

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

June 2021



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



**Rector**

The Revd Nick Heron  
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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 Chris Mellings	236575 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 & Kath Ridgway	234412 290162
Church Flowers:	Olive Kenward & Sybil Farmer	234774 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](http://www.wemcofe.co.uk)

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@Wemparishchurch

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

## **Holy Baptism**

22 May    Mason Peter Heron

**“One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who  
is above all and through all and in all.”**

## **At Rest**

7 May    Denise Gloria Evanson

25 May    Molly Patricia Hoffmann

26 May    Gerald (Gerry) Holden

28 May    Allan Hugh Scott DFM (Interment)

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

## **Book of Remembrance for June**

1 <sup>st</sup>	John Austin Gregory	18 <sup>th</sup>	Kenneth Sherwood
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Ethel Shufflebottom	18 <sup>th</sup>	Eileen Gladys Johnson
3 <sup>rd</sup>	William Millington	20 <sup>th</sup>	George William Morris
4 <sup>th</sup>	Edward Brian Bennett	20 <sup>th</sup>	Arthur 'Phil' Jones
4 <sup>th</sup>	Agnes May Salisbury	20 <sup>th</sup>	Joan Margaret Dawson
8 <sup>th</sup>	Herbert Frank Higgins		Russell
9 <sup>th</sup>	Margaret Daffodil Haarhoff	21 <sup>st</sup>	Bessie Herriman
9 <sup>th</sup>	Sarah Ann 'Sally' Archer	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Samuel Ernest Coles
	Pegrum	23 <sup>rd</sup>	George James Rich
10 <sup>th</sup>	Reginald Ernest Harper	24 <sup>th</sup>	Rosemary Beryl Davenport
10 <sup>th</sup>	John Tudor	24 <sup>th</sup>	Gerald Gordon Shepherd
10 <sup>th</sup>	Archie Kevin Powell	25 <sup>th</sup>	Brian Dennis Birch
11 <sup>th</sup>	Clive Raymond Shaw	25 <sup>th</sup>	Trixie May Styles
16 <sup>th</sup>	Olive Annie Groom	26 <sup>th</sup>	Mary Connolly
17 <sup>th</sup>	Michael James Peel	28 <sup>th</sup>	Elizabeth Mary Catherine
17 <sup>th</sup>	Walter Eric Cliff		'Bette' Rich
17 <sup>th</sup>	Peter Geoffrey Bullen	29 <sup>th</sup>	Albert Thomas Evans
		30 <sup>th</sup>	Elsie May Jones

## **St Peter & St Paul's Rotas**

### **Intercessions**

<b>June 6</b>	<b>Katharine</b>
<b>June 13</b>	<b>Ruth</b>
<b>June 20</b>	<b>June</b>
<b>June 27</b>	<b>Olive</b>
<b>July 4</b>	<b>Keith</b>

### **Ministrants**

<b>June 6</b>	<b>Ruth</b>
<b>June 13</b>	<b>Kath</b>
<b>June 20</b>	<b>Ruth</b>
<b>June 27</b>	<b>Simon</b>

### **Readers**

<b>June 6</b>	<b>NT Rodney</b> <b>G Helen</b>
<b>June 13</b>	<b>NT David</b> <b>G John</b>
<b>June 20</b>	<b>NT Thelma P</b> <b>G Ruth</b>
<b>June 27</b>	<b>NT Katharine</b> <b>G June</b>
<b>July 4</b>	<b>NT Thelma C</b> <b>G Karl</b>

## **ST PETER'S, LEE BROCKHURST**

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

**ST LUKE'S,  
WESTON-UNDER-REDCASTLE**

Church Warden:	Frank Hosie-Kingdom	01939 200618
Church Warden:	Helen O'Neill	01939 200663
Church Warden (Deputy):	Sylvia Griffiths	01630 685204
Treasurer:	Colin Holloway	01939 200682
Church Warden Emeritus	Arthur Fox	01630 685180

