

Christ Church Birkenhead

Bessborough Road, Birkenhead, CH43 5RW

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Christ Church Services and Community Activities

**Our Sunday services begin this month.
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/>



CHRIST CHURCH
BIRKENHEAD



Parish Magazine

August 2020

Welcome to the August 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!



Services during August

2nd August: Trinity 8

9th August: Trinity 9

16th August : Trinity 10

23ed August: Trinity 11

30th August: Trinity 12

At 10.30am

A short service of Morning Prayer will be held on each of these Sundays.

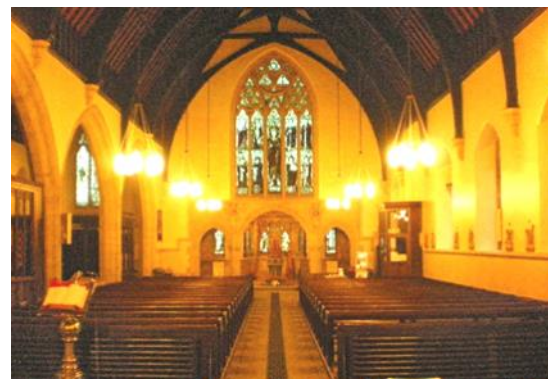
**Everyone is welcome
Full social distancing will be observed.**

Another Christ Church — Lancaster

Well, I suppose I'd better own up! I spent my teenage years being educated as a boarder at Lancaster Royal Grammar School, which meant attending Christ Church Lancaster every Sunday for evensong. That's the traditional service still held in many cathedrals; five proper hymns, psalms, prayers and a long sermon. Fortunately the vicar recognised that 100 teenage boys would find paying attention somewhat difficult, so we had visiting speakers most Sundays. It's where I was confirmed. The Bishop laid his hands on my head and prayed; then paused and whispered, "Is your dad here? I'd like a word with him after the service.." As you know my dad was one of his vicars!



Above is Christ Church Lancaster in a photo I took in 2016: it's hardly changed. Here's a view of the nave from the internet—I used to sit at the back by the entrance next to the wall on the right, where the heating pipes ran!



Christ Church Lancaster was built as the chapel for my school and the nearby workhouse in 1857. Later in the 1880s it became a parish church in its own right as the area around became built up. Today it is a thriving parish, though I don't know if the schoolboys are marched there every Sunday anymore.

Here is a 'giggle or groan' from their weekly newsletter to make you laugh. Visit them at <http://christchurchlancaster.org.uk/>.

*What sort of lights did Noah have on his ark?
Floodlights.*

Paul Rees

Come and be Revived – talks on Social Justice

Wednesdays: 1.10pm – 1.50pm

Join us for a series of talks on Social Justice. Meet on Zoom or gather together at Chester Cathedral in the Song School.

Wednesday 16 September

Speaking out for Justice: How the church in Melanesia is making a difference
With The Venerable Dr Michael Gilbertson, Archdeacon of Chester

Wednesday 23 September

Black Lives Matter
With The Right Revd Mark Tanner, Bishop of Chester, and The Revd Dr Calvin Samuel, Methodist Minister in the Bedford, Essex and Hertfordshire District

Wednesday 30 September

Invisible Women
With The Revd Liz Shercliff, Director of Studies for Readers and Sharon Amesu, Leadership Facilitator at St George's House, Windsor Castle, Chair of the Greater Manchester Branch of the Institute of Directors

Wednesday 7 October

Christianity, Animals and the Climate Crisis
With Professor David Clough, Professor of Theological Ethics at the University of Chester

Wednesday 14 October

Slavery and Salvation
With The Right Revd Alastair Redfern, Chair of the Clewer Initiative, and former Bishop of Derby

Wednesday 21 October

Christian Response to UK Poverty
With The Revd Lynne Cullens, Incumbent, St Mary's Stockport

To join these sessions online, please email deansoffice@chestercathedral.com with *Social Justice talks* in the subject line. Alternatively, contact our Education Officer, Jen Stratford on 01244 500 957 or jen.stratford@chestercathedral.com to attend in the song school.

The series is presented in partnership With Chester Diocese Reader Training.

The Rev writes ...

