



CHRIST CHURCH  
BIRKENHEAD



# Parish Magazine

June 2020

**Welcome to the June edition of our online parish magazine!  
As usual it contains a mixture of articles sent in by members  
of the church community or acquired from other sources.  
Please enjoy!**

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## **The Rev Writes**

As lockdown begins to slowly be lifted it might be that people are beginning to feel anxious again – anxious about their health, people coming too close, touching things and so on. It might well feel very strange to go out and about that bit more and feelings of anxiety are to be expected; along with the relief that life is moving on again, albeit slowly. If this is you, don't be hard on yourself – expect to feel out of sorts and just a bit strange, we are still in the middle of a very unusual time.

I have to say thinking about getting back to normal feels like a long way off and I'm not sure that I want what was normal all over again – at least not everything about it. Of course, we will have to get used to something different in the meantime. The way we meet together again will certainly change; the way we worship will change. There is much to consider in keeping people safe and the church nationally and the diocese will produce guidance for us when that time comes. We all know that interpretation of guidance can differ widely for people. Can I ask for your prayers and support when that time comes. One way of beginning the discussions that we might have regarding church life is to reflect on the following questions:

### **Of the things that we have let go of during the lockdown (e.g. groups, weekly and monthly activities, services, etc.)**

- What do you feel we need to pick up again?
- What do you feel we can do without?
- What have you missed the most during lockdown?

### **Of the things that we have picked up during the lockdown (e.g. more on-line resources, services, written materials, etc.)**

- What do you feel we need to keep?
- What do you feel we need to leave in lockdown?
- What might you miss most once lockdown is over?

Those are just a few questions to get you thinking about the future; above all, pray for our church, pray for each person that is a regular or occasional part of our worship and those who have been connected through the groups that meet regularly during the week in the hall and rooms.

Ask one other question –

What is God saying to us as a church through this time and what might he be asking of us? Read Acts 2.42 *'They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.'* This verse saddens me as we cannot break bread together or have our usual fellowship – what we can do is continue in prayer and in connecting with one another in the ways that are open to us – phone, email and so on. As I write we approach Pentecost when the Holy Spirit filled the disciples and saw them being empowered to witness to the gospel of Jesus – let us not forget that we too are filled and empowered by that same Spirit – keep pausing to listen, read scripture, pray and reflect.

With kind regards and God's blessing on you all.

Gerri

### **A handwashing tip**

Are you tired of singing 'Happy Birthday' every time you wash your hands? Try singing hymn no. 287.

*I love you Lord, and I lift my voice,  
To worship You, O my soul rejoice.  
Take joy my King, in what You hear,  
May it be a sweet, sweet sound in Your ear.*

This takes 20 seconds,  
and is much more uplifting throughout the day!

I think I will always do this now... Rita O'Loughlin

## Kathleen's Corner

If there has been one great comfort for me during these times in which we now all find ourselves living, it has been the series on television 'Spring Watch'. Chris Packham has, it seems, been warned off using his appearances on such nature programmes for airing his political feelings. The result is that he is less evident and allows the beautiful examples of the great life forces to speak for themselves.

The features where we are shown a lovely landscape or sunset or night sky without sound of any kind except the cheep of a bird or the lap of water are especially soothing. Helpful for meditation. Reminding us that whatever shambles man makes of this world, a higher force is still at work obeying the order of life and death in perfect obedience.

I am reminded, reading the Vicar's message in this time of Pentecost, that Jesus promised the Comforter would come.

If we stop and listen, we can find that Comforter in many ways.

*Kathleen Stansfield*



*A lovely riverscape from Llanrhydian <https://www.churchinnorthgower.com/> where George Rees was once vicar..*

## From the Editor

Sometimes, when I am short of material for the magazine, I turn to the diocesan website at <https://www.chester.anglican.org/>. There's a lot to read there: how to find a church near you, jobs available, items for sale (forty chairs and a carpet this month), the heavy stuff about data protection etc., forthcoming events, prayers and comments by the bishop and his team, and a rolling news from around the diocese. Here's the headline for a local story: go online to read the details.

