

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

April 2023



Consisting of the parishes of:

St Peter & St Paul's, Wem,



St Peter's, Lee Brockhurst,

St Luke's, Weston-under-Redcastle



Rector:

The Reverend John Christopher Jukes BTh (hons) MA
The Rectory
Ellesmere Road, Wem SY4 5TU

01939 235343

revjohnjukes@gmail.com

Retired Clergy: Prebendary Rob Haarhoff
 Canon Dr William Price
 The Reverend Edith Quirey

Reader: Cathy Dibben

Reader Emeritus: Celia Camplin

Further details are available on our website:
www.wemcofe.co.uk

Find us on 

@Wemparishchurch

ST PETER AND ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WEM

Churchwardens:	Chris Mellings Cathy Dibben David Murray	01939 809521 01939 236178 01939 236134
PCC Lay Chair:	Sybil Farmer	01939 232568
PCC Treasurer:	Caroline Sinclair	01939 232626
Organist:	Glyn Williams	01939 234954
Sacristans:	June Powell & Kath Ridgway	01939 234412 01939 290162
Church Flowers:	Sybil Farmer	01939 232568
Church Hall Bookings:	Via website/Facebook	
Baby and Toddler Group: (Sweet Peas)	Alison Hope	07526 757492

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

At Rest

2nd March Joyce Roberts
2nd March Raymond Cox
20th March John (Alan) Jones
23rd March Margaret Seargeant
30th March Arthur Jenkins
31st March Joyce Roberts Interment of Ashes

Holy Baptism

30th April Evie and Harry Dunphy

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	15 th	Veronica Thomas
7 th	John Edward Johnson	17 th	Dennis Tomlinson
8 th	Richard William Birch	19 th	Philip John Wilden
9 th	Ida Mary Brown	20 th	Betty Victoria Gwendolen Frances Mayhew
9 th	Peter Broadhurst	24 th	William Edgar Bacon
9 th	Ernest Ford Watson Mayhew	24 th	Nellie Elizabeth Davies
10 th	Henry James 'Harry' Heffer	24 th	Arthur Bryan Thompson
10 th	Margaret Jones	24 th	Jessel Elizabeth Jones
11 th	Peter Stephen Robinson	25 th	Graham Anthony Hazelwood Atkins, Priest
11 th	John Richard Jones Parry	26 th	Nigel Elmore
12 th	Thomas Carrick Penman	28 th	Marjorie Florence Arrowsmith
12 th	David Douglas Price, Priest		

ST PETER'S, LEE BROCKHURST

Church Warden:	Val Lusby	01939 235610
Church Warden and Treasurer:	Roger Ashton	01939 232425
PCC Secretary:	Phoebe Ashton	01939 232425
PCC Lay Chairman:	Tim Wilton-Morgan	07802 735769
Church Warden Emeritus:	Robert Marsh	01939 200641

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

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

Church Warden:	Frank Hosie-Kingham	01939 200618
Church Warden:	Helen O'Neill	01939 200663
Treasurer:	Colin Holloway	01939 200682
Church Warden Emeritus	Arthur Fox	01630 685180

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

Holy Matrimony

17th March Catrin Alice Guy and James Oliver Crosby

**SUNDAYS IN APRIL
ACROSS THE BENEFICE**

DATE		WEM	WESTON	LEE
2 April	Palm Sunday	8.00 am HE 9.45 am SE	9.30 am HE	11.15 am HE
9 April	Easter Day	8.00 am HE 9.45 am HE	9.30 am HE	11.15 am HE
16 April	Easter 2	8.00 am HE 9.45 am HE	9.30 am MP	11.15 am HE
23 April	Easter 3	8.00 am HE 9.45 am AA	9.30 am HE	11.15 am HE
30 April	Easter 4	8.00 am HE 9.45 am SE	Combined Benefice Service at Wem	

AA All Age Service
HE Holy Eucharist
SE Sung Eucharist

EC Extended Communion
MP Morning Prayer

You are welcome to join services at any of the three churches in the Benefice.