Dear Friends,

I can't believe its August already – despite being cooped up for most of the past few months, time has flown by. The monotony of the days nearly drove us all crazy initially, then the fear and worry and finally perhaps the boredom; followed by – do we have to re-open everything! We kind of want our cake and to eat it too, as the saying goes!

I've been away with Mike for a holiday to the Northumberland coast and the Eden Valley. We had a lovely, relaxing time and enjoyed seeing new places and simply enjoying different countryside and a stunning coastline. The sea birds and seals of the Farne Islands were a highlight as was visiting Lindisfarne for the first time. Take away fish and chips and a pub Sunday roast – all delicious and really ordinary everyday fare.

Now that my holidays are over for a while, we are re-opening church for services – hurrah! Sundays at 10.30am we will have a service of Morning Prayer during August progressing to Holy Communion for September. After that we will see – one step at a time is the approach we are taking. The on-line service will continue for those unable to attend in person; as will paper-based resources for those without tech abilities who are not able to attend.

I wonder what God has been saying to you, teaching you, during this time? Now is a good time to begin to reflect on that – it's not something to be hurried so take your time and think about it, pray about it. Maybe even write something down, it would be lovely to hear from you – either some thoughts for the magazine or write to me personally – I would find it incredibly helpful to hear from others their journey through lockdown and what it has meant to them. Remember it doesn't all have to be positive and upbeat – be honest!

Psalms 145:14-18. The Lord upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing. The Lord is just in all his ways and kind in all his doings. The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

God bless you all, hope to see you soon,
Revd Gerri



Kathleen's Corner

"Seasons of mists and mellow fruitfulness."

Let us hope so. The weeks of Lockdown drag on as efforts are made to ease life into what we have known as 'normal'. It is rewarding to be told that Oxton has been steady in keeping to the advice.

I have been impressed by the way in which so many organisations and societies have adapted to the situation: working out ways they can keep members in touch, providing positive hopes for the future, keeping everyone informed. They have not given up. They have adapted. They have carried on.

Another aspect of this pandemic has been how it has brought so many of us to the realisation how much we take each other for granted. How lost we feel not being with them when we feel like it.

These are lessons we have all needed to learn. Lessons the global society needs to learn as the unfair distribution of wealth is revealed across the globe. This is a world filled with plenty. Why then do people starve?

These are thoughts to engage our minds as the harvests are gathered and the apples ripen.

August is holiday month; children out of school, ready to run free, wanting to be entertained. Perhaps the recent restrictions on movements will give them a new respect for freedom of movement?

I wrote earlier in this corner of the way societies adapted and worked hard to keep members in touch. Our Magazine Editor is to be thanked for his splendid efforts to bring us together with the online issue. Thank you, Paul.

Kathleen Stansfield



Archaeology news: Explorers claimed they had found remains of the vessel (Image: getty)

Mr Wood, also a creationist, referred to radiocarbon dating and concluded that the wood found isn't old enough. He said that "if you accept a young chronology for the Earth ... then radiocarbon dating has to be reinterpreted" because the method often yields dates much older than 6,000 years.

Radiocarbon dating helps gauge the age of objects – and is generally thought to reach its limit with objects about 60,000 years old. Wood continued: "I'm really, really skeptical that this could possibly be Noah's Ark." He said the wood date is "way, way, way too young."

Charlie Bradley, Daily Express, July 21st 2020



Archaeology breakthrough: Explorers '99.9 percent sure' remains of Noah's Ark discovered

ARCHAEOLOGISTS have long sought to explore the bible's most famous stories - and a group of evangelical Christians were convinced that they had found the remains of Noah's Ark.

They explored the Mount Ararat region of Turkey and said they were convinced they had found the remains of the famous biblical vessel. Turkish and Chinese explorers from a group called Noah's Ark Ministries International said: "It's not 100 percent that it is Noah's ark, but we think it is 99.9 percent that this is it." The team also claimed to have found in 2007 and 2008 seven large wooden compartments buried at 13,000 feet (4,000 meters) above sea level, near the peak of Mount Ararat. They returned to the site with a film crew in October 2009. They added: "The structure is partitioned into different spaces. We believe that the wooden structure we entered is the same structure recorded in historical accounts."

