

**ST MARY'S
OLD SWINFORD
Parish Church
MONTHLY NEWS
JULY/ AUGUST 2019
ONLINE EDITION**

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50p

RECTOR

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SUNDAYS AT ST MARY'S

8.00 am	Holy Communion
10.00 am	Parish Communion and Children Together
6.30 pm	Evensong
10.00 am	(second Sunday) Worship Together

WEEKDAYS AT ST MARY'S

Daily:	9.00 am - Morning Prayer (Monday to Thursday)
Daily:	5.00 pm - Evening Prayer (Monday to Thursday)
Wednesday:	1.30 pm - Toddlers' Group at St Mary's (term time) parents & toddlers
Thursday:	10.30 am - Holy Communion in Lady Chapel
Thursday:	7.30 pm - Bell Ringing Practice
Friday:	Choir Practice and Youth Groups (in term time)
Saturday:	10.00 - 12.00 noon - Open Church – refreshments available
Clergy Day Off	Friday

OTHER REGULAR EVENTS

		Tel:
Prayer Group	Third Wednesday in month, 10 -11 am	393454
Mothers' Union:	Second Tuesday at 2.15 pm	392951
St Mary's Walking Group:	Last Saturday of the month. Depart 9.30 am	

CONTACTS

Reader:	Mr Roger King	379800
Church Wardens:	Mrs Judy Hall	377349
	Mr Antony Tatford	822661
Director of Music:	Mr James Bradley (as of 14 July)	
PCC Secretary:	Miss Katey Fletcher	378182
Monthly News Editor:	Vacant	
Safeguarding Officer:	Mrs Liz Fourness	394359
Church Hall and		
Coach House: - Bookings:	Parish Office	441003
Parish Administrator and		
Publicity Officer:	Mr John Sutton	441003
Parish Office:	Open 9.00 am -1.00 pm Tuesday to Thursday, 9.00 am to 12.00 noon Friday Closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday	441003
Church website address:	www.stmaryschurcholdswinford.org.uk E-mail: st.mary.os@btconnect.com	
Facebook:	www.facebook.com/stmaryschurcholdswinford	
Magazine e-mail address:	stmary.parishmagazine@hotmail.co.uk	

ENQUIRIES ABOUT WEDDINGS, BANNS OF MARRIAGE, BAPTISMS.

Please come to the Church on Saturday morning between 10.00 am and 11.00 am for Vestry Hour. You will be warmly welcomed. Tea and coffee will be available.

PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms

26 May	Laura Jane Hickman
2 June	Scarlett Angel Penny Kimberley Davies
	Zachary Michael Smith
	Primrose Michelle Taylor

Weddings

1 June	Wayne Jones and Harriet Brown
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Funerals

13 June	Sylvia Woodward	Aged 84
18 June	Betty Chiswell	Aged 87

DIARY JULY 2019

Tuesday 2	10.00 am Open the Book Team visit to OCEPS 1.30 pm OCEPS, Yr 2 visit to church
Wednesday 3	7.30 pm Baptism Preparation
Thursday 4	10.30 am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
Saturday 6	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 7	THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 3.00 pm Baptism
Monday 8	Work to start in North Porch
Tuesday 9	11.30 am Communion at Hollycroft 1.30 pm OCEPS, Yr 2 visit to church 2.00pm Mothers' Union Group Outing
Thursday 11	10.30 am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
Saturday 13	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 14	FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 2.00 pm Tea in the Coach House 7.30 pm PCC Meeting
Wednesday 17	7.00 pm OCEPS Leavers' Service (Rehearsal am)
Thursday 18	10.30 am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
Saturday 20	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour 1.00 pm Wedding LOVE STOURBRIDGE event in Mary Stevens Park
SUNDAY 21	FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 12 noon Baptism
Wednesday 24	11.30 am Communion at Holly Lodge
Thursday 25	10.30 am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
Saturday 27	9.30 am Walking Group to Bewdley 10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour 7.30 pm Friends of the Music Concert - Amicus Ensemble
SUNDAY 28	SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 2.30 pm Tuesday Tea in the Narthex

DIARY AUGUST 2019

Thursday 1	10.30 am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
Saturday 3	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour
SUNDAY 4	SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 3.00 pm Baptism