**From the Registers of  
St Luke's Weston-Under-Redcastle**

**At Rest**

8 May Gillian Elizabeth Liver (Interment)

16 May Brian George Dawkes (Interment)

21 May Daphne Goodall Robinson

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

**SUNDAYS IN JUNE**

**ACROSS THE BENEFICE**

DATE	SUNDAY	WEM	WESTON	LEE
6 June	1 <sup>st</sup> After Trinity	8.00 am 9.45 am	9.30 am	11.15 am
13 June	2 <sup>nd</sup> After Trinity	8.00 am 9.45 am	9.30 am	11.15 am
20 June	3 <sup>rd</sup> After Trinity	8.00 am 9.45 am	11.00 am	11.15 am
27 June	4 <sup>th</sup> After Trinity	8.00 am 9.45 am	11.00 am	11.15 am
4 July	5 <sup>th</sup> After Trinity	8.00 am 9.45 am	11.00 am	To join Weston or Wem

## **Notes:**

Sunday 1 June is Environment Sunday.

Sunday 20 June is World Refugee Day.

Where some of the service times have altered it is due to Permission to Officiate Clergy holidays and other commitments

## **OUR CALENDAR FOR JUNE**

Major Feast Days and Festivals which adorn this month include:

**Thursday 3 June. CORPUS CHRISTI. Day of Thanksgiving for Holy Communion**

*Almighty and heavenly Father,  
we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament  
you have given us the memorial  
of the passion of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Grant us so to reverence  
the sacred mysteries of his body and blood,  
that we may know within ourselves  
and show forth in our lives the fruits of his redemption  
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.*

1 Corinthians 11. 23-29

John 6. 53-58

**Friday 11 June. St Barnabas the Apostle**

**Thursday 24 June. The Birth of John the Baptist**

**Tuesday 29 June. SS Peter & Paul Apostles**

*Almighty God,  
whose blessed apostles Peter and Paul  
glorified you in their death and in their life:  
grant that your Church,  
inspired by their teaching and example,  
and made one by your Spirit,*

*may ever stand firm upon the one foundation,  
Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.*

1 Peter 2. 19-end  
Matthew 16. 13-19

As always you will find the other Saints and Holy Days for the month later in the magazine, June seems to have a particularly rich variety and cross-section of these.

Monday 14 June marks the beginning of **World Refugee Week** and Sunday 20 World Refugee Day. Over this period please pray for all refugees and the many agencies that do God's work in supporting them

Saturday 26 is **Victims of Torture Day**. As always, but especially on this day pray for all victims of torture, the work of Amnesty International and the eradication of this evil practice.

Lord Jesus, you experienced in person torture and death  
as a prisoner of conscience.  
You were beaten and flogged and sentenced to an agonizing death  
though you had done no wrong.  
Be now with prisoners of conscience throughout the world.  
Be with them in their fear and loneliness,  
in the agony of physical and mental torture, and in the face of execution and death.  
Stretch out your hands in power to break their chains.  
Be merciful to the oppressor and the torturer, and place a new heart within them.  
Forgive all injustice in our lives, and transform us to be  
instruments of your peace, for by your wounds we are healed.

*Amnesty International, Prayers for Peace.*

*“Therefore since we are surrounded by so great a cloud  
of witnesses....let us run with perseverance  
the race that is set before us”*



## UPDATE

I'm not quite sure who might be finding constant Benefice Magazine updates on Church covid-19 responses more 'Groundhog Day' you, dear reader, or me! Certainly we can all be forgiven for having feelings of déjà vu and perhaps on occasion a little frustration. HOWEVER, that is all it is isn't it? - Compared with the huge picture surrounding us, a *little* whatever....

As said at all our church annual meetings over the past fortnight I believe it is good for us to recognize and remember that all we are doing, and far more significantly our wider Church does, are a part of keeping one another safe and gradually moving things forward to the better place we all yearn for. As such these acts are borne out of care, concern for others and unselfishness so may be best understood as more than a duty – rather our corporate being as the Body of Christ founded on love. More prosaically, yet realistically, few things are more frustrating than a lack of clarity – so where are we now?