However, given that explorers regularly claim to have found Noah's Ark – various experts expressed scepticism. Paul Zimansky, an archaeologist specializing in the Middle East at Stony Brook University in New York State, said: "I don't know of any expedition that ever went looking for the ark and didn't find it." Biologist and director of the Center for Origins Research, Tom Wood also said he doubted the find.



Archaeology news: The story of Noah's Ark was told in Genesis (Image: getty)

It's time to exercise. One two three...let's go



I have a habit of slotting photos, newspaper clippings, post cards, fliers in or between books. Always indiscriminately and randomly. Occasionally then when I'm browsing my shelves one of these objects falls out to give delight or generate memories. A week ago out of a book dropped a slim small booklet – "Journey into Life" by Norman Warren. When was I given this? Who gave it me? At what stage in my journey with Christ? Was it a comfortable time or of those recurrent times of struggle?

My memory gave me few answers... but I quickly reread the booklet : an outline of sin coming between the whole of creation and God; Gods' giving of his son to pay the price for our sin that we – and the whole of creation – might come back into intimacy with him. He then describes a course of action with the **ABCD** acronym: **A**dmit we have sinned; **B**elieve Christ has borne on the cross the guilt and penalty of our sins; **C**onsider that following Jesus is likely to bring its own challenges; **D**o something by accepting Jesus into your life as Saviour. (Uhm I thought I keep coming back to this ABCD cycle as in a loop of rediscovery and struggle). Then is offered a prayer to pray asking Jesus to come into one's life as Saviour.

Having described this ABCD process as the beginning of a journey with God, the author outlines what is needed to sustain and encourage us on that journey so that we grow and mature. This aspect really caught my attention. What he said spoke to me of one aspect of the past few months. I found helpful his analogy, if we are to grow and mature, of our physical need for food, air and exercise. The faith equivalent of food is the bible, reading it regularly; of air is prayer, time alone with Jesus; of exercise is worship and fellowship with other Christians. During the Covid lockdown it struck me that while there has been increased opportunities to access food (reading the bible) and air (prayer) – I don't say I've made the most of those opportunities – there has been minimal opportunity to exercise (Worship and fellowship). And I recognise this lack has had an effect on my wellbeing. I look forward to exercising with my church again.

I can see two Cathedrals and a Dome

Looking out from the window of my flat, high up on the hill I above Oxton village, I have an excellent view over the river towards Liverpool. The Pier Head buildings are all there in the foreground, and in the far distance (on a good day) I can see Winter Hill near Chorley where our television transmitter is! On the high ground above Liverpool I can see the city's two cathedrals.



To the right is the Anglican Cathedral – properly named The Cathedral Church of the Risen Christ, Liverpool. It is the largest cathedral and religious building in Britain, and the eighth largest church in the world. Designed by Giles Gilbert Scott, it took 74 years to build from 1904 to 1978.

To the left is the Roman Catholic Cathedral, officially known as the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, known around here as 'Paddy's Wigwam'. Well, just look at it! Although plans for a cathedral were proposed in 1933, construction did not begin until 1962. The architect was Frederick Gibbert, and construction took just five years.

Now, turning away from Liverpool and looking northwards across Wirral, New Brighton appears on the skyline. Not the low-lying promenade with all its



Junior Church

The end of term is here and our junior church has 'broken up' for the holidays. As we have not been meeting, here is some lovely art work they made some time ago to remind us of summer.

The children have all been given activity packs to see them through the holidays. Praying they all stay safe and well until we can all be together again.



Like the other community groups who use our hall, our Tots Spot group has not been meeting during the lockdown. I am in contact with *1277 Make Them Count*, a national network of church-based toddler groups. The group is seeking government guidance about reopening; and we shall be following this when it is made available.

Mary Kirby
Children and Families Worker



Indi Gardening by Marie Mairs

amusements of course, but the higher ground above where James Atherton built his grand houses in the 1830s. And where, in 1935 Father Tom Mullins opened his new church dedicated to St Peter and St Paul.



Trained as a catholic priest in Lisbon, Mullins created a grand cathedral-like building in a Classical Renaissance style. Its huge dome can be seen, not only from my window, but from out at sea where returning sailors called it the 'Dome of Hope' during the war. It is a splendid building and well worth a visit.

