

**To worship God, to share Jesus,
and to serve the community**

Christ Church Birkenhead

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**Contributions for our next magazine
by the end of August please.**

*Paul Rees, Editor,
oxtonrees@gmail.com*



CHRIST CHURCH
BIRKENHEAD



Parish Magazine
Summer 2022

Services in Church for Trinitytide 2022

All Sundays at 9am
Holy Communion (BCP)

Main services at 10.30am

3rd July: Morning Prayer

10th July: Holy Communion

17th July: Morning Prayer with Baptism

24th July: Holy Communion

31st July: Holy Communion

7th August: Morning Prayer

14th August Holy Communion

21st August: Morning Prayer

28th August: Holy Communion



Not all Cathedrals are cathedrals!



Here is Southwell Minster in Nottinghamshire

The Minster's website explains all:

Welcome to Southwell Minster where God has been worshipped for well over 900 years, both in the present building and in the earlier Saxon church which it replaced. Here you can read about its long and complex story, from its origins as a Roman villa, through a period as a private church of the Archbishop of York, to the years when served simply as a church to the parish, and finally to the creation, just over a century ago, of a new bishopric, with the Minster as its cathedral.

The minster is some 14 miles from Nottingham where I went to university, and I visited the minster a number of times, not just to attend services, but also because I was interested in archaeology and old buildings! There was a good pub in the town too!

<https://www.southwellminster.org/>

A Fond Farewell



On Wednesday 6th July, in the penultimate week of the Tots Spot term we said goodbye to Tina Kirby who has been helping support and run the sessions over the past 12 years, giving up her day off from work. She is changing her job and won't be having a day off during the week.

We also said farewell to some twelve children who are moving on to school, each of whom received a present and a certificate to remind them of their time here at Christ Church. It was an emotional event for all.

Tots reopens in early September—new helpers are always welcome. Please come and talk to Mary Kirby, our children's and families' worker.

Ladybirds — remember?

The Williamson Art Gallery has a lovely summer exhibition telling the story of Ladybird Books and the artists who contributed to them from 1940 to 1975. As well as paintings and photographs on the walls, there hundreds of books to sit and look at within the exhibition. The memories they bring back are wonderful. Do go and see for yourself!

Fire Alarm!

A friend of mine who is a member of a church in Wallasey told me about his church's recent fire practice. He was chosen by the warden (presumably), given 'the whistle' and instructed to blow it at any time during the service. So there he was listening to the vicar's sermon when he realised he had a duty to do. He blew the whistle, the preaching stopped and the congregation left the building.

What my friend did not make clear was whether the vicar knew the practice was to take place—or when!

The Rev writes...

We have been enjoying some good weather in the past few weeks - not too hot, or too cold, or too windy (that's what I call good weather). We had a holiday in South Devon for a few days and it was truly lovely. Just what we needed. It was a holiday that we turned up to without planning much beforehand - simply booked a cottage, put the postcode into satnav and arrived - eventually! Each day we hit different beaches and the weather was glorious - sunny, still and comfortable. Not too many people about, mostly those with very young children and those 'cough' of a certain age!

I think if we had planned it, had great expectations it might not have happened. It's lovely when things go well and its been almost effortless. Most of life isn't like that though, is it? My Dad used to say 'he who expects little, shall not be disappointed'; this was usually a bit of a joke when he was serving the food for dinner when we were all 'starving' and hoping for a big portion!

Of course, now that we have returned home the weather is cold and it feels like time to get the jumpers out if you had put them away. Like the weather, life is very unpredictable and just when we feel things are settled and peaceful, something seems to come along and disrupt everything. That seems to have been my story quite often and maybe its been yours too. We live in unusual times when the way things have been for ages, seems to be changing rather radically in many spheres of life and the way that things work or used to work, like getting to see a doctor, or open a bank account have changed and we don't like it much do we?

I find solace often in getting outside, whether in the garden, the park or off on a walk somewhere, even in the town or the city across the water; watching the countryside when in the car on a journey and so on. The natural world seems to have sprung up beautifully - roses have been beautiful this year and the garden - thanks to Mark is taking on great shape from the relative wilderness that it had become - we love the garden but are not great gardeners! I'm so pleased that some people are!