Thursday 8	10.30 am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
Saturday 10	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour 1.00 pm Wedding
SUNDAY 11	EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
Thursday 15	10.30 am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
Saturday 17	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour 15.00 pm Wedding
SUNDAY 18	NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
Tuesday 20	2.00 pm Tea in the Coach House
Thursday 22	10.30 am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
Saturday 24	10.00 am - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour 12.00 noon Wedding
SUNDAY 25	TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
Tuesday 27	2.30 pm Tea In the narthex
Thursday 29	10.30 am Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel
Saturday 31	10.00 - 12.00 noon Open Church and Vestry Hour

FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friends,

This is my first letter 'from the Rectory'. On the day I write, Mary and I have been here for exactly a month. Strangely, it feels as though we've been here both a long time and hardly any time at all! There is a great deal that feels very new and different. At the same time, we have been made so welcome that we do feel at home, although we're still a long way from emptying all the boxes and hanging any curtains. If that is still the situation when you read this, you know what we'll be doing in August!

The 'red letter day' of the collation (etc.) service does seem a long time ago. We were struck by the generosity of so many friends that day; those who travelled from Birmingham and Smethwick to support us and all our new friends at St Mary's who did so much to greet us, (and feed us) so handsomely. Thank you again.

Amongst all that was new it was reassuring to begin life at Old Swinford with Compline, (or Night Prayer). Alex and Roger had decided to respond to the Archbishops' 'Thy Kingdom Come' call for prayer by offering a service of Compline each evening between Ascension Day and Pentecost. It was a very simple, gentle and wise plan. I found it reassuring because it is one of the services I love best.

A service of quietness and reflection, Compline has deep roots in the church, (it is mentioned from the 4th Century and commended by the great

monastic innovator, St Benedict). Its name comes from the Latin for 'completion'. I like to think of it as a way of gathering together the pieces of the day and the different, sometimes fragmented parts of my own self in order to surrender them, before sleep, to God.

All prayer is a kind of surrender to God, a surrender of that territory we try to keep for ourselves. We so often hide from God parts of our lives and ourselves; either out of fear that God will disapprove, (of the dingy, unkempt or embarrassing bits) or out of the strange belief that there are parts in which God has no interest! Whatever we surrender, (which God has all along known and loved), that territory is transformed into the beautiful, fruitful garden we really desire it to be.

Mother Julian of Norwich wrote that when we are full of peace and love, (which we seek in prayer), 'then we find no striving in ourselves and are not hindered by the strife that is in us now. For that strife is the cause of our troubles and sorrow.' The glory of our redemption through Jesus our Saviour is that God takes our strivings, our hidden struggles and worries, and sends them to heaven, where, Julian says: 'they are made more sweet and delectable than heart can think, or tongue can tell. And when we get there we shall find them waiting, all turned into lovely and lasting glory.'

My prayer for St Mary's is that together we can learn better how to surrender in prayer and so build that heaven here in Old Swinford.

God Bless you.

John



LOVE STOURBRIDGE 2019



On display in the narthex are the details of the **LOVE STOURBRIDGE** event for 2019 which takes place in Mary Stevens Park on Saturday 20 July.

Details of the many events being organised by Churches Together in Stourbridge are included with the invitation to add your name on the list to volunteer your involvement if you are able. Lots of opportunities exist from supervising car parking, helping to prepare before or dismantle after the day's activities or to help with any of the activities planned.

On a separate sheet attached to these details is the invitation from Revd Alex French to sign up as part of the St Mary's team to help him with his plans to provide some suitably themed fairground type games - challenges that will entertain and inform but that do not need excessive physical effort.

Please try to help if you are able, to go along and support the event on the day (especially the St Mary's team) and if you can do nothing else, to pray for fine weather to help make the event full of enjoyment and achievement.

ST MARY'S WITH ST JOHN'S MOTHERS' UNION

On Thursday 30th May Stourbridge Deanery had the honour of hosting the World Wide President to a Bring and Share Lunch at St Saviour's Church Hagley. President Sheran Harper of Guyana, the first World Wide President to be appointed outside of the UK in the history of Mothers' Union was on a whistle stop tour of the Diocese.



Nine branch members, plus our Rector John and our Curate Alex, joined fellow members of the Deanery and the Provincial President to welcome Sheran to Stourbridge. The official welcome and midday prayers were led by our Deanery Leader Jean Swift. In her reply the President thanked everyone for their warm and kind welcome and for all the hard work done by the members for Mothers' Union.



During lunch the president visited each table to speak personally to members and viewed all the project work undertaken by the branches.

It takes a very special person to be World Wide President and it was obvious to all how Sheran was chosen,

he shone with joy and affection for her fellow human being, inspiring us all to renew our aims to make a difference to the lives of those less fortunate in our world.