SPECIAL EASTER SERVICES ACROSS THE BENEFICE

DATE

3 April	Monday of Holy Week	7.00 pm	Wem	HE
4 April	Tuesday of Holy Week	10.00 am	Wem	HE
5 April	Wednesday of Holy Week	2.00 pm	Wem	HE
6 April	Maundy Thursday	7.00 pm	Wem	HE
7 April	Good Friday	9.30 am	Wem	Intercession & Reception of the Blessed Sacrament
		2.00 pm	Wem	Meditations on the Last Hour
		2.00 pm	Lee	The Last Hour

MIDWEEK SERVICES

We are delighted to announce the resumption of the regular Thursday morning Holy Eucharist services in St Peter & St Paul's from 13 April onwards.

Website and Weekly News Sheet

If you have any information that you would like to be included on our website and/or included on the weekly news sheet please email this information to Sybil Farmer syb.hbcwem@btinternet.com - for inclusion in the weekly sheet please send the information by Wednesday for inclusion in the following Sunday sheet.

You may find it convenient to copy information you send to Pam for the magazine (pamedgmond@hotmail.com) about any special events to Sybil at the above email.

The website, news sheet and benefice magazine are all great ways to share news and notice of forthcoming events amongst us all.

Rector's Ramblings April 2023

The Bible has an important part to play in our worship. We have readings from the Old and New Testaments, in many Churches Psalms are read too. We know that they were in very early, pre-Christian, Jewish services. If you follow the set liturgies of Morning and Evening Prayer, which are available on the Church of England web site, one can see that it is strongly Biblical. Not only are there readings, but there are responsories and canticles lifted straight from the Bible.

But what of the main Sunday Service in our Parish Churches? Church Law says that where possible there should be a Service of Holy Communion available on a Sunday. What is a Holy Communion Service? Known as "Holy Communion" because, we become one with Christ by receiving him.

There are various names for Holy Communion:

1. "Holy Eucharist" because Jesus offered himself to God the Father as an act of thanksgiving; Eucharist means thanksgiving
2. "The Lord's Supper" or "Breaking of the Bread" because we celebrate it as a meal; it is seen as a symbol or foretaste of the feast we will all share when we are in heaven
3. "Holy Mass" (which means *holy sending*), because it gives us a mission: "Go in peace glorifying God by your life."

Many Churches will use a name for this service that has been handed down through past times to today. Church tradition will also often have a hand in how the Service is not only undertaken, but also by what it is called.

No matter the name, what we discover in this service is that there is hardly a single sentence that does not either remind us of the Scriptures or allude to them in some way. Even though there is much of the Bible in our worship texts, our liturgies often weren't created by people sitting down with a blank piece of paper, a pen and a Bible before them. Nearly always the liturgists will have had before them

some of the texts that have come down the centuries in front of them to work from.

There are some services where this is not the case. These services are often ones that are led by a worship band. They are usually very Charismatic, that is the *Charism* or “gifts of the spirit”, such as speaking in tongues, are often apparent at these services.

Our more central Church of England services will have been revised and amended to speak to the changing times and cultures. And they will be amended again and again. But the liturgists will also have a lifetime of prayer and study to draw from as well. Very little of the service will have been created in isolation.

Since the Reformation the Church of England has ordered its liturgy in a distinctive way. In the sixteenth century the liturgy emerged from the worship of the Medieval Church and in fact still retains much in common with the liturgical provision of the Roman Catholic Church. Both in its traditional liturgy and its twentieth century reforms. Many of these being made in the 2nd Vatican Council during the 1960s. The Church of England also drew on the work of the Reformation reformers. People such as Martin Luther (1483-1546), Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) and John Calvin (1509-1564).

Most of the changes in the Church of England in the reign of Henry VIII were concerned more with church order than with worship, and it was not until 1549 in the reign of Edward VI that Archbishop Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) produced the first English Prayer Book. Although it was quite a conservative and catholic book it was a radical departure because it was written in English. It was used for only three years until the Second English Prayer Book took its place in 1552. This was a huge theological shift owing much to the continental reformers. It was a thoroughly Protestant Book. However, this Prayer Book only lasted until Edward VI died in 1553. It was then that his Roman Catholic sister Mary succeeded him, and this meant a return to Roman Catholicism and the Latin Mass. When Mary died, she was succeeded by Elizabeth I whose Prayer Book was very similar to that of 1552. For the next century there was further upheaval. During the Commonwealth the Anglican Liturgy was suppressed, but with the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 the English Prayer Book returned. The Book of Common Prayer was authorised and passed into English law in 1662. This version was then used for the next three centuries

and indeed it is still valid in law today. The Church of England is now known as both catholic and reformed.