Gardens like many things in life need attention. They need to be tended, cultivated, parts left a bit wild, spaces made, clusters of plants dug in and some decent material put into the soil to aid growth. I guess it's the same with the countryside - it looks wild often but isn't really unless deliberately left that way. Much of what is 'natural' is managed to a greater or lesser extent.

I find that there is something that we can learn here that can inform our faith and life. We have to tend to our faith, as we do to our gardens and the natural world, as much as we do in other areas of our lives - tending to friends, our own needs, our families, our walk with Jesus. To enhance each of these areas of our lives they need time and they need us to be aware of any 'weeds' that might be growing up and entangling us; making our lives more difficult. Tending to our health, tending to our spiritual life by taking time away with Jesus - reading our Bible and spending time in prayer in ways that work for you. Some need silence and space, others need to be doing tasks that allow their mind to wander and 'converse' with the Lord.

Jesus is infinitely patient with us and is always willing to forgive. If we have been 'away' from him for a long time, or a little time; he is there to welcome us back into that on-going conversation of love. Perhaps what my Dad used to say is true - if we expect little from our walk with Jesus, we will not be disappointed! Conversely if we expect much, we will not be disappointed either. I think this is the one area of life that both of these things are true.

It's not easy to be expectant and hopeful in a positive way at this time for things we cannot see but as the Apostle Paul says in Romans 8.24-25 *'hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?' But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.'*

Have a great summer whether in your garden, back yard, outside in the local parks or further afield. When you get out, spend a little time just focusing on the good things in life, those blessings that you have, who you might bless and all with a thankful heart to God.

Kind regards
Rev Gerri Tetzlaff

Baptisms
May
Oliver Jude Hargreaves & Joseph William Davies
June
Esmé Barrington
Wedding
July
Michael Deer and Rachel Hardy

The Knife Angel

Have you been to see the knife angel? It's here in Birkenhead standing by the main entrance to the park at the junction of Park Road North and Park Road East. It's staying with us until it goes to Redcar in Yorkshire on its 'national youth anti-violence tour' at the end of the month.

It was created at the British Iron Works Centre near Oswestry by artist Alfie Bradley who formed the angel's figure from steel sheeting and then welded some 100,000 knives to it. The blades came from collection boxes filled at police stations all around the country.

Since the Knife Angel's conception, its makers always had a singular objective in mind – to bring about social change. The Knife Angel was always intended to educate children, young people, and adults about the harmful effects that violent behaviour has on communities across our nation. It has also helped to raise better awareness, helped those carrying knives to renounce violence as a solution for solving disputes, and encouraged leading bodies to create better initiatives to turn the tide on aggressive behaviour. It symbolises a call for change whilst acting as a National Memorial for victims of knife crime and their loved ones.



You can read more about the Knife Angel online at
www.britishironworkcentre.co.uk/the-knife-angel-official/

'Thoughts for Every Day' by Patience Strong

Wrinkles

Wrinkles tell the tale of life upon a human face. As the years roll over us a finger seems to trace their story for the world to see, our weakness and our strength. Time's hand may be gentle, but the marks will show at length. Corrugated foreheads, tell-tale lines and puckered flesh. Yet if we could always keep our faces smooth and fresh --- they would look like marble statues without warmth and breath, lacking in expression like a mask, a mask of death. Life has made our faces and we cannot conceal --- what we are and what we think and what we truly feel. That's what makes them interesting, laughter, worry, strife --- draw the wrinkles that declare the story of a life.

The thread of friendship

Nothing dims the brightness of a friendship tried and true. The colours may be faded, but the gold comes gleaming through. We were meant to share the lovely things the good God sends. Joy is doubled, sorrow halved when we are with our friends; and fortunate are they who, looking back with smiles and tears, can trace the thread of friendship through the pattern of the years.

Sharing

How can I prove my gratitude for all that you have given me?
Happiness and fond affection, comfort in adversity.

Peace of mind and joy of living, help and hope and friendship true,
Richly has my life been blessed with all that I have found in you.

Thank you for your understanding, for your trust and sympathy
For the gift of your devotion, for your love and loyalty.

Ever I'll remember this no matter what the years may bring
I'll remember and be grateful. Thank-you, dear, for everything.