Paul Rees

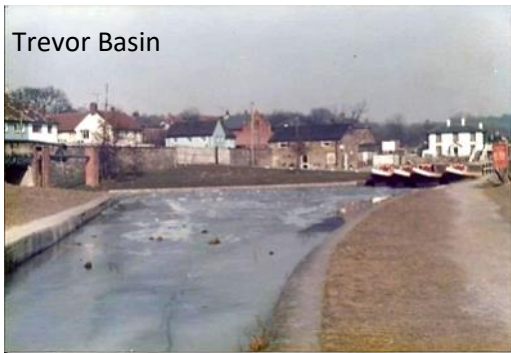
To Autumn **John Keats 1795—1821**

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells

To read the rest of the poem which inspired Kathleen's contribution, visit
<https://www.bartleby.com/101/627.html>

More from my Homeland

From the age of three I lived in a little village called Trevor between the towns of Wrexham and Llangollen in North Wales. Trevor Basin at the bottom of the estate was where I spent my childhood and teenage years. I spent many hours down by the canal, much to my parents displeasure as I could not swim and one of the most exciting pastimes was 'jumping the cut'. This literally meant that as the canal narrowed to a reasonable width, we would jump from one side across to the other. Many a Saturday would see my Mum's kitchen full of kids, who had jumped the cut and fallen into the canal and I had marched them up to our house for my Mum to dry out their clothes and supply them with a hot drink before sending them off home with a flea in their ear. I myself fell in the canal on one occasion and as I could not swim,



was unceremoniously lifted out by a canal worker by my long hair which was the only thing he could grab at the time!

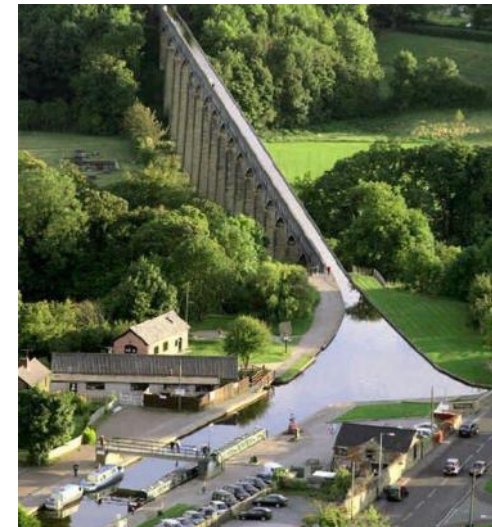
Today the basin is so busy that kids don't play there any more. The pathway shown in the photographs leads to the famous Pontcysyllte Aqueduct [or as we kids called the 'akkie']



The photo on the next page shows the aqueduct and you can see where the canal narrows just before the start of the bridge. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is 1,007ft (306.9m) long and spans the valley from Trevor to Froncysyllte, with the River Dee running beneath it. Pontcysyllte means 'the bridge that connects'. For the non-Welsh speaker, Pontcysyllte is pronounced 'pont-kur-suck-tay'. The work was undertaken by Thomas Telford and supervised by the more experienced canal engineer William Jessop. The first stone was laid in July 1795. It was completed in 1805 using local stone. There are 18 piers 126ft high (38.4m) and 19 arches,

slender masonry piers are partly hollow and taper at their summit. The mortar was made of ox blood, lime and water. The aqueduct holds 1.5 million litres of water and takes two hours to drain.

At the centre, the aqueduct reaches a height of 126ft (38.4m) from the river bed to the ironwork. This is the largest aqueduct in Britain and it is fed by water from the Horseshoe Falls near Llangollen. The canal runs through a cast iron trough that measures 11ft 10ins (3.6m) wide and 5ft 3ins (1.6m) deep. The joints in the trough were sealed with red flannel dipped in boiling sugar, which Telford found to be very effective, and many of the original rivets are still sound and in place.



Rumours of a ghost on the aqueduct are said to be of the man who was killed during its construction...some say that he is keeping an eye on the aqueduct and all who cross it.

I have discovered that a lot of the trees that were planted along the canal, at both ends of the aqueduct were provided by my ancestors.

Some famous visitors to the aqueduct have been ... Queen Victoria, George Borrow, Felix Mendelssohn [during his visit to Big John Jesus] and much later... Princess Anne, Harry Seacombe, Harrison Ford and Calista Flockhart and of course the most famous of them all ... our own Fellowship Group!

Jackie Harness