The latest revisions of the liturgy have resulted in Common Worship which was authorised for use in services in the Church of England in the year 2000 by the Bishop's Council. It is from these books that our Church Services are taken today.

With Every Blessing

Reverend John.

* * *

Forthcoming Events in Wem

April 15th Community Lunch in Wem Church Hall

April 22nd Coffee Morning in Wem Church Hall

Please join us for coffee and to catch up with friends. There will be a raffle, tombola, home made cakes and jams and marmalade stalls.

Shropshire Historial Churches Trust

Gardens Open 2023

Many readers will be aware that we as a Benefice have received much-appreciated support from SHCT over the years. Each year money is raised thanks to the enthusiasm and hard work of gardeners throughout Shropshire. For information on the gardens open this year please visit the SHCT website:

<https://www.shropshirehct.org.uk>

Advance notice that the gardens of The Citadel in Weston-under-Redcastle will be open under the scheme on 14 May 2023.

Diocesan dates which may be of interest

Psalm Roar 2023

Sing the songs of Christ, Saturday 22nd April 2023. St George's, Shrewsbury

From the website: "Do not imagine the gentle singing of a choir in a cathedral. Picture a rugby team about to go onto the pitch, or an army preparing for battle. You do not need to be musical or able to read music. You will not be put on the spot, or asked to sing solos or anything like that. "

Further details at <https://www.stgeorgesshrewsbury.church/psalms>

Stafford Passion Play

Various locations around Stafford on 7th and 8th April. "In partnership with Love Stafford, this production is by the community, for the community. Over a hundred volunteers will gather alongside Saltmine's professional actors to steward, act, sing, and perform."

Further details at: <https://saltminetrust.org.uk/passionplaystafford>

The King's Big Help Out Day

If you can, please come along and take part in making Whitchurch Road Cemetery better for the community and the environment on the King's Big Help Out Day on the bank holiday Monday (May 8th) of the King's Coronation weekend.

An event being organised by the Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery. More details to follow in the May magazine.

Thanks, David Murray

The next issue is scheduled to be prepared on Thursday 20 April. It will be available in an electronic version. If you are not currently on our email list and wish to be please contact the address below.

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)

Lee Brockhurst WI

Would you like to know what character traits are revealed by the writing of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle? Well, at Lee Brockhurst W.I.'s February meeting, the graphologist, Susan Ord, gave an interesting insight into what our handwriting says about us, and incorporated a few examples of well known people which were most illuminating! Our members' competition, 'A handwritten rhyme for a Valentine', was won by Judith, with Dale 2nd and June 3rd. It was June's lucky night as she also won the raffle.

Our March speaker was retired Reaseheath College horticulture lecturer Anne Harrison, who gave very helpful advice about 'Easy plants for your Garden' just in time for our trip to Oakgates Nursery a few days later to enjoy a delicious brunch and some retail therapy. This was a landmark meeting as for the first time we were able to offer virtual attendance to members – obviously not as good as being there in person but a good backup when a member is unable to attend. In honour of St David's Day the competition was '3 Welsh Cakes' at which Dale triumphed closely followed by Julie W and June whilst Rosamund won the raffle. This was also our AGM: we heard very upbeat reports from our President Jules, Secretary Julie and Treasurer Ann which reminded us that we've had a very active year with an increasing membership. The meeting saw a few changes, most notably the retirement of our wonderful secretary Julie Woolfenden. For the last eight years she has combined excellent organisation with a great sense of fun and we are very grateful to her for all she has done for our W.I. Also standing down after eight years in post was our Book Club coordinator Helen James. Her calm efficiency has been much appreciated by all of us in the Book Club – thank you Helen. We welcome Dawn and Janet who take up those roles assisted by our new multi-tasking minute and press secretary Rose.

Our Book and Craft Clubs continue to thrive. The crafters had an enjoyable evening at the start of March, learning to make rag rugs – a very simple and satisfying craft. In April Kinki Glass will teach members how to produce a decorative glass panel. Book club members will be meeting on 27th of March to discuss Bear by Claire Cameron.

We are all looking forward to our April meeting when members of the Midlands Cave Rescue team will be describing how they helped to rescue the young Thai footballers trapped in an underground cave in 2018.

We always welcome visitors to join in the fun. All meetings take place at Lee Brockhurst village hall unless otherwise stated. If you would like to know more, please contact our secretary Dawn, on 07527 086916 or dawnwickham1@aol.com, who will be happy to help you.