From our C of E Church, the latest update, dated 20 May: *"The Revd Dr Brendan McCarthy, the Church of England's adviser on medical ethics and health policy, said: "The changes in guidance which come into effect today [20 May] represent a relatively modest step along the road of easing restrictions affecting places of worship in common with many other public places.*

*"The increase in maximum numbers at weddings and the lifting of the cap on those permitted to attend funerals will be welcome by many families.*

*"A more extensive easing of restrictions is expected next month when England is due to move to step four on the Government's 'reopening' roadmap.*

*"However, despite major progress in the rollout of vaccinations, recent developments around the world – especially the tragic events in India – show that there is still uncertainty ahead and we will continue to encourage a measured approach to the path forward as we seek to protect the most vulnerable."*

In short this means that 30 may now attend weddings and baptisms (if these are not in the usual morning service) and the number possible for church funerals is dictated strictly by the capacity of the individual church. Clearly depending on how family units or bubbles are comprised makes a significant difference to capacity in a smaller church. On the matter of family units or household bubbles, again from the C of E website: - *"From Step 3 groups of 6, or larger groups where everyone present is from the same two households (or linked*

*support bubble), can sit together. Everyone else will need to observe appropriate physical distancing at all times.”*

As mentioned above appropriate distancing remains essential as do all our other protocols detailed elsewhere in this magazine. We are, as said, at 'Step 3' - we wait out on what Step 4 may, or may not, bring - this scheduled for 'no earlier' than 21 June. Rest assured, once I know I will be passing on asap.

***With many thanks for all you are continuing to do, keep taking care,  
Nick***

### **Holy Days in the June Church Calendar**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Justin, Martyr at Rome, c165
- 3<sup>rd</sup> The Martyrs of Uganda, 1886 & 1978
- 4<sup>th</sup> Petroc, Abbot of Padstow, 6<sup>th</sup> century
- 5<sup>th</sup> Boniface (Wynfrith) of Crediton, Bishop and Apostle of Germany, Martyr, 754
- 6<sup>th</sup> Ini Kopouria, Founder of the Melanesia Brotherhood, 1945
- 8<sup>th</sup> Thomas Ken, Bishop of Bath & Wells, Non-Juror, Hymn writer, 1711
- 9<sup>th</sup> Columba, Abbot of Iona, Missionary, 597
- 9<sup>th</sup> Ephrem of Syria, Deacon, Hymn writer, 373
- 11<sup>th</sup> **Barnabas the Apostle**
- 14<sup>th</sup> Richard Baxter, Puritan Divine, 1691
- 15<sup>th</sup> Evelyn Underhill, Spiritual writer, 1941
- 16<sup>th</sup> Richard, Bishop of Chichester, 1253
- 16<sup>th</sup> Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham, Philosopher, 1752
- 17<sup>th</sup> Samuel & Henrietta Barnett, Social Reformers 1913 & 1936
- 18<sup>th</sup> Bernard Mizeki, Apostle of the MaShona, Martyr, 1896
- 19<sup>th</sup> Sundar Singh of India, Sadhu, Evangelist, 1929
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Alban, first Martyr of Britain, c250
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Ethelreda, Abbess of Ely, c678
- 24<sup>th</sup> **The Birth of John the Baptist**
- 27<sup>th</sup> Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, Teacher of the Faith, 444
- 28<sup>th</sup> Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, Teacher of the Faith, c220
- 29<sup>th</sup> **Peter and Paul, Apostles**

**SATURDAY 26<sup>th</sup> JUNE**

**DAY OF PRAYER**

**7am – 7pm**

Acts 1:14

*‘They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers’*

On our annual prayer day we aim to create a continuous 12 hour chain of prayer. Inspirations will be provided on-line and (Covid restrictions permitting) in the church building.

Do join with the church community for whatever time you are able to spend during the day. You might like to join with a partner to pray together.

To ensure at least 2 people are praying at any given time, please consider committing to a specific hour during the day.

To sign up, please contact Thelma Pugh:  
01939 232273 [thelmapugh0@gmail.com](mailto:thelmapugh0@gmail.com)

The next issue is scheduled to be prepared on **Thursday 17 June** and will be available on **Friday 25 June** 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](mailto:pamedgmond@hotmail.com)**

## St Peter's Lee Brockhurst Annual Parochial Council Meeting

The APCM took place in the church on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7.30pm, there were 12 present. After opening with prayer the Rector moved swiftly through the three Agendas. There were no changes in the officers or the PCC membership.