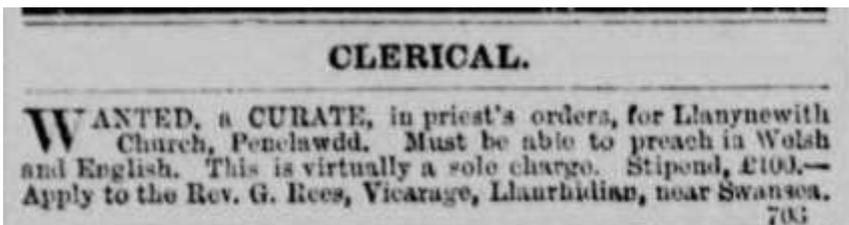
### Birkenhead generosity in lockdown

Over the last couple of weeks, with the generosity of hundreds of people, Make it Happen, a community shop and hub in the heart of Birkenhead, has received over 1000 bags of donations.



Or you might like to go one up to the Church of England's website at <https://www.churchofengland.org/> where you'll find daily prayers and online services, details of the way the C. of E. is run, stories of faith in action, services to download and print off and even apps for your smartphone. I have the lectionary on mine—most useful when I can't find the piece of paper telling me what I should be reading in church on Sunday morning!

The marvels of modern day technology! Compare it with how George Rees, my grandfather's grandfather advertised for a curate in February 1871.



# Junior Church



This month Junior Church will be exploring the story of Ruth. I will be dropping resources off to members soon. this is a picture to colour in I found this on Together at Home at <https://www.tath.co.uk/sunday-packs>. I have tried to supply the children over the last months with some Sunday school themes and packs. Hopefully we will all be together soon.

God bless you all,  
Mary Kirby, children and families worker.

## Pugna Bene

Along Village Road, opposite the end of Fairclough Lane is the now empty Ashton House formerly occupied by the Wirral Learning Disability Service.

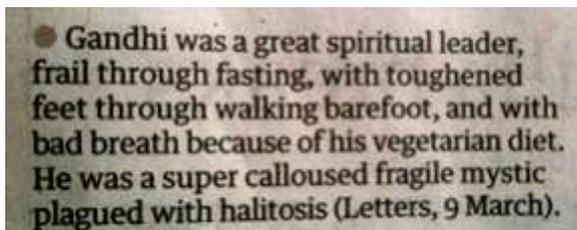
As I walked past last week—in glorious sunshine—I happened to notice high up on the wall of the building a dark square plaque which I'd never noticed before despite having lived in Oxtan since the early 1970s.

Look carefully at the photo and you will be able to make out what looks like a hand rising up between two laurel branches holding an iron ring. Beneath that is the motto PUGNA BENE which my Latin education tells me means 'Fight Well'.



But whose is this plaque? Was it specially created for the Disability service for whom it would be an appropriate motto? Or was it on the house when it was built, presumably as a private residence in the late Victorian period? And to confuse us further, the house was called Thorn Heys on the 1910 Ordnance Survey map. Anyone have any ideas?

*Paul Rees*



*Thanks to Jean & Pete Martin*

## Another piece of interest from ‘back home’

I don't know if anyone has ever visited Worlds End, just outside Llangollen. It's a place of natural beauty, with a ford that runs across the road and is frequented by many rock climbing enthusiasts. If you get a chance to visit please do as it really is quite something.

There is also a very interesting manor house there which is a private residence and so not open to visitors, but has a fascinating history to it. The house is called Plas Uchaf, and is an Elizabethan half-timbered manor house, dating from 1563, which was built on the site of the 12th century hunting lodge of Owain ap Cadwgan and a popular tale associated with it is that of Owain and Nest.



***Plas Uchaf, World's End ... Llangollen***

Owain, who was Prince of Powys at the beginning of the 12th century, became infatuated with his cousin Nest, who was married to Gerald, steward of Pembroke Castle. Having heard of the beauty of Nest, Owain visited her at Pembroke Castle on the pretext of kinship. He returned with a group of men on the same night, however, and set fire to the castle, intending to kidnap Nest and kill Gerald.

Nest made her husband escape through the privy hole, but she was captured by Owain, along with her children, taken to Powys and hidden at his hunting lodge on the site of Plas Uchaf. The kidnap is reported in documents written near to the time. That they hid in a hunting lodge on the site of Plas Uchaf has become part of local folklore.



