

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

St John's: A place of worship where all are welcome

In Memory

The Funeral of Henrietta **Marjorie** Lightfoot was held at St John's on Wednesday, 24th May. Marjorie, who will have been known by many in the parish, lived in Ashton Hayes for 35 years before moving to Frodsham in 2017. She has now been laid to rest with her late husband, Glen, in the churchyard. Our thoughts and prayers are with Marjorie's family and friends at this sad time.

Thank You

A special thank you to everyone who helped to clean and decorate the church with flowers in preparation for our Easter services. It was truly beautiful.

Services in May

5th May:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am All-age Service (CW)
6.30pm Evensong (BCP)

12th May:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Morning Worship (CW)
& Sunday Club

19th May:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Morning Worship (CW)
& Sunday Club

26th May:

9.00am Matins (BCP)
10.30am Holy Communion (CW)
& Sunday Club

BCP - Book of Common Prayer
CW - Common Worship (Modern Language)

Contacts

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A View from the Vicarage

I'm writing this article in the week we celebrate St George's Day, the patron saint of England. As far as we can tell, the real St George was born to Christian parents around 280 AD in Lydda, Palestine. He followed his father's profession and became a successful Roman soldier, rising to the rank of Tribune. George was a member of Roman Emperor Diocletian's imperial guard, and stationed at Nicomedia in Turkey. In February 303, the Emperor issued an edict saying that every soldier must offer a sacrifice to the Roman gods. Christian soldiers (such as George) who refused to worship anyone but Jesus were arrested. Ultimately, George was beheaded for his faith on 23rd April 303.

So that's the history, but what about St George the dragon-slayer?! It seems that the image of St George and the dragon was used to depict George's martyrdom. The dragon likely represents the Emperor Diocletian, whom George defeated by not succumbing to his demands.

But do you ever wonder what it would take for you to become a saint? Do we need to defeat a dragon or perform a miracle? And do you have to be dead before you can become one?! Thankfully, the Bible says that it is much easier than that! Because in the New Testament every Christian is called a 'saint'. To be a saint is to be pure and holy in the sight of God - to be in a right relationship with him.

Of course that's never something we can achieve by ourselves, however hard we might try. But Jesus offers us all the opportunity to become saints. Funnily enough, St. George's flag is a great visual aid for how that transformation is possible. The flag has a red cross - reminding us of Christ's blood shed at the cross, where he willingly paid the penalty for human disobedience to God, so we don't have to. And a white background is under the cross - emphasising that we can be forgiven and made clean in God's sight by faith in Christ's saving death for us. Wonderfully, sainthood is a status we can all receive and enjoy by faith - no dragon-slaying is necessary!

God bless,
Phil Weston

News

- **Christian Aid** — Christian Aid Week is between 12-18 May. This year, when you receive your new specially designed envelope, please add your donation, seal it and take it to the Community Shop where our co-ordinator, Margaret Garman, will collect it and send your gift off to the charity.

- **Easter Egg Appeal** — We have received a letter from Save the Family which says: "On behalf of our charity, may we thank the residents of Ashton Hayes and Mouldsworth and the employees of Inovyn for the large donation of Easter Eggs for our homeless families. There will be a lot of happy faces on Easter Sunday.

We rely on donations and gifts from individuals and organisations to enable us to employ qualified staff to help our families with budgeting, parenting skills, basic cookery, job training etc. so that they can move back into the community with greater skills and confidence. Your support is really appreciated."

- **Gift Day — Sunday, 9th June 2019** — Our annual Gift Day will be held on 9th June. Please help us to keep our church financially viable by making a donation towards its day-to-day running costs and the maintenance of the building and churchyard. Gift envelopes will be circulated with the June edition of *News from the Pews*. Look out for them.



100 Club

The winning numbers in
March's draw were
67 48 9 21 32

Pause for Thought by Alan Downen



Simon Peter said to the others, "I am going fishing." "We will come with you," they told him. So they went out in a boat, but all that night they did not catch a thing. As the sun was rising, Jesus stood at the water's edge, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. *John 21:3-4*

Jesus was dead; he'd been crucified; they had seen it; it was a terrible end! However, some of the women said that they had since seen him; some of the disciples said that they had spoken to him ... but the last place any of them expected to see him was standing on a beach ready and prepared to barbecue breakfast! Not that they had anything to barbecue of course!!

But he told them to cast their nets just one more time on the other side of their boat — never mind one more time, it was a total waste of time, there was nothing there, if there had have been they would already have found it. But just to appease this stranger, they did what he asked and straight away found that the net was far too heavy to pull back into the boat because it was so full of fish — and immediately, they recognised him ...

Very often, it is when we are at our lowest and about to give up that Jesus speaks to us, "Don't despair, believe in me and all will be well," but sometimes we don't hear his still, small voice or recognise his call.

When life becomes difficult remember to set time aside to stop ... and pray ... and listen ... and be prepared to be surprised just like the disciples were just after that first Easter Day!

Easter at St John's



Approximately 180 Easter Eggs were sent to Save the Family thanks to the generosity of our parishioners and employees of Inovyn, Runcorn and "pilgrims" arriving from their Good Friday Walk of Witness.



During May and June our children's Sunday Club will be looking at the church's "Mission Unstoppable" in the book of Acts. Sunday Club is at 10.30am each Sunday, and starts in church before heading over to the Village Hall for Bible teaching, crafts and games. Sunday Club is suitable for ages 3 and up. We also have a creche area in church for babies and toddlers.

OPEN MEETING

in church
on Tuesday, June 4th
at 7.30pm

We are holding a meeting to update members of the community on the progress made and future plans for our church project.

We already have raised £220,000 towards the estimated cost of £300,000 of the project and are in the process of applying for grants.

It is 6 years since we started the project and naturally people who have supported us want to know when we will be able to start work on the changes. Come along and find out.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Wine, soft drinks and nibbles will be provided for your enjoyment.

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