Offered by MaryJo Blades

The Cross of Iron—'Cruz de Ferro'



On my recent Camino walk across Spain, there were many special places, but the most emotive and challenging was on a peak in Western Spain. It is the site of a pole, possibly 50 feet tall, with an iron cross at the top. In itself, it would be just one of many crosses and other religious symbols along the 500 mile path. However, this has become a place of greater meaning and pilgrimage to many walking the route, than the cathedral of Santiago at its end.

The tradition is that the pilgrim brings a stone from his home or wherever he starts his journey and leaves it at the foot of the cross. For those of us with a Christian faith it is easy to accept the idea of leaving our burden at the Cross. Jesus died on the Cross to take our burdens and set us free. The photo shows an enormous mound of these stones that have been left over the centuries.

I certainly spent time there praying and I believe receiving answers. However, as I sat nearby after, I watched the regular passage of others and was surprised and encouraged by what I saw. Certainly a few walked past, almost oblivious to the place but almost everyone stopped and not just to take photos. Surveys show that less than 10% walking this route claim to have no personal faith or spiritual interest in the journey but most were leaving a stone and seemed to be thinking of something.

A few days later, a couple I had met earlier asked me over coffee whether "the Cross" had been special for me. I had already shared the reason for my walk so I had no difficulty explain that I had found direction and answers. They then shared, that for them, out of nowhere, a painful episode in their life had come to mind and they were able to talk and find they could move on from it. It was a blessing to be with them.

Rob Perry

Sing Joyfully



There was a full house in Christ Church on Sunday evening to celebrate the power of song. After some two years of waiting, the concert started a week of song by three superb local choirs. The Luminelles from Birkenhead High School Academy, Soul City Voices and the Birkenhead School Chapel Choir together with the mighty Wirral Symphonic Wind Band.

During the following week the choirs and musicians went on to sing on Mersey ferries, at the Floral Pavilion, in Birkenhead Park and elsewhere.

Our concert began with a rousing congregational rendition of 'All people that on earth do dwell' as set by Vaughan Williams. After more Vaughan Williams, we were treated to the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by Charles Villiers Stanford especially reworked for the symphonic wind band. It was so loud! A journey down the Thames and songs of the sea followed.

After the interval — tea and coffee served to hundreds it seemed (thank you Jackie and Judith)—The young ladies of the Luminelles choir took over with their contributions ranging from songs by John Denver, The Beatles and Fleetwood Mac. Then it was the turn of the Soul City Voices to sing songs from Sister Acts, by Jo Cocker and Whitney Houston. All great stuff and well appreciated by the packed audience.

An amazing evening was had by all.

Barnabas Fund Cycle Pilgrimage, 2022

Canon John Bowers has written to say that he completed a ride from his home in West Kirby to celebrate holy communion at Chester Cathedral on 18th June. Canon John is to be admired for his many fund raising rides for the Barnabas Fund over the past twenty years since he retired. As you will know, we at Christ Church have supported his efforts over the past years.

Since 1993 the Fund has supported many causes, not least currently among them the Cana Girls Rescue Home in Kenya. Here some 250 girls are protected and given a Christian education having fled sexual abuse, child abuse or female genital mutilation. In Nigeria's North and Middle Belt Christians are being attacked, shot and massacred. Homes and churches have been razed, cattle looted and thousands forced to flee from the ruins of their village. In Pakistan, schools are being built for the children of brick-kiln workers to help them escape the poverty and illiteracy which trapped their parents and grandparents. Ten are currently being built in the Punjab, each with three classrooms, electricity and blackboards as well as washrooms and piped water. There's plenty more to read on barnabasfund.org.

If you would like to support Canon John in his support for the Fund, perhaps you might like to send a cheque to him which he will forward on to the Fund. Please make your cheque payable to the Barnabas Fund and send it to Canon John Bowers, 2 Shalford Grove, West Kirby, Wirral, CH48 9XY.

Some thoughts

The liar's punishment is that when he speaks the truth, he is not believed.

Jewish wisdom

John Ruskin, the Victorian artist, writer and critic, had a fine house in the Lake district which is now a museum. On his desk he had a plaque bearing only one word—TODAY.

1982 was a pivotal year for me. I was 26 and depressed at the ending of a love relationship. I decided to do some voluntary work at a club for the mentally handicapped. Helping other people can cure your blues.

submitted by Tony Blades