Do Women Write Hymns?

A 'throw away' remark at the end of a recent service "Did you notice that one of the hymns was written by a woman?" got me to thinking. I took home the hymn book used at Wem and out of 571 hymns therein, 38 were written by women (not 38 different women).

They were written mostly in the 19th century and some more recent ones in the 20th century. I have picked out three of the authors.

The earliest in our hymn book was written by Harriet Auber 1773-1862, described in Wikipedia as an English poet and hymnist. She was the daughter of a Church of England clergyman; never married and was said to have led a quiet and secluded life.

I mention Christina Rossetti 1830-1894 as she penned my favourite Christmas carol In the Bleak Mid-Winter.

Jean Holloway b1939 has five hymns in our book but no biographical information is available.

Wendy Cook

Renovation and Restoration Repair

St Peter's at Lee has now completed two projects.

The Churchyard bench sited below the west end gable, which was kindly donated some years ago by the Higgins family in memory of Hazel Higgins, our church organist for many years, and the Church Notice Board, sited by the Church Gate, which was originally built by Jeremy Lusby, whose woodworking-skills served our Church so well.

A big thank you to Michael Cotterell for his dedicated craftsmanship. They both look like new now.

Roger Ashton

A life in the air



April is a month to marvel at the birds returning to our shores, a true herald of spring. During the month you may witness first Martins, then Swallows and finally Swifts appearing, with the Swifts last to arrive in late April. These Swifts are at the end of a nonstop journey of over 6,000 miles from Africa; they will have been on the wing since they left the U.K. last August as they eat, drink and sleep on the wing, soaring up to 3km high and reaching speeds of 70mph. Swifts look rather like swallows and martins but are more closely related to hummingbirds. They feed on insects and spiders, often caught high up in the sky. Spiders are known to 'balloon' to great heights, they spin a few strands of gossamer web which catches the wind and can take them long distances. Spiders have been found 5km up in the sky and in also in mid-ocean!

Swifts pair for life and return to the same nest site year after year. They tend to nest in colonies - within a hole in a cliff, wall or roof. Tall buildings with more than one storey, such as churches and towers, make good nesting sites. Under church eaves is a particular favourite. It can be difficult to know exactly where swifts are nesting as the parents tend to eat the droppings of their young and so there is little or no mess beneath a swift nest and the nest itself is completely out of sight. In addition, they don't return to feed their young often, so you will not see swifts repeatedly visiting their nests with food, unlike swallows and martins. Look for swifts nipping into holes or swooping in under the eaves, particularly in the evening when they do return to their nests.

Sadly this fantastic bird is in trouble - 58% of our swifts vanished between 1996 and 2018 and lack of nesting sites is contributing to their decline. Many established swift colonies are being lost through building demolition, renovation, improvements in energy efficiency and roof repair. It is possible to do all of these important building works without adversely affecting swifts however. Many communities are helping swifts by fitting nest boxes or swift bricks into and onto buildings with good success. Church towers are ideal places for nesting boxes. Place swift boxes snugly behind the tower louvres, cutting a small hole in any bird netting which gives access into the box, but not into the whole tower. Amazingly the swifts don't seem to mind the bells! Video footage shows birds jump slightly at the first ring and then settle back down.

Please have a look for swifts in late April and if you see them whizzing around the church and churchyard then why not return a few weeks later and see if you can see where they are nesting. Please let us know what you find, email **wildlife@cfga.org.uk**.

All the best, Harriet Carty

[Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor, harriet@cfga.org.uk,](mailto:harriet@cfga.org.uk)
www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

Bells at St Peter's Church

We have recently had a visit from Peter Woollam, the Bell Adviser to the Lichfield Diocesan Advisory Committee. He had some fascinating information on the history of the two bells at St Peter's which we would like to share with you.

St Peter's is Grade II* listed and built of sandstone on a site which dates from the mid C12 with restoration and extension taking place in 1884, including the construction of the bellcote above the west gable.

The inventory taken in 1553 records two bells at the church and in 1915 the antiquarian, H B Walters, also recorded two bells, noting that the smaller of the two was "probably mediaeval". The noted bell historian Randal Clouston visited in 1984 and assessed the date of casting as circa 1400. Our Church Warden Emeritus, Robert Marsh, recalls clambering up to the bells in 1984.