A fellow member remarked "we are having lunch with the President" - no - not that one. We just hope Her Majesty enjoyed her lunch as much as we did.



WITH YOU ALL THE WAY



The work of the Stourbridge Street Pastors will be familiar to many of our readers from past presentations in church, and in connection with our on-going support, in prayer and finance, of this very worthwhile Christian provision and ministry.

On the evening of Thursday, 2 June, Helene Gale was commissioned, alongside three other new members of the team, as a Street Pastor during a service at New Road Methodist Church. Several members of St Mary's congregation attended to support Helene.

Helene will now fill a full role in the active patrols undertaken in Stourbridge town centre to help minimise and avoid the potential for harm that may arise on a night out when excess alcohol and other circumstances may increase the vulnerability and exposure to danger of those involved.

The provision of First Aid, care and assistance, drinks of water, flip flops for sore feet, a supporting shoulder, the clearing of broken glass and other rubbish and the organisation of a lift home all form part of the tasks undertaken on a typical patrol. Such help removes a huge responsibility from the immediate attention of the emergency services, often serving to minimise the impact of something that has the potential to become much more significant and potentially serious for all involved.

The evening included the Annual General Meeting of this organisation and revealed how, for the past ten years, this group of positive-thinking and determined Christians have aided the police and ambulance services in the care of those at risk.

It will be for us all to remember Helene and all her Street Pastor colleagues in our prayers as they continue this assistance that benefits those helped directly as need arises and us all by the reduction of the costs that such challenges pose for society as a whole.



Tony Tatford

D DAY REMEMBERED

Lt D H Brotheridge – the first man to be killed on D-Day

Lt Denham Brotheridge of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry of Smethwick was killed in a surprise attack on German positions in Normandy just after midnight on 6th June 1944. It was an attack by glider to destroy German guns over-looking the American forces about to launch on Omaha beach and then to halt enemy reinforcements along the Caen Canal.

Their particular target was Benouville bridge and this was quickly captured. It then became 'Pegasus' bridge, using the regimental symbol of the regiment, and is much visited today. Lt Brotheridge was 'mentioned in dispatches' but really deserved the Military Cross. He is buried in a churchyard nearby at Ranville, together with several other men in his platoon. He was 29 years of age and his grave has the commemoration, chosen by his wife, Margaret (who shortly afterwards gave birth to a girl) and his family:

**OUT OF THE BITTERNESS OF WAR
HE FOUND THE PERFECT PEACE**

Margaret moved eventually to Oldswinford and looked after the Post Office near the Cross, where many people knew her well. She was always good humoured and often at St. Mary's. She was treated very well by her husband's old regiment but probably did not know too much of the D-Day assault. The bare account of it is grim. The plan was to land 100 men by glider at midnight near Benouville. They were Horsa gliders, crudely made and packed with 30 men and equipment. The towing bombers unhitched near Benouville and the heavy wooden gliders went slowly down. The landing was very heavy and Lt Brotheridge then had to form up his shaken men and reach the German defences. The German forces were certainly surprised but Lt Brotheridge, at the head of his platoon, entered the defences, only to be wounded by an enemy machine gun. He died at 12.20 am by which time the Germans had been driven out. Overall, the assault was a success. The Germans retired and Omaha went ahead as a great victory but with huge loss of life.

Roy Peacock

D DAY FACTS

- As early as 1942, the BBC launched a bogus appeal for photographs and postcards from the coast of Europe, from Norway to the Pyrenees. It was

actually a way of gathering intelligence on suitable landing beaches and led to Normandy being the location that was settled on