Discussion took place at the PCC Meeting about key services and fundraising events. The first is to be a Strawberry Tea at Brockhurst Farm hosted by Roger and Phoebe Ashton, this will hopefully take place on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> July between 2.00pm and 4.00pm. Entry will be by pre-purchased ticket only.

The Harvest Festival will take place on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September followed on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> by a Harvest Supper and Auction. The Autumn Fayre will be held on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November. Both the Harvest Supper and the Autumn Fayre will take place in the newly refurbished Village Hall.

Carol Singing on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December. All events dependent on Covid-19!

Those elected at the various meetings:

Church Wardens: Valerie Lusby and Roger Ashton  
Secretary and Electoral Roll Officer: Phoebe Ashton  
Treasurer: Roger Ashton

PCC Members: Tim Wilton-Morgan (Vice Chairman), Pam Clarke, Judith Lester and Margaret and Robert Marsh.

## **WEM PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MATTERS**

The PCC has been meeting remotely through Zoom during lockdown, a new experience for many, but enabling business to go forward almost as if we were able to meet in person.

The five-yearly architect's report on the state of the church building has led to some major decisions having to be taken. A very generous legacy will mean that maintenance can soon be carried out on the upper portions of the side windows, which are showing signs of old age. Another area of concern is the parquet flooring at the front of the nave, which is becoming increasingly uneven. And as

those who were in church one Sunday in this chilly spring will remember, the heating has required some major repairs.

When we finally get to meet in the church hall again we shall all find it more comfortably warm. The new heating being installed is thanks to a government grant, via the County Council, to compensate community meeting places for losses incurred as a result of the pandemic.

It's not all about the buildings. At their May meeting the PCC heard about moves afoot for all the parishes in the Deanery to work more closely together to fulfil the Church's mission to our communities more effectively. This is still in its very early stages, and there will be much more discussion to come. A decision was also made to become a member of Inclusive Church, a grouping which focuses on our commitment to be a place where everyone is truly accepted and welcomed in the spirit of Christian love.

Hopefully we shall be seeing each other face to face again soon.

At the Annual Meetings held on 24 May the following were elected/appointed:

**CHURCH WARDENS:** Chris Mellings and Elaine Shaw

**Treasurer:** Caroline Sinclair    **Lay Vice-Chair** Sybil Farmer

**PCC MEMBERS**

Ruth Empson  
Cathy Dibben  
Keith Gosney  
Tim Heavisides  
Sue McLeod  
David Murray  
June Powell  
Neil Price  
Kath Ridgway  
**Secretary** - Katharine Murray

Ruth and David are also Deanery Synod Representatives and Chris and Tim are St Peter's School Foundation Governors.

## **Clearing the Jungles**

### **Edstaston Vicarage**

In 1962 my father, Jack Edwards who was a Churchwarden at St Peter and St Paul's at that time, asked my Uncle Stanley and me to clear the grounds of Edstaston Vicarage in just six weeks in readiness for The Rev Preb Basil Morson, the new Rector at Wem. (The Vicar of Edstaston was residing at the Whixall Vicarage at that time and the new Rectory in Ellesmere Road, Wem was still under construction.) The garden was like a jungle. Fruit trees were growing into each other and as for the lawn!! When I went home for lunch on the first day my father asked me what progress had been made. When I told him it was going to be a long job he admitted that he had not in fact been to see the site. He came to have a look that afternoon and merely said "Do the best you can".

I also had the task of taking a ton of coal from Mr Arthur Bailey's premises at Wem Railway Station to the Vicarage. Bearing in mind that the canal bridge was still in place at that time, bringing the coal by tractor and trailer was somewhat hairy!

Prebendary Morson was inducted at Wem on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1962.