*The privy hole at Pembroke Castle*

Another occupant was Colonel John Jones, who was the brother-in-law of Oliver Cromwell, and one of the signatories of Charles I's death warrant. There is also a local rumour that Elizabeth I came here to give birth to an illegitimate child.

*Jackie Harness*

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## Also from Wales

**GLUTTONY.**—On Thursday week, a man named William Williams, a labourer, living in Llandisillio, boasted that he would eat on one meal a goose, if any person would give him one. He soon found a purveyor; and the bird, weighing 12½lbs, was cooked at the Butcher's Arms, Llandridio, and was partaken of by the glutton, who demolished it within half a pound, besides a quantity of potatoes and bread. He also drank five glasses of water, as well as nearly half a gallon of ale. The disgusting feat was witnessed by a number of persons, who paid 2d each 'to see the animal feed!' The man appeared perfectly comfortable after his exertions, and declared he could have devoured 'ever so much more.'—*Llanidloes Telegraph.*

*Pembrokeshire Herald and General Advertiser*  
31 July 1867

## Keith and Kristyn Getty Hymn Sing

In these weeks I've really enjoyed playing my guitar. Happily, I have a great repertoire of hymns to play from out of our old Mission Praise book and others. But I've also been enjoying something on Youtube, which I'd certainly recommend if you're feeling a need for Christian music.



It's called the "Getty Family Hymn Sing". Keith and Kristyn Getty are well known in Christian music circles, writing and performing all over the world. Originally from Northern Ireland, at the moment they're spending lockdown in Nashville where they live and raise their children. They are uploading a 20 minute video every week from their piano at home. It's really charming and so sweet to see the whole family—they have four girls—singing favourite hymns together. It's lovely to be reminded of tunes and have sentiments to reflect on afterwards.

*Marion Worth*

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## Good News?

Sorry, it's me again, more of my ramblings ... Before the Corona virus pandemic arrived, I didn't spend a lot of time watching or listening to the news. I always seemed too busy, out—involved with other things—school, church, scouting, spending time with my family, especially my grandsons. I never bought a newspaper and only watched the news on TV, this consisting of headlines, in a half-hour slot, which were mainly political or sensational.

I preferred the local news or discussing events of the moment with friends and work colleagues. Don't get me wrong, I was interested in what was going on in the world. I watched documentaries and programmes on climate change, conservation, disasters and injustices, and even tried to help in small ways, and always by prayer, but not through watching the news much.

Then came the outbreak of Covid19 in March, staying at home and isolating. I began to watch and read the news avidly, to find out how the virus was spreading and what was happening around the world. As the virus spread, the news was dreadful, filled with statistics—the daily rise in numbers of people contracting the virus, hospitalisations and sadly deaths.

I don't know if you have felt the same but I have to admit that some days I couldn't watch the news and would switch it off, because I was left feeling anxious, lonely and with a feeling of helplessness of not being able to do anything to make it better.

I prayed, I shared my fears and concerns with God. Prayers for my family, the sick and vulnerable, the wider community, the world, myself and for wisdom for our leaders. As I pray, our Father God calms me and strengthens me. He gave me answers to my questions and taught me anew to acknowledge that He is in control – He is our refuge. He loves us and will never leave us.

I watch the news on TV now, to keep abreast of events at home and in the world, which is still dreadful, but I am not consumed by it. Instead I focus on the Good News I have been given by God—that He loves us. I read my *Good News Bible* and I am fed on it; it guides me and teaches me about the ultimate Good News, that Jesus is our Saviour—only through Him is our hope of salvation.

Now with certainty I can ask “What's the Good News today?” And the answer is—The same as it was yesterday and will be tomorrow—God Loves Us.

May God's Blessings be with you,  
*Rita O'Loughlin*



# Wild Goose

I am the Wild Goose  
That spreads its mighty wings to catch the breath of the Universe.  
Sweeping across vast continents and oceans of tides  
and wind-swept waves.

Horizon after horizon present their opportunities, for I am...  
I am this scarred splendour,  
I watch with an eye as patient as a parent  
Waiting for a tottering toddler to walk in steady joy.

I will have a long wait whilst alpha male empires  
Grow and Crumble, rejoicing in their fleeting power.