- The Allies put a lot of effort into trying to convince the Germans that the invasion was going to be near Calais, not Normandy. They invented phantom field armies based in Kent as part of their D-Day deception plan, named Operation Fortitude.
- They built dummy equipment - including inflatable tanks - parachuted dummies, used double agents and released controlled leaks of misinformation which led the Germans to believe the Allies were going to invade via the Pas-de-Calais and Norway. The Germans took the bait so much that even after D-Day they held many of their best troops in the Calais area expecting a second invasion.
- By 1944 more than two million troops from more than 12 countries were in Britain preparing for the invasion. On D-Day, Allied forces consisted primarily of US, British and Canadian troops but also included Australian, Belgian, Czech, Dutch, French, Greek, New Zealand, Norwegian, Rhodesian [present-day Zimbabwe] and Polish naval, air and ground support.
- The officers organising the operation were very particular about the timing of D-Day. They wanted a full moon with a spring tide so they could land at dawn when the tide was about half way in - but those kind of conditions meant there were only a few days that could work. They chose to invade on 5 June, but ended up delaying by 24 hours because of bad weather.
- In fact, the forecast was so bad that the German commander in Normandy, Erwin Rommel, felt so sure there wouldn't be an invasion he went home to give his wife a pair of shoes for her 50th birthday.
- When the D-Day forces landed, Nazi leader Adolf Hitler was asleep. None of his generals dared order reinforcements without his permission, and no-one dared wake him.
- Of the 156,000 men who landed in France on 6 June, 73,000 were American, and 83,000 British or Canadian. The Commonwealth naval contingent was twice that of the Americans.
- There were five beaches that were chosen for the operation, codenamed, from east to west, Sword, Juno, Gold, Omaha, Utah. Casualties varied widely - on "Bloody Omaha", where around 4,000 men were killed or wounded, one US unit landing in the first wave lost 90% of its men. On Gold Beach, by contrast, casualty rates were around 80% lower.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK – 2019

Grateful thanks are due to the 22 volunteers who carried out house to house collections in our allocated streets; bringing in £1,645.89; thank you for all your efforts.

Oldswinford Primary School was very innovative this year holding a sponsored event, the children forming a hand-held chain around the block containing the school comprising; Field Lane, Prospect Row, Hall Street, Craufurd Street, Corser Street, Love Lane, Swinford Road and part of Hagley Road. This raised a further £1,442.79. Well done indeed.

The final total raised by St Mary's was £3,088.68 which was over £500 better than last year. To this will be added tax recovered under the "Gift Aid" Scheme which should add another £500 to £600.

Mike Blaxland

And a very big thank you is shared on behalf of us all with Mike for all his hard work and dedication to ensure the St Mary's community was encouraged in its support of this important appeal.

CHURCHWARDENS' ADMISSION SERVICE 2019

This annual service at which churchwardens in the northern part of the Diocese are admitted to serve for the year ahead, was held at St John the Baptist, Queensway, Halesowen on 13 June. St Mary's Churchwardens, Judy and Tony, were accompanied by the Revd John Flitcroft and several supporters from the St Mary's congregation.

The Churchwardens were reminded of their historical origins, of their duties, obligations and responsibilities, and were invited to make their declaration solemnly and sincerely to serve faithfully and diligently.

It was a wonderfully powerful service of readings, prayer and the music of psalms, hymns and sacred songs.

In her address, the 'Archdeacon's Charge', Archdeacon Nikki Groarke presented associations with the observance of Pentecost, the birthday of the Christian church and the start of the church's mission to the world. She linked this to the recent programme of prayer, 'Thy Kingdom Come', and the reading of 1 Corinthians 3, 9-23 in which Paul taught the Corinthians to recognise that they were God's temple and that His Spirit dwelt in them. She thanked the Churchwardens for their particular ministries, noting how the busyness of the diverse tasks asked of wardens can present the danger of these overcoming the maintenance of a full relationship with God and of fulfilling work in the service of God.

Nicki encouraged all to stop and pause, to give time 'for our souls to

catch up with our bodies', to consider what we do and to reflect on what we discern to be God's will. She reminded us that, in a world which can often become too busy, the good may become the enemy of the best and how, as reflected in the dilemmas presented by the diocesan finance challenge, there sometimes comes a time when it is right to stop without any sense of failure..

AN INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME TO OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Hello all! My name is James Bradley and I have recently been appointed as the new Director of Music here at St Mary's. I will have already met some of you (apologies in advance if I forget anyone's name, which I undoubtedly will!) and I look forward to meeting you all over the coming months.

As I write this I have two Sundays left in my current post at St Mary and All Saints, Kidderminster, where I have been Director of Music since October 2012. Looking at the photographs on the wall in the vestry at Oldswinford I am reminded of various connections between the two churches. Owain Bell, formerly Rector at Oldswinford, was the person responsible for hiring me at Kidderminster and I greatly enjoyed working with him for a year before he retired. Rose Lawley succeeded Owain as Rector in Kidderminster, and I believe Rose was married at Oldswinford and her husband, John, used to ring the bells here too.

