

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

St John's – Focused on Christ, united in faith, serving our community
and a place of worship where all are welcome

Church Services in August

3rd August:

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

10th August:

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

17th August:

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

24th August:

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

31st August:

10.30am Holy Communion (CW)

BCP - Book of Common Prayer

CW - Common Worship (Modern Language)

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Contact Us

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Congratulations

Congratulations to Lucas Barnes, and his parents Imogen and Alex, who was baptised at St. John's on 6th July. Lucas is the grandson of Margaret Papworth and the great-grandson of Reverend E H Barnes who was vicar of Ashton Hayes from 1941 to 1979.

Also congratulations to Richard Groves, who recently completed his training to become an Occasional Worship Leader (OWL) at St. John's

View from the Vicarage

The phone was a great invention, wasn't it? How easy to press a few numbers on our small devices and speak to someone the other side of the world. Once a phone was a luxury item, but now we take it for granted that this gadget in our pocket enables us to contact anyone, at any time, in any place.

However, how many times have you called an organisation, only to be given a recorded message giving a variety of options? Then you must wait in a queue for ages before your call is answered. A voice informs you that 'your call is important to us' ... but meanwhile you are left waiting, listening to endless music. Yes, a phone may be useful in all kinds of circumstances, but they can also be very frustrating!

So it's good to know that God can be contacted immediately we need Him. There is no celestial call centre where our messages are delayed or referred. With prayer we can call on the Lord directly. This service is free, with no charges. He hears our every call, and we can be confident that our Creator will answer us in ways which are only for our good. "When you pray, I will answer you. When you call to me, I will respond" says the Lord (Isaiah 58:9).

Nowadays our smart phones offer us internet access and apps as well as calls. For example, well over three million people have now downloaded the Church of England's Daily Prayer app, which offers Morning and Evening Prayer in both text and audio form. Since its launch in 2014 thousands have used it each day to call on the Lord in prayer. Why not give it a try yourself?

God bless
Phil Weston



News

A New Face — Melanie Webb will be joining our church's ministry team in September. Mel is training for ordained ministry in the Church of England (studying at Emmanuel Theological College in Liverpool) and will be on placement with us until June 2027. If you see her in church or around the parish, please make her welcome.

Summer Break — There will be no Messy Church or All-Age Café during August but we will be back in September. Please watch this space for more information.

Church Garden Party — Our thanks to Hilary Clegg who provided the venue for our Strawberry Cream Teas afternoon and to all those who helped on the day. The event raised a total of £850 which were a welcome addition to the church's funds and it was wonderful to see some 'old' friends.



Pause for Thought

by Alan Downen



"The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone.'" Genesis 2:18

Those ancient words from Genesis 2:18 capture a fundamental truth about human nature that resonates just as powerfully today because, as individuals, we are programmed for connection, built for community, and designed to thrive while in relationship with others.

Yet loneliness has become an epidemic in our modern world. Despite being more "connected" than ever through technology, millions of people experience profound isolation—the elderly neighbour who hasn't spoken to another person in days; the teenager struggling with his/her own identity while scrolling through carefully curated social media feeds—loneliness and isolation can affect anyone, regardless of age.

Loneliness isn't just an emotional burden—it's a health crisis. Research has shown that chronic loneliness increases the risk of depression, anxiety, heart disease, and even early death. It weakens our immune systems and clouds our thinking. When we're isolated, we become shadows of who we're meant to be. But we have the power to change this. Small acts of genuine connection can transform lives. A phone call to check in; an invitation to coffee; a smile and conversation in the street or at the village shop; creating spaces where people can meet and belong—all can help.

We can choose to see the person working in the shop, the neighbour walking their dog and the co-worker eating lunch alone. In a world that often feels disconnected, we can be the bridge that reminds others they're not alone because, in the end, we're all better together. So, as we enjoy ourselves during the summer months, let's not forget the lonely and isolated who are still at home.



Music for a Summer's Evening

Our 20th annual summer concert seemed to be enjoyed by everyone who came along (including the choir members!) and raised a magnificent £840 towards funding our church. Further concerts are already being planned for the autumn and will be officially announced next month.

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