I am the fight for survival, the envy, the spite.  
I am creation in all its infinite light.  
I am the slow burn.  
I am the He and the You.  
I am the Christian, the Muslim and the Jew.  
I'm an Untouchable. I command night and day.  
I am the white boy who has lost his way.  
I am a spirit with sinew and flesh.  
I am ebony in all its magnificence.

I am myriad, fragile and broken.  
Yet forever ready to heal, wholesome and token.  
Anguished in my compassion, tender and hopeful.

I am the Wild Goose.  
Ready to catch the breath of the Universe.  
When it too cries the agonising pang of relief  
At its true birth.

*Joan Goodier*



## Precious memories

*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Luke 12:34*

Precious little memories  
of little things well done,  
Make the very darkest day  
a bright and happy one,

Tender little memories  
of some word or deed,  
Give us strength and courage  
when we are in need,

Blessed little memories  
help us bear the cross  
And soften all the bitterness  
of failure and of loss,

Priceless little memories  
are treasures without price,  
And through the gateway of the heart  
they lead to paradise.

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Thank you, Jesus, for my precious memories of the past and thank you for the promise of what is yet to come. Please teach me to relax in these hectic and busy days. Please awaken the laughter within me. Please reduce the tension. Please help me to take time today to build a snowman, or at least make a snowball. Please, if there is no snow, then let me just pretend.

*From Daily Reflections by Helen Steiner Rice  
via MaryJo Blades*

## Lottery Parrot

On a cold November morning a young boy found an injured parrot lying in the gutter and brought it home. At first his parents complained, but the boy promised to look after it. He nursed the parrot back to health and eventually it began to talk. To the delight of the boy, and his parents, the parrot would squawk out numbers every time the lottery was on TV. His mother decided to play using these numbers and to her amazement the ticket won. It was over a thousand pounds – as they lived in poverty this was a small fortune. If this feat could be repeated it would make all the difference in the world to them.

The boy carried on feeding and tending the parrot, and the parrot carried on squawking out winning lottery numbers. Eventually his mother decided to tell her husband what had been going on. At first he was sceptical, and rather suspicious, when he saw the money. But after a practical demonstration of the parrot's unique ability he was beside himself with joy.

“We can have the best Christmas ever,” he said. Everyone was happy and everybody prospered. As Christmas neared they bought all kinds of lovely presents and stocked up on fine wine and food.

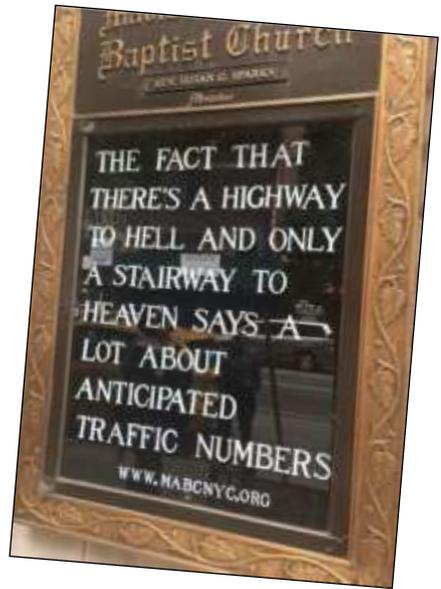
One day the boy's father said, “The bird is too precious to be left in the hands of a child; we should take charge of it.” His wife was reluctant but when he said, “What if it should die? You wouldn't be able to buy any more nice new clothes,” she was convinced.

So the couple took the parrot away from their son, who was sad but accepted his parents' decision. Unfortunately neither his mother nor his father knew anything about parrots so did not give the bird what it needed. They became too busy with all the trappings of Christmas to spend any time caring for the parrot.

The poor creature died. The boy was distraught. The parents blamed each other. Despite the wealth of things all around them they had a miserable Christmas.

So remember – do take care of your bird this Christmas.

*Michael Tetzlaff*



More Church Notices will be found at  
<https://www.boredpanda.com/funny-church-signs-twitter/>

# **Christ Church Birkenhead**

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## **Christ Church Services and Community Activities**

**Because of the Coronavirus we regret that  
all services and community activities are suspended  
until further notice.**

**Updates will be provided on our Facebook page and website.**

**<https://www.facebook.com/christchurchbirkenhead>**

**<http://christchurchbirkenhead.net/>**