

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

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



SEASON OF CREATION

1st September - 4th October

Church Services in September

3rd September:

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

10th September:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Morning Worship (CW)

17th September:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Morning Worship (CW)

24th September:

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

1st October:

9.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Harvest/Creation (CW)
6.30pm Evensong (BCP)

BCP - Book of Common Prayer

CW - Common Worship (Modern Language)

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Contact Us

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View from the Vicarage

Life doesn't always go according to plan, does it? Our ambitions, hopes and dreams don't always materialise. Our future plans can be thrown up in the air by unforeseen events.

For example, you may have seen in the news that the 2023 World Scout Jamboree in South Korea didn't quite go as anticipated. 45,000 Scouts from around the world (including my son James) arrived at the Jamboree on 1st August expecting a fun fortnight of camping and outdoor activities. Unfortunately, they instead encountered searing heat, high humidity, poor sanitation, meagre rations and mosquito bites. To top it all, the campsite lay in the path of a powerful typhoon that threatened to swamp it with torrential rain and storm force winds!

So, after just a few days, the site had to be evacuated and all Scouts relocated to safer accommodation in the capital, Seoul. But adversity is the mother of invention, and thanks to the efforts of the South Korean government and the Scouting authorities a whole new programme of sight-seeing, concerts and other activities were hastily arranged for the forty thousand affected Scouts. A potentially disastrous and hugely disappointing situation was rescued and redeemed. All the affected Scouts have now safely returned home, with happy memories that will last a lifetime.

The Bible describes another victory drawn from the jaws of defeat. Human history got off to a terrible start when our first ancestors rebelled against their Creator and brought evil into our world. A rebellion perpetuated in countless sinful acts over subsequent centuries. But thankfully God intervened to rescue us and remedy the situation, via the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Through faith in him, God has made it possible for us to be forgiven our past, to be given new purpose in the present, and to become heirs of eternal life in the future. Whatever life throws at us, we are never beyond the reach of God's grace.

God bless,
Phil Weston



Notices

- **Harvest Festival** — will take place on Sunday 1st October but this year we shall also be celebrating God's Creation whilst also lamenting our exploitation and abuse of the world's resources. All gifts of non-perishable foods will be donated to the *West Cheshire Food Bank*.
- **An Update** -- the Summer Concert actually raised £900 and not the £800 reported in the last edition.
- **Study Groups** -- will be meeting again from September onwards. The Monday Group meets via Zoom and will be continuing to look at the Gospel of St Luke. The first session will be held on 18th September at 8pm – for more information or joining instructions contact Alan Downen. The Wednesday group, which meets in person at the vicarage, is scheduled to recommence on 13th September and will be exploring Paul's letter to the Phillipians. Contact Phil Weston for more details.

Family QUIZ NIGHT

7pm, 22 September @ St John's, Ashton Hayes

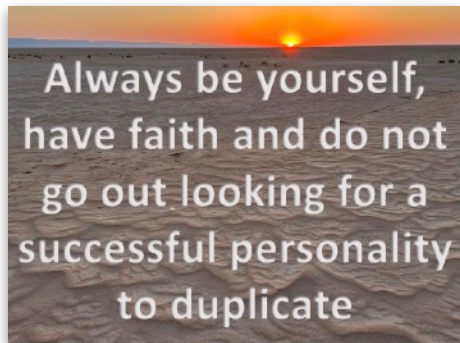
Tickets £10 from the community shop or pay on the door.

Come and join us for an entertaining quiz night for all the family (general knowledge, sport, music, children's round etc.)

Tickets include cheese board, cakes and soft drinks (bring your own bottle).

Pause for Thought

by Alan Downen



I have been thinking about how difficult it is to coherently express fundamental Christian concepts — God, Prayer, Sin — when speaking to friends, strangers, relatives and acquaintances, especially now, in the 21st Century, when the Sacred-Secular divide seems to be ever widening. Interactions and attention spans are becoming increasingly short or fragmented in ways which seem designed to distract from the nuances of faith and this may be particularly true when one's own thoughts and beliefs are not fully formed or aligned with the 'traditional' views of the Church.

I look with admiration at some of the great orators of our time, including our own Bishop Mark of Chester, but I know in my heart that I will never be able to duplicate their flair and verbal dexterity — I can only do what I can do. So I have concluded that honesty is the best policy: all I have is me and I just have to trust that God will assist when words become difficult to find. Added to that, I have realised that it is okay to have personal doubts and fears, but there are also moments when I feel that I have stumbled upon certainty; times when my thoughts seem so much easier to express; times when God feels very close and I am able to appreciate his glory, not the same as observing something beautiful perhaps — it is something closer to a feeling of ecstasy and more about insight than physical sight.

I am still very much in learning mode and I know that I don't have all of the answers: there will always be some answers which we will need to seek out together. Are you willing to join me on that journey?



Colours of Autumn

The Vale Royal Singers
in concert at St John's

Friday, 13th October
at 7.30pm.

The programme will be varied and will last about an hour: light refreshments will then be served. Tickets will cost £10 and are be available from Alan Downen or the Community Shop.

All proceeds will be donated to the church to support its work and ministry so please come along and support us.

St John's Café



Now that the new school term is about to start, our **all-age café** is also reopening. Join us on Thursday, 21st September, between 2.30-4.30pm. Everyone is welcome to join us for a free cup of tea, coffee or glass of squash and a slice of cake whilst you have a chance to have a chat with friends (or play!)

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Ashton Hayes Gardening Club Autumn Show

Saturday 16th September
in the Church

Our Autumn Show is a fun event and everyone is welcome to enter. There is no need to book, just turn up at the Church between 1pm and 2pm and we will give you everything you need.

You need to be a member to enter but you can join on the day for just £5 and this gives you access to our full programme and discounts at Okells and Morreys.

The show will be open to the public from 3pm when you can buy raffle tickets and refreshments will be available. Children are welcome.

To find out more take a look at our website:

tinyurl.com/AHGC-Autumn23
or pick up a Schedule at the shop.



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