The larger bell is much easier to date being as it bears an inscription detailing that it was cast in 1721 at the Gloucester foundry of Abraham Rudhall. More than 5,000 bells were cast by the Rudhall family during the years 1684 to 1835 and very few of them are accorded significant historic merit.

In contrast, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, it is surmised that the smaller bell seen today is one of the two recorded in 1553. Peter Woollam tells us that bells of this age are very rare. "Of the 1,900 or so church bells in the diocese, only about 20 have definitively been given an earlier date." He adds that because there is no inscription the date of casting is arrived at by assessing its profile.

Given that the older of the two bells has probably survived for more than 600 years and the 'new bell' for many years too, it is likely that some restoration will be needed to keep them in 'good working order'.

As a congregation we love our 'little' church and it is extremely pleasing that we can add to our knowledge of its history.



Holy Days in the April Church Calendar

1 st	Frederick Denison Maurice, Priest, Teacher, 1872
9 th	Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Lutheran Pastor, Martyr, 1945
10 th	William Law, Priest, Spiritual Writer, 1761
10 th	William of Ockham, Friar, Teacher of the Faith, 1347
11 th	George Augustus Selwyn, First Bishop of New Zealand, 1878
16 th	Isabella Gilmore, Deaconess, 1923
19 th	Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1012
21 st	Anselm, Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1109
23 rd	George, Martyr, Patron of England, c304
24 th	Mellitus, Bishop of London, 624
25 th	Mark the Evangelist
27 th	Christina Rossetti, Poet, 1894
28 th	Peter Chanel, Missionary in the South Pacific, Martyr, 1841
29 th	Catherine of Siena, Teacher of the Faith, 1380
30 th	Pandita Mary Ramabai, Translator of the Scriptures, 1922

William Law

It had all begun so straightforwardly. Born in King's Cliffe, Northamptonshire in 1686, William had studied at Emmanuel College Cambridge, been ordained a deacon, and been made a Fellow of the college in 1711.

But soon politics interfered. At his ordination, William had made his Oath of Allegiance to the House of Stuart. But with the accession of the first Hanoverian monarch, King George I in 1714, William found he was now expected to make his Oath of Allegiance to King George I. This he felt he could not do, with any integrity. But without the Oath, William lost his Fellowship, and was unable to be priested.

It would have been a bitter blow to anyone wanting a career in the Church, but William did not change his mind. He wanted more than a career in the Church, he wanted to live a holy life before God, and to keep his conscience clear. And so he spent many years as a simple curate (he was not priested until 1728), living by tutoring, but also writing extensively.

And it was through his writings that William Law went on to make a lasting impact on the spirituality of the nation. One of his numerous books, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, is recognised as having had more influence on the English

people than any other English post-Reformation spiritual work, except Pilgrim's Progress.

William Law's writing greatly influenced the leaders of the evangelical movement of his day, including John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield. Law was also praised by Enlightenment thinkers such as the writer Dr Samuel Johnson and the historian Edward Gibbon.

And 20 years after his death in 1761, William Wilberforce, the politician, philanthropist, and leader of the movement to stop the slave trade, also paid tribute to the effect Law's writing had had on him.

Law's spiritual writings remain in print even today – nearly 300 years later.

The story behind the hymn 'Lord, for the years'

This well-loved hymn was written in 1967 by the Revd Timothy Dudley Smith, who later became Bishop of Thetford. He later confessed: "I wrote it on a train when I was very pressed for time. I'm thankful if something I write gets picked up, but I suspect anyone who does something in a rush later regrets that they didn't find time to apply the sandpaper a bit more!"

Dudley Smith had been asked to write a hymn for the centenary service of the Children's Special Service Mission, now Scripture Union, in St Paul's Cathedral. His commission was to write words that could be fitted to Jean Sibelius' *Finlandia*, as it was to be accompanied by an orchestra with this tune in their repertoire. And so – 'Lord for the years' was written.

Dudley Smith need not have worried about lack of time – his lyrics were a 'hit' in the cathedral on the day, and went on to become so well-loved that George Carey chose the hymn to be sung at his consecration as Bishop of Bath and Wells, and then again later, in 1991, on his consecration as Archbishop in Canterbury Cathedral.

The hymn continued to be widely sung and loved, and in 2002 Timothy Dudley Smith was asked to write an extra verse for it so that it could be sung around the time of the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

Say what?