### **Wem Churchyard**

Again, as Churchwarden, my father "volunteered" me to cut the grass around St Peter and St Paul's. Mr George Jones, who had until then cut the front lawn and the area by the church door, wished to give up the work and no-one else had come forward to take over from him. My brother, John, cut the front lawn and I worked on the Mill Street side of the rear area. By July 1962 the grounds were tidy. The high wall, which in those days ran along the Mill Street edge of the churchyard, was taken down. (There was a pathway behind the wall and a little gate in the wall leading on to Mill Street.) Preb Morson told me I could light bonfires but, first of all, I needed to cut down the jungle between the powerhouse and Mr Graty's house next to the church (now the "purple" house). Mr Bert Rogers of Rogers Garage gave me the petrol for the mower free of charge. I looked after the church grounds on a voluntary basis from April 1962 to July 1969 when I moved from the area.

## **Whitchurch Road Cemetery**

In 1997 I began placing sweet peas on the grave of Mr Henry Eckford VMH but to do this I had to cut my way through to the grave from the centre path of the cemetery. In July 2002 I decided to do something about clearing the undergrowth in the cemetery. So it was that on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2002 I began to clear the brambles, weeds and trees to the left of the cemetery chapel using a hand hook. (I could not use a scythe as I could not see what was hidden under the jungle!) The only visitor I had was a white cat who came regularly to see what I was doing. When I had finished clearing the left-hand side, a retired farmer came to have a look and said to me "you must be mad, lad". The right-hand side of the chapel was covered in gorse bushes, brambles and trees and I finished clearing that area by the following March.

My next task was to clean all the graves in the cemetery. I re-aligned the edging stones that had sunk into the ground and also, with help, restored to their rightful positions the crosses that had also sunk.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2007 a television crew came to Wem. Cameraman, Peter Smith, and interviewer, Susan Jones, came with Mr Barrie Eckford (great-grandson of Henry Eckford) and me (as Archivist of the Sweet Pea Society) to the Whitchurch Road Cemetery. Barrie spoke about sweet peas and I spoke about Eckford family history.

In November 2006 it was necessary for me to have foot surgery which put an end to my work in the cemetery and the Friends of the Cemetery group was formed in 2008.

In 2003 I received the honour of becoming an Honorary Townsman of Wem in recognition of my research into the history of the town and my large collection of photographs, and also for my dedication in rejuvenating the cemetery in Whitchurch Road.

Some time later I pruned the bushes around St Peter and St Paul's, again on a voluntary basis.

Tom Edwards

## **Safeguarding Update – Property and Social Care Fees**

Some readers may know that I am currently the Safeguarding Officer for the Benefice, but others will also know that in my 'day job', I'm a lawyer working for a local firm of solicitors.

My main brief in my day job is dealing with property transactions – mostly involving buying and selling houses, but I also deal with Land Registry registrations of unregistered houses, mortgages and Transfers of Equity. As a result of this, I have seen a trend in recent years of older members of the community entering into Equity Release mortgages, transferring property to other family members in an effort to avoid care fees, and also entering into Deferred Payment schemes with the local authority in relation to care fees. These last three aspects are a bit of a legal minefield, and have raised a few issues that I felt needed to be brought to wider attention.

The most important point to make will always be this – these are all complex legal issues and should only ever be entered into with independent legal advice of a solicitor. Most firms of solicitors will make a charge for this advice, however, it will be invaluable in the long run, as we have had several instances where clients have come to us having been given inaccurate, misleading and in some cases, completely untrue information from third parties. Equity Release mortgages are not for everyone and can lead to enormous amounts of interest and administration costs. For example, a recent matter involved an Equity Release mortgage such as this, which had been taken out around 10 years ago for a small loan of around £10,000. When the mortgage was paid off recently when the house was finally sold, the eventual repayment was over £118,000. Given that the eventual sale price was around £135,000 this made a huge impact on the sale proceeds that were then available for the family.

