

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

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

Church Services in July

Our Sunday services are now being held in church but the 10.30 service will continue to be live streamed on our Facebook page. Join us here:

www.facebook.com/stjohnashton/

Services in July

4th July:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am All Age Service (CW)

11th July:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Morning Worship (CW)
& Sunday Club (4-10yrs)

18th July:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Morning Worship (CW)
& Youth Club (11+ yrs)

25th July:

9.00am Matins (BCP)
10.30am Holy Communion (CW)

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

Contacts

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A View from the Vicarage

We've all been asked by the Government to wait a few more weeks for the final 'unlocking' of our society and the return (we hope) to a more normal pattern of life. The pandemic and its associated restrictions have taken their toll on our economy and society, but at long last the end is almost in sight. We just have to be patient!

As a church family at St. John's we've had to show particular patience over the past year, as we've awaited the completion of our church building project. The pandemic put our renovation work behind schedule, and we still await the resolution of a few final snags and hiccups (including the delayed arrival of our smart new chairs!). But, overall, it has been well worth the wait, and we are thrilled with the transformation that has taken place. With all its new facilities, our building is now a great venue for Christian ministry and community events - our patience has been rewarded!

Patience is certainly something commended in Scripture. All God's people are encouraged to "clothe" themselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness... and patience (Colossians 3:12). Church leaders are instructed to "Preach the word, in season and out of season...with great patience" (2 Timothy 4:2). And every Christian is told to be patient as we await the Lord Jesus' return in glory (James 5:7). A return that will herald the end of suffering, sorrow and sin - something well worth waiting for!

God bless,
Phil Weston



In Memory

Janet Rowe, who formally lived in Pentre Close, passed away on 6th June. Her funeral was held at Vale Royal Crematorium on 17th June and her ashes will be laid to rest alongside her late husband Peter's in the churchyard (Peter died last Spring). Janet is survived by her children Andrew, Kate and Tom.

Doug Dalzell and his wife Sylvia have lived in the Pentre Close for many years. Sadly, Doug died on 12th June at the age of 89 and his funeral was held on 30th June. Doug had a passion for Brass bands and played in the City of Chester Brass Band for many years, the band played in the car park before and after the service, he and Sylvia also sang with the church choir for a while. Our thoughts and prayers are with Sylvia, their children Stuart, Elizabeth and Jeanette, and all those who mourn at this time.

News

- **New Youth Group** — Thank you to those young people who attended our BBQ at the Vicarage last month. As well as burgers and hot dogs, we enjoyed badminton, swing ball and trampolining! We hope to run further fun events for teens this Autumn, probably on Sunday evenings, making use of the great new facilities in our church building. Watch this space for further details!
- **Bible Study** — Our latest study, which is a continuing journey through St Mark's Gospel, will finish in mid July and it will be followed by a Summer break. We shall be gathering again in September to consider 'Living in Love and Faith' — a CoFE course which will help us to consider Christian teaching and learning about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. This study will be open to all.
- **Covid Restrictions** — It is hoped that as Covid Restrictions ease (19th July??) we shall be able to return to congregational hymn singing and, who knows, we may even be able to shake hands as we greet each other. It is also hoped that we shall be able to return to holding a service of Evensong on the first Sunday of each month at 6.30pm starting on 1st August.

A Prayer

Lord of creation,
whose glory is around and within us:
open our eyes to your wonders,
that we may serve you with reverence
and know your peace at our lives' end,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

100 Club

The winning numbers in
May's draw were

1 2 57 46 8



Pause for Thought by Alan Downen

John had been saying to Herod, 'It is not lawful for you to marry Herodias, your brother's wife.' So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. Finally the opportune time came. On his birthday, Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests. The king said to the girl, 'Ask me for anything you want, and I'll give it to you.' She went out and said to her mother, 'What shall I ask for?'—'The head of John the Baptist,' she answered. *Mark 6:18-19, 21-22 & 24*

This story of the death of John the Baptist, told in Mark's Gospel, tells us that Herod feared John and protected him because he was a righteous and holy man. When he heard John speak, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him. Mark also tells us that Herod was greatly distressed when he realised the consequences of his rash promise to his step-daughter but, because he was a man of his word and he had made his promise in front of his dinner guests, he couldn't refuse her and John had to die.

There are two things we can learn from this story, the first of which is 'Never hold grudges against other people' — in the end they will destroy you and nothing good ever comes from them. When Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive someone who sinned against him Jesus said, 'seventy-seven times' — a number which was too large to keep track of. There is an old saying which tells us never go to bed angry. If we do, those bad feelings will harden into resentment and scientists have now found evidence to support the idea that negative emotional memories are harder to reverse after a night's sleep so, forgive and/or apologise before turning in.

The second learning point is 'Never make promises you may not want to keep.' You will only end up regretting your actions or letting someone down whom you may really care about. Always think before you speak and consider the consequences before making any grandiose statements or promises which are simply intended to impress others.



**"Open House Afternoon"
18th July 2021 — 3-5pm**

Do join us for free refreshments, crafts and children's activities at our Open House afternoon on 18th July, from 3-5pm. Come and have a look around our re-ordered church building and enjoy some tea, coffee and cake outside. All welcome!

The changes to our building also enable us to offer it for hire for community events. More information, including a booking form, is now available on our website:

www.ashtonhayes.church/booking-application



**The Enthronement of the
41st Bishop of Chester
The Rt Revd Mark Tanner**

Saturday, 26th June 2021

Right from the outset of this great event, +Mark admitted that the term 'Enthronement' made him feel uncomfortable, but what else could you call a service where a Bishop is being welcomed to a Diocese some 12 months after his initial arrival. He joked that it was too late to call it an 'Inauguration' and if it had been an 'Installation' he would have felt more like a fridge-freezer or some other item of white kitchenware.

He was welcomed into the Cathedral by young members of local church schools before moving to the front to be greeted by other church leaders and local dignitaries. It is already clear that his episcopacy will be one marked by equality, diversity, collaboration and service — everyone will be treated with equal respect. Even in the midst of this great celebration he took the opportunity to offer a public apology for the times and occasions when the Church has failed to safeguard people. He said that over the last 12 months he has "wept and raged over the behaviour of some in the past in our Church who have utterly broken trust and left abused, broken and scarred people in their wake."

In his closing remarks he said "I can't tell you the future, but I can tell you who holds the future; I can't tell you the task exactly, but I can tell you what it looks like: it looks like checking in for duty with Christ and committing yourself to be good news. And we will be astonished what God can do among us, for he has barely begun his work among us."

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