One of the blessings of the Covid pandemic was that it inspired or forced a lot of people, churches, employers and others to take our online potential more seriously. Zoom and Teams software was rolled out to us staff in Lichfield Diocese in a matter of days at the start of the first lockdown, and we've appreciated the flexibility it offers as well as some of the downsides. Many churches too found new ways to keep in touch, whether with services streamed on YouTube or more interactively via WhatsApp groups, Facebook pages, Twitter, Instagram and the rest. Most will have seen occasions where harmony vanishes and tempers flare as the feeling of anonymity leads to the irrepressible urge to win an argument and put the internet right. We might even have added fuel to the fire. Or we might have taken umbrage, blocking the rogue or even taking ourselves offline.

Humans have been ever thus. We see it this month as we read the Gospel records of Good Friday. Luke writes that "The people stood watching... the rulers sneered... the soldiers mocked... the criminal hurled insults" (Luke chapter 23). Pilate was perhaps the shrewdest of the characters – as a Roman governor tired of the squabbling between the Jewish leaders and upstart preacher from Galilee, he had a sign nailed above one of the crucified, saying 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews'. There's a good chance he believed it to be true; but having the sign added was perhaps also designed to troll the Jewish leaders after reluctantly giving them what they wanted to keep the peace. The predictable flame-war followed. An academic might describe this as post-modern irony; a teenager would add an eye-roll. There was some ambiguity in it, and people would talk. The priests tried to 'correct' the Roman governor. There's no affirmation in the Gospels that any of those people would join Jesus in heaven. Just the second criminal crucified next to Jesus, who spoke plainly, admitted his own failings, expressing himself truthfully and kindly.

I've long held, tongue-in-cheek, to my belief in Bananarama Theology – sadly, most people reading this will be old enough to remember their hit, 'It ain't what you do, it's the way that you do it – that's what gets results'. The Church of England might agree, in other words. In 2019 it launched its Digital Charter and social media guidelines with the hope of tackling offensive behaviour and encouraging a positive atmosphere for online conversations. It asks us to treat online conversations the same way we should face-to-

face – with truth, kindness, welcome, as good witnesses, togetherness and alert to safeguarding issues. It's well worth taking a moment to read at www.churchofengland.org/charter before joining your local community, parish and our diocese online.

Simon Jones is Lichfield Diocese's Creative Media Producer, with duties managing the website, social media and video production. You can join conversations (nicely!) with others in and linked to the diocese online at facebook.com/groups/DioceseOfLichfield, twitter.com/Lichfield_CofE, instagram.com/lichfielddiocese/ and youtube.com/@LichfieldDiocese.

Remembering Corrie ten Boom

It was 40 years ago, on 15th April 1983, that Corrie ten Boom, a Dutch writer, watchmaker, and Holocaust survivor, died. She wrote about her experiences in Christian books that became best-sellers.

Corrie's family were Calvinist Christians in the Dutch Reformed Church, and served their neighbourhood by offering shelter, food and money to the needy. They believed the Jews were precious to God and that all people were created equal. During the Second World War, she – and the rest of her family – helped many Jews and others to escape from the Nazis at great risk to themselves. She later received the rare accolade from Israel of being named Righteous Among the Nations.

The Dutch Resistance helped them to build a secret room in their house behind Corrie's bedroom, which became known as The Hiding Place – later the title of her most famous book. The room held six people, had its own ventilation and an alert buzzer, and was astonishingly successful. It is estimated that about 800 Jews in all were saved through Corrie's efforts, which included obtaining at least 100 false ration cards.

Eventually an informer gave them away, and the family were arrested in February 1944 – though not the six people in the Hiding Place at the time. After months in prison, Corrie and her sister Betsie were sent to Ravensbrück concentration camp in September 1944, where they continued to worship and share the message of forgiveness, hope, love, and salvation. Betsie died in the December, but Corrie was released later that same month, apparently because of a 'clerical error'. A week later all the women in her age group were sent to the gas chambers.

After she was set free, Corrie travelled the world for 33 years, from 1944 to 1977, speaking in 64 countries. She suffered three severe strokes from August 1978 and died on her 91st birthday.

All in the month of April

It was:

150 years ago, on 4th April 1873 that the Kennel Club was founded in London. It oversees dog shows and dog agility competitions and operates Britain's national register of pedigree dogs. The Kennel Club licenses dog shows throughout the UK, but the only dog show that it actually runs is Crufts. The Kennel Club recognises 221 breeds, of which the Labrador Retriever is probably most popular.