With regard to local authority care fees, this is perhaps the most pertinent matter that needs to be brought to wider attention. It is well known that local authorities are able to recoup elderly care fees, and are able to apply for a Deferred Payment Charge over a property where the owner of a property has gone into residential care, but does not have capital in bank accounts capable of funding the care. However, we have recently had a client who had been advised by the Council that a Deferred Payment Charge prevented the property being sold at all and could not even be rented out. This is completely incorrect, but it is worth noting that the Deferred Payment will enable the Council to take the value of any care fees incurred, up to 90% of the value of a property at the point of sale, to include interest and administration costs. In addition, if there is a desire to rent a property, which is logical as it will help to boost income and



prevent a property sitting empty if the owner is in care, it can be done with the Council's consent and under a standard Assured Shorthold Tenancy.

However, the biggest issue which we have now come across a number of times, has involved there being an assumption, because the Council tell someone, or their family, that care fees are chargeable. In reality, just because the local authority say so, legally this doesn't mean that they are. There are several instances where fees are not payable, depending on circumstances, and this information is not something that Local Authorities necessarily make readily available.

Instances of fast tracking, requiring specialist nursing care and even being made subject to Sectioning or Deprivation of Liberty under the Mental Health Act, mean that the Council are specifically prevented from charging care fees in any way at all, either directly or under a Deferred Payment Scheme. Any attempt by the local authority to charge care fees in those circumstances, through direct charges, means testing or Deferred Payment must be challenged.

It is, therefore, important to ensure that family are fully aware of the circumstances under which any family member is admitted into care, to ensure that the Council do not attempt to charge fees where they are not entitled to do so. As stated, the Council will not make this information known – the occasions when we have challenged this recently have been where family have mentioned in passing that fees were being charged, but we were aware that a Section or Deprivation of Liberty Order had been made, and the Council were required to admit that they had been charging illegally, and in one case, a large sum of money was refunded.

Where any family member has Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPA) for Health & Wellbeing, you are entitled to be involved in the decisions to admit a loved one into care. If your loved one has dementia and requires Deferred Payment to be set up, then this will also require a Lasting Power of Attorney relating to Property and Affairs. LPAs can only be drawn up whilst a donor still has capacity to give the Power. It is essential, therefore, that these are done well in advance, whilst your loved one is still able to give instructions and understand what they are signing and why.

I appreciate that these are heavy topics to consider, but I can only reiterate the need to obtain legal advice in any circumstances such as these and hope that, by heeding this advice, some heartache and unnecessary expense in the long run can be saved.

Alexandra Lusby, Safeguarding Officer and Chartered Legal Executive

## **A Trip to Iona - St Columba and the Abbey**

For a very long time now I have wanted to visit Iona, hardly even knowing where it was. Filled with the fascination for St Columba and the prospect of visiting the Abbey, I booked a few days camping on the Isle of Mull.

I'd only ever been to Glasgow and Edinburgh city centres for work, so making my way to the Western Isles and Mull in particular was something of an adventure.

What a joy to drive the M6 north through the Lake District, dramatic in the rain and clouds. Sadly, after bypassing Glasgow the clouds descended lower, and the further north I went the less and less I saw. 8 hours after leaving Wem I arrived in a damp and dreary Oban 4 hours early for the ferry across to Mull! As the rain poured down I seriously considered checking into the Holiday Inn and forgetting all about my camping trip, visions of pitching my tent in a huge puddle and a campsite awash with tents floating towards the sea kept haunting me.

The time for ferry departure duly arrived, the last one of the day, and embarking proved simple and straightforward and as we left Oban the weather miraculously cleared. Though the clouds were dark everything began to dry out but retained that sparkling fresh greenness that only the rain brings. The 45 minute crossing was truly magical with the mysterious and dark brooding waters of the sounds adding drama to the scene. Luckily, the sea was calm – I am not the greatest of travellers – and by the time we arrived on Mull my spirits were mightily lifted.

Arrival at my campsite lifted my spirits even further: clean, tidy and most importantly an amazingly well drained tent-friendly area looking out to sea. I pitched my tent and quickly fell fast asleep having been up since 4.30 am – if it rained in the night I didn't notice and remarkably I woke up dry and warm

The next day I drove the scenic route (are there any routes that are not scenic on Mull?) via the Benmore Estate and along an almost deserted coastal road with sheep and lambs that masqueraded as grey boulders strewn everywhere on the beaches and steep mountain slopes. The scenery was awe-inspiring and I kept having to stop to take pictures, but finally reached Fionnphort where the passenger ferry leaves for Iona. I duly bought

my ticket from a lady with pink hair on the quayside, the booking office being very shut indeed.

