned Alphege. A vast sum was demanded by his captors, so much that it would have ruined the people of Canterbury, and so Alphege refused to be ransomed.

This infuriated the Danes, who wanted the gold of Canterbury, not the Archbishop. After seven months of ill-treating him, one night they got very drunk and began pelting him with ox-bones from their feast, until in a frenzy they hacked him to death with an axe.

Alphege was mourned as a national hero and venerated as a martyr: he had given his life in order to protect his people from harm.

The History of the PCC

*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. **Romans 8:28***

When you next attend a PCC meeting, which may now be by Zoom rather than in person, you could say “Happy 100th Birthday!” to your colleagues. It is a hundred years since The Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1921 which was an important stage in the birth of PCCs.

During the First World War army chaplains found that many men who thought of themselves as church goers were ignorant of the basics of religion. This led to a new interest in mission for the church. There were national days of prayer during the war and in 1915 there was a National Mission of Repentance and Hope. After the Armistice there was a desire for change in the national church and this led to a discussion about the links with the state.

There was a concern that Parliament was often slow to enact laws for the church and many people felt the national church should have more authority to govern itself. The setting up of Parochial Church Councils was part of that process. In the past a lot of local secular administration had been the responsibility of churchwardens in the vestry meetings. Gradually their functions were passed to local councils. Most of their remaining powers were transferred to PCCs by The Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1921.

The purpose behind these new councils was to give the laity a more prominent role in parish life to go alongside the deaconry, diocesan and national councils which became the synods and have an important role in church life. Some conservative clerics were concerned at this reform and felt that congregations would pick and choose clergy or object to a new incumbent chosen by a patron.

A leading churchman in the reform movement was William Temple who became leader of the 'Life and Liberty movement' which hugely influenced the move towards democratic government in the Church of England. He was Bishop of Manchester in the 1920s, Archbishop of York from 1929 to 1942 and Archbishop of Canterbury (1942-4).

He had been a secretary of the National Mission of Repentance and Hope in 1916 and became chairman and joint leader with H. R. (Dick) Sheppard of the Life and Liberty movement. 'We demand liberty for the Church of England' he declared at a meeting in July 1917. One difficult issue was what level of commitment to church life enabled a person to be eligible to serve on a church council. It was decided that anyone on the electoral roll whether or not they attended services or communion regularly could participate. The then Bishop of Oxford resigned over the issue because he thought that councils must only be made up of committed regular communicants.

The next Bishop of Oxford in his monthly diocesan magazine endorsed the principle of democracy and reassured people that it was a not negative step or would limit the powers of clergy or wardens. He encouraged the congregations to consider how to use each other's gifts.

It is strange to think that the proposal for clergy and congregation to work together for the benefit of the church could be controversial. The birth of PCCs was a major step in the life of the church. What will the next one hundred years bring?

WHITCHURCH FOODBANK
HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

Now we have returned to public worship perhaps one small, yet critical for someone living very near to you, gesture of thanksgiving might be to bring a donation to the Food Bank to leave in the usual place in church?

Amongst the items they are particularly short of at present are:

Tins of corned beef Cereals Tins of spaghetti hoops
Tinned pies Packets of mashed potato
Tins of rice pudding Tins of meat
Tins of custard Tins of fruit
Tins of peas Bottles of cordial/squash
Tins of carrots Jars of jam
Tins of sweetcorn Chocolate snack biscuits
Tins of tuna Sponge puddings

Non-perishable food of any description plus essential toiletries will always be gratefully received – an up to date list of specific shortages is always available on their website (underneath).

**If as yet you feel unable to attend you can still support
in the following three ways. -**

The Food Bank is still open to accept donations at their base, Bargates Hall Whitchurch, in the usual way between 09.30-11.30 on Tuesdays & Fridays. Social distancing will be maintained. There are two other alternatives:

The Wem Co-op will take donations, please ask staff for the exact location of the 'bin'.

Or via online giving, please go to their website - whitchurch.foodbank.org.uk where donations can be made on line.

***'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty
and you gave me drink'***
Matthew 25.35a