100 years ago, on 15th April 1923 that insulin became generally available for the treatment of diabetes.

Also 100 years ago, on 26th April 1923 that Prince Albert, Duke of York (later King George VI) married Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon (later Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother) at Westminster Abbey in London.

90 years ago, on 3rd April 1933 that the first flight over Mount Everest took place. British pilots, the Marquis of Clydesdale and Donald McIntyre, flew two biplanes over the summit.

80 years ago, from 20th April to 13th May 1943 that the final phase of World War 2's Tunisia campaign took place. An Allied victory, and the Axis forces were ejected from North Africa.

Also 80 years ago, on 30th April 1943 that the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp was established in Germany. The former prisoner-of-war camp was converted into a holding camp, mainly for Jews. Tens of thousands of people died of starvation and disease in the overcrowded, unsanitary conditions.

75 years ago, on 7th April 1948 that the World Health Organization (WHO) was founded in Geneva, Switzerland as a specialist agency of the United Nations.

Also 75 years ago, on 30th April 1948 that the Land Rover, a British all-terrain vehicle, was officially launched at the Amsterdam Motor Show. According to Yougov.co.uk, nowadays 95% of us have heard of them, and 58% of us admire them.

60 years ago, on 16th April 1963 that American civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jnr. wrote his famous 'Letter from Birmingham Jail' while imprisoned in Alabama. He stated that the Black community was forced to protest when the white power structure left them no choice.

50 years ago, on 4th April 1973 that the World Trade Centre in New York City was officially opened. It was destroyed in the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001.

Also 50 years ago, on 8th April 1973 that Pablo Picasso, Spanish artist died. Co-founder of the Cubism movement, he is considered one of the greatest artists of the 20th century.

40 years ago, on 1st April 1983 that tens of thousands of anti-nuclear weapons protestors formed a 14-mile human chain in Berkshire. They linked the US airbase at Greenham Common, the nuclear research centre in Aldermaston, and an ordnance factory in Burghfield.

30 years ago, on 22nd April 1993 that Stephen Lawrence, an 18-year-old British teenager, was murdered in a racially motivated attack while waiting for a bus in Eltham, London. The high-profile case was widely covered by the media, and an inquiry found that the Metropolitan Police Service, which originally investigated the crime, was institutionally racist.

30 years ago, on 29th April 1993 that Queen Elizabeth II announced that Buckingham Palace would open to the public for the first time, to raise funds to repair fire damage at Windsor Castle.

Also 30 years ago, on 30th April 1993 that CERN, the creators of the World Wide Web, announced that it could be used for free by anyone. That decision has shaped the modern world as we know it.

25 years ago, on 10th April 1998 that the Good Friday Agreement was signed in Northern Ireland.

20 years ago, on 9th April 2003 that US troops took control of Iraq's capital city, Baghdad. Jubilant Iraqis celebrated the end of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Also 20 years ago, on 14th April 2003 that the Human Genome Project was successfully completed, with over 99% of the human genome sequenced and mapped, including all of the genes.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Mt 21:1-11, Mk 11:1-11, Lk 19:28-38, Jn 12:12-19

Thousands of people went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover feast each year. This year Jesus and his friends went too.

Two miles outside Jerusalem Jesus said to two of his friends



Go into that village and bring back the donkey you find there.

If anyone asks, say 'The Lord needs it.'



So off they went...

and they found it as Jesus had said



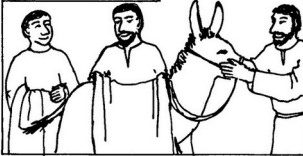
Why are you taking our donkey?

The Lord needs it.



That's alright then

They brought it back to Jesus, and made a saddle from a cloak.



They spread more cloaks on the road to make it a way fit for a king.



Others cut palm branches and waved them.

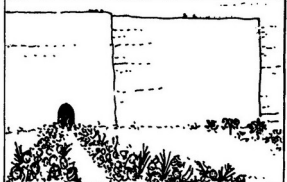


They shouted the traditional welcome to the Passover feast

God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord!



As they got closer to Jerusalem the crowd grew



Everyone shouted to welcome Jesus as king



The teachers of the laws were angry



Teacher, you should stop them calling you 'king'.

But Jesus replied



What they say is so true that even if I made them stop, the stones would shout!