As soon as I stepped on the island there was this sense of beauty and calm, cold and windy but sunny and my heart was singing as I headed towards the Nunnery and the Abbey. My tour of the Abbey was scheduled for 1pm, in non-Covid times I suspect the Abbey would have been heaving, instead there were 8 of us.

Aside from the deep peaceful presence in the Abbey itself and the mystery and beauty of the celtic crosses greeting you as you enter the Abbey grounds, as you walk towards the Abbey you realise you are walking the steps of thousands, maybe millions, who have gone before, on pilgrimages to this place. Pausing at Maclean's cross, like so many before, I silently offered thanks and praise for this place and prayers for many. This is one of several of what are called the high crosses on the island with their magnificent size and sophisticated carving including the traditional Celtic boss and snake design, the snake representing transformation (shedding of an old skin) and the bosses being the groups of three balls representing the Trinity, most evident on the large St John's cross now in the Abbey Museum. Our tour of the Abbey began with the crosses as we neared the small chapel of St Columba at the Abbey entrance and finished in the cloisters where the sculpture of the "Descent of the Spirit" (one of only three in the world) takes centre stage. Yet this mystical piece of art is surrounded by the most amazing stone carvings created when the cloisters were relatively recently restored, such variety and skill showing all the flowers of Scotland. The Cloisters felt a very special place.

After climbing the hill and getting a 360 degree view of the island, I made my way to the pristine, sandy and deserted beaches. Momentarily I was "beamed" half way around the world to NZ. Enjoying the Iona ruggedness and peace, the blue sky and the cold water as I paddled in the sea, remarking to myself that it was 10.5 months since I'd last seen the sea (in NZ).

Next time ... and there has to be ... I feel as if I will try to be part of the Iona Community; I used their daily prayer during the NZ Covid lockdown, enjoying the diversity of voices, the Scottish Island voices in particular, and here in the UK I enjoy the Celtic prayer book tradition.

## Remembering St Columba's prayer

*My dearest Lord, be thou a bright flame before me,  
be thou a guiding star above me,  
be thou a smooth path beneath me,  
be thou a kindly shepherd behind me,  
today and ever more, today and ever more.*



And the Celtic Canticle that I love

*Christ, as a light  
illumine and guide me.  
Christ, as a shield  
overshadow me.  
Christ under me;  
Christ over me;  
Christ beside me on my left and my right.  
This day be within and without me,  
lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.  
Be in the heart of each to whom I speak;  
in the mouth of each who speaks unto me.  
This day be within and without me,  
lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.  
Christ as a light;  
Christ as a shield;  
Christ beside me on my left and my right.*



Certainly, I felt hugely blessed to spend time on Iona and felt hugely restored by getting away to such a beautiful and holy place; thanks and praise be to God. Our God is Good.

Ruth Empson

## Celia's Bible Study - Summer 2021

Hi everyone, I hope you've all been keeping well over these last few months. It seems a long time since we met. Where did 2020 go let alone 2021? I expect most of you have had your second vaccine by now and I hope you are feeling fighting fit, even though we are all obeying the rules and not spoiling the after effects.

With this lockdown I have missed my visits to Wem, in fact it was before Christmas that I last came over, BUT GOOD NEWS. Unless things change we shall be on the way to being out of this dreadful time by the end of June – so... we can start our Bible Study sessions in July.

Just in case you've lost the dates, we shall meet at Olive's house on **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July at 10.00am.** We usually start with a drink and one of Olive's splendid biscuits before we start using our brains.

We were going to have a look at St Peter's Letters, I expect you know them off by heart by now. We'll keep to our plans and start them, unless you prefer to study something else. I have got the leaflets prepared but have also looked at the Creeds if you want to do them instead. Let me know, I'll bring both leaflets. Incidentally if you want to get in touch with me use my mobile number 07533 859612, the landline is the other end of the house and I don't hear it all the time.