Thank you to everyone I've met so far for being incredibly kind and welcoming, and in particular I would like to thank Richard Hall for the amazing job he's been doing these last six months keeping the music going to such a high standard. My first Sunday will be on July 14th which, as it happens, will also be the choir's last before the Summer holiday (I'm assured they're not trying to escape!) Nevertheless, I am really looking forward to working with them when they return in September. The choir's potential, with the large number of choristers that have recently joined, is huge – so my plea to parents is this: thank you for everything you do and please bring them back in September!

Kind regards

James

THANK YOU!

A special thank you to Chris Morgan for making a new sepulchre with such love and care. It will form a powerful and much needed addition to our Easter Garden.

ST MARY'S WITH ST JOHN'S MOTHERS' UNION

The group welcomed the Rector, Revd John Flitcroft to our June meeting. We had received thanks for items sent to the premature baby unit and more garments were blessed ready to go to the hospital in Dudley. A request for 6 inch knitted coloured woollen squares had been asked for by the unit for September. Do help if you can.

The Rector led the service and then gave us a fascinating glimpse of his 25 years as an actor. Following a short time in a hippie colony, then working for the Birmingham Crown Prosecution Service, a friend in Smethwick got him an audition with a village touring company of 5 called Pentabus. He worked at the Swan Theatre, Worcester, Birmingham Rep, on radio, in schools and even trod the boards in London's West End.

All this was interspersed with displays of his talent from Bottom in Shakespeare, Toad in prison in 'Wind in the Willows', Curly in of 'Mice and Men', even God, Father and Son in Wakefield Mystery Play at Malvern Priory to Mr Jeffs, the Brummie sweet shop owner.

Company acting brought him the joy of interdependence, and sharing the deep communication theatre can bring to others. His call to ministry and to be ordained resulted in training at The Queen's Foundation* in Birmingham, with ministry at three Birmingham churches before we welcomed him to St Mary's .

We much appreciated and applauded his talent sharing a joyous afternoon as the rain poured down outside.

Dates for your diary

Tuesday 9th July 2 pm, Group Outing to Cookley.

Wednesday 10th July 7.30 pm at St Saviours West Hagley, Diocesan AGM.

Tuesday 10th September 2.15 pm, at the Coach House, - 'Recycling'.

Dawn Nex

***The Queen's Foundation** - is an Ecumenical Theological Training Institution in Edgbaston, Birmingham. Originally established in 1830 as one of the first Anglican Theological Colleges in England, it became an ecumenical college in 1970 with Anglicans and Methodists learning together .

At the turn of the century the college developed further as the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education. It now provides for research and training in validation with a number of universities, in Anglican and Methodist backgrounds, in a diverse and inclusive community serving global Christian ministries in lay or ordained roles.

THE SILVER FOREST

The walking group's May walk involved a train ride to Langley Green Station and after a short stretch of road walking we followed canal tow paths into the middle of Birmingham. Twelve walkers took part, in warm, dry, mostly sunny conditions.

We joined the "Tittford Arm Canal" from Station Road and had a pleasant, almost level, rural walk to the old engine house at the top of the six Tat Bank locks, that took us down to Oldbury Junction on the "Old Main Line Canal". It was there that we encountered the silver forest that had grown since our last walk along that way; the forest being the miles of scaffolding tube in use beneath the M5 Oldbury Viaduct repair works. The canal zig zagged beneath the viaduct for about one and a half miles, en route crossing the New Main Line on an aqueduct, before the Motorway turned to the north and the canal to the south east. The next section was very rural and pleasant with reed beds, wild flowers and waterfowl to catch our interest. Several herons, coots and mallards were spotted, some with very young chicks. On passing the "New Smethwick Pumping Station" we descended a further three locks to Smethwick Junction where the old and new main lines meet. "The New Main Line Canal" was built to avoid canal traffic queuing to go up or down the three locks at each end of the summit stretch which runs close to Smethwick Galton Bridge Station.

We then followed the main line into the centre of Birmingham, level walking but hard under foot; along this length we passed several panels of very well executed and colourful graffiti!

Eventually the NIA came into view with the Malt House and Sea Life Centre opposite. We enjoyed a pleasant lunch in the Malt House, where they were more than willing for us to move tables so that we could all sit together. After lunch we re-joined the canal system and descended a further 12 locks to finish under Snow Hill Station. An iron staircase brought us up to street level and then blissfully, escalators took us up to platform level. A pleasant journey on the train returned us to Stourbridge after walking more than 7 miles along the canals.

Mike Blaxland

A SUMMER PILGRIMAGE

The Diocesan website carries suggestions for a summer holiday pilgrimage, a walk or visit, in a manner most suited to your needs, to a local (or distant) site of significance - a church, open space, water source or other. If you make such a visit why not write a few lines to share your experience with others via the Monthly Parish News? The committee will welcome contributions for publication in future editions.

BELL RINGERS' CORNER



The bells rang out at St Mary's a few weeks ago to welcome the new Rector when he took over his ministry here. On Sunday 19th May at 3.00pm a quarter peal on eight bells was rung before the Service of Induction and welcome for the Revd Jonathan Flitcroft, as the new rector of Old Swinford.

An experienced band of eight ringers, some from St Mary's and some from other churches gathered together to ring out a quarter peal of Grandsire triples. This was completed in 48 minutes, in good time for the service to begin at 4.00pm. As part of this service the new Rector rang a single bell to make known to the community that he had begun his new ministry.

If you think that you, or a family member or friend, might be interested in finding out a little more about bell ringing then contact John Sutton on 01384 441003. Practice takes place on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm. Visitors are always welcome.

Stephen Howard

ST MARY'S WALKING GROUP – APRIL WALK

Starting From the Dog at Dunley, near Stourport

The advertised walk had been changed due to treacherous conditions underfoot. Therefore eight walkers assembled on the church car park to study and choose their lunch in advance from a very comprehensive pub menu before leaving for Dunley. Turning right leaving the pub we walked a short distance along the A451 before crossing the road to enter Dark Lane opposite. In a short distance we turned left from the lane passing through several meadows some planted with oilseed rape. We joined a lane, then a track to Astley Hall, where Stanley Baldwin once lived, before passing Solhampton Fisheries where we headed for the nearby St Peter's church, Astley.

This idyllic spot was perfect for our coffee stop and to receive a copy of the Church Magazine from a lady church member of St Peters who was delivering them. We left the church and headed north up a track leading into a furrowed field planted with potatoes. At this point we became very conscious of Storm Hannah, as this was the highest point of the walk with lots of sun but lots of wind. It was suggested by a member that these were the strongest gusts they had ever experienced.

We made it to the nearby wood where we descended to the A451 passing some very attractive poultry (spotted by Malcolm) in a nearby farm. We crossed the A451 at this point to follow a well defined path north then through some purple sprouting to reach a bungalow where we turned right to meet Heightington Lane. We crossed over into a meadow and continued east then south to reach the Dog at Dunley. The food at the pub was splendid and enjoyed by all.

ALL TOGETHER AS KINGDOM PEOPLE

SATURDAY 28 SEPTEMBER, WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

It is now over five years since our **Kingdom People Vision** was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted by Diocesan Synod in 2013.



The Church is God's gift to the world, which is called to be an effective sign of God's Kingdom. God's mission is to reconcile the whole creation in Jesus and establish the reign of God. Jesus's first words in his ministry were 'Repent and believe the good news: the Kingdom of God is at hand'.

As Christians, we are called to be Kingdom people: those who both hear and proclaim that message, becoming agents of the transformation of the world according to God's loving purposes in Jesus. Churches should be places where people seek to live out their vocation to be Kingdom people and where the Kingdom values of love, compassion, justice and freedom are embodied and proclaimed.

On Saturday 28 September, we will once again come together in Worcester to worship, share resources and be inspired in this vision and our 'Kingdom People' journey. You may remember our last such day in 2015: it was a great occasion, with people gathering from right across the Diocese.

Highlights this year include the presence of the Bishop of Liverpool, Paul Bayes, (formerly one of our honorary canons) and a wide range of workshops - from which you'll come away with new ideas to reinvigorate your worship, connect your faith with life beyond church walls, or help make running your parish easier. There will be sessions suitable for families to attend together as well as practical prayer stations and a chance to be involved in a 'Kingdom Arts' project.

The day will also include a ministry of hospitality with breakfast and afternoon tea provided free of charge, courtesy of a gift from a charitable trust. You'll just need to bring lunch (or take the opportunity to head into Worcester in the break to get something). I'm hoping very many people from across the Diocese will come and join us to worship, learn, share and eat together.

Please do look out for more information on the diocesan mailing and website. To enable us to plan workshops etc, we'd be very grateful if people could book in through the Eventbrite website as early as possible and definitely before Saturday 14 September.

I hope to see you there!

+John

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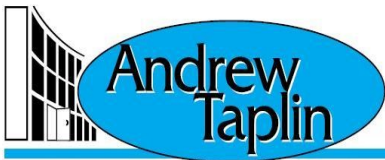
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