If anyone would like to join us, please feel free, you will be very welcome, just bring your Bible.

See you all on 21<sup>st</sup> July,

Celia [Reader Emeritus]

## Lee Brockhurst WI

Having been enlightened in May on the surprisingly fascinating subject of '**the history of underwear**' by speaker Liza Jones, zooming from Norwich (raising money for the East Anglian Air Ambulance), Lee Brockhurst were eagerly looking forward to their first physical encounter. This took the form of our '**Summer Strollers**' inaugural walk – postponed from May 2020. Twelve intrepid walkers, ramblers and shufflers, plus one dog, ambled around Lee Hill, enjoying each others' company and revelling in the freedom to socialise in the open air. It was proclaimed an outstanding success, thanks to organiser **Rachel Bailey**, and plans are 'afoot' for the next ramble on **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June**, meeting at Clive church at **7.15pm**. If you'd like to know more about our walks, please email Rachel on [rachel56bailey@outlook.com](mailto:rachel56bailey@outlook.com) or phone 07909 982609.

Roger and Phoebe Ashton are hosting our first face-to-face monthly meeting in their Dutch barn, and have kindly provided us with a speaker as well as a venue! Roger's cousin, **Hilary MacBean**, is a noted ornithologist and will be teaching us to identify our local birds from their birdsong. This promises to be a relaxing and enlightening evening, complimented by the **breath-taking vista** from **Brockhurst Farm** (SY4 5SB). So, if you've ever wondered what is making that cawing, cooing, hooting, trilling or whistling!... come along on **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June** at **7.30pm** to learn more. (All necessary Covid guidelines will be followed and you are encouraged to bring your own hand sanitiser please).

Our Brockhurst Bookworms will be getting together in the garden of member **Julie Davies** on Monday **5<sup>th</sup> July** at 8pm to review 'Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter' by Tom Franklin, an unusual 'who dunnit'. We are all looking forward to the discussion (as well as the glass of wine accompanying it!) especially after the animated opposing opinions at our last book review.

As we emerge, hopefully, from the pandemic, our '**What's the Point**' craft club will also be resuming with a session making 'morsbags' (a type of tote bag) for the **Shropshire Federation of WIs** to give away at a climate change awareness event. This will be in our newly renovated village hall on Tuesday **7<sup>th</sup> September** from 7.30pm. For more information about our craft club, contact organiser Meg Bilson on [meg.bilson@gmail.com](mailto:meg.bilson@gmail.com) or 01939 250252.

Lee Brockhurst is a very welcoming W.I., as the growth in our numbers proves. If you would like to know more, please contact our secretary Julie Woolfenden on 01939 200237 or [jjwoolfenden@gmail.com](mailto:jjwoolfenden@gmail.com).

WHITCHURCH FOODBANK  
HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

*It would be very easy to imagine that as the local impact of the pandemic eases in terms of restrictions things are easier all round – in terms of food poverty nothing could be further from the truth.*

*It is so important that we keep up our support to this essential social need*

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).

**You can support in the following ways. -**

Leave food in your church at the designated point either when attending or when the church is open

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 Wern 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](http://whitchurch.foodbank.org.uk) where donations can be made on line.

Amongst items in particularly short supply 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

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

*Matthew 25.35a*

## **CONTINUING COVID PROTOCOLS TO KEEP US ALL SAFE**

In the evolving context of the pandemic and changes to what we are able to do it is important to stress that, even as stages are met in the governmental 'roadmap', certain restrictions and guidelines most certainly do still apply when we meet in church:

- 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

We may attend as part of a group all from 2 linked households but must not join any other group or mingle with any person from another group. Refreshments after the service are still not permitted.

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

As always up to date information may be found at 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

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



Strawberry Tea  
Saturday 10 July 2021  
2.00 – 4.00 pm  
Brockhurst Farm

All proceeds to St Peter's Church  
£5.00 per person  
(children under 12 £2.50)



Raffle and any stalls possible  
given the circumstances at the time

Tickets available from  
Phoebe and Roger Ashton  
01939 232425  
&  
Valerie Lusby  
01939 235610

NB Entry by ticket only

