

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 July

5th July:

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

12th July:

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

19th July:

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

26th July:

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

A short service of **Morning Prayer** is held in church **every Wednesday morning at 9.00am**

BCP - Book of Common Prayer

CW - Common Worship (Modern Language)

Contacts

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In Memory

The funerals of Andrew Brown (of West End), Neil Goodier (of Dunns Lane) and Doreen Derbyshire (of Peel Crescent) were all held at St John's during June. Our condolences go to all of their family and friends

View from the Vicarage

A Summer of sport is upon us! The football World Cup has kicked off and the Wimbledon tennis championships commence on 29th June. For the next few weeks millions of people around the world will become armchair commentators. People who haven't run in years will explain how professional tennis players should have played. Referees will be criticised by people relaxing on their sofa, and millions will ride an emotional roller coaster based on the movement of a ball!



Sport is a wonderful thing - it gives us drama, fun, excitement and hope. But, as the Christian evangelist J. John reminds us: 'Every trophy eventually gathers dust. Every medal eventually tarnishes. Every champion is eventually replaced. One day someone else lifts the cup.' The apostle Paul understood this too. He wrote, 'Every competitive athlete goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever' (1 Cor 9:25). Sportsmen and women train for years to win a trophy they hold for a few moments. But if we choose to follow Christ, God offers us all something infinitely greater - purpose, peace and eternal life. A victory over sadness, sin and death that will never fade.

So enjoy the sport this summer - celebrate the goals and admire the tennis skills. But remember that the greatest victory was not won on a football pitch or a tennis court, but by Jesus Christ through his cross and resurrection. And the greatest prize is not awarded by FIFA or the All England Club. It is the gift of life and hope that Christ, Heaven's champion, offers to each one of us. A precious prize, received by faith, which will endure forever.

God bless,
Phil Weston

News

Christian Aid — Our Christian Aid appeal raised just over £550 (plus gift aid) this year. Our thanks to all who made a donation.

Craft Evening — Natalie Meara is organising another craft evening. It will be held in the church on the evening of Friday, 17th July. Please contact Natalie for more details.
natalie@ashtonhayes.church

Messy Church — Our next Messy Church will be held on 13th September at 4pm.

Congratulations

Our congratulations to young Conall Mitchell who was christened at St John's on 14th June. He is the son of Janet and Joe and grandson of Kate and Roger Davies of Willow Hayes.

Strawberry Cream Tea

*Enjoy a relaxing afternoon
with friends and neighbours*

Sunday 12th July

2.30pm – 5.00pm

In the garden of Orchard Croft
Duck Lane, Ashton Hayes

TICKETS

£10 each

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM

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All proceeds to be donated to church funds

Our annual Gift Day raised over £7000 this year, easily exceeding last year's total of £5800. Your ongoing support is critical to us as it helps to ensure that we have the ability to pay our bills and employ a vicar to serve in this parish. We will never take that support for granted and we would like to thank everyone who made a donation towards this magnificent total.

Pause for Thought

by Alan Downen



And God said, 'Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.' And it was so. Genesis 1:9

As I write, I am sitting at Morte Point on the North Devon coast. The Atlantic is stretching away to the horizon, vast and indifferent to the smallness of my figure perched here on the rocks. Waves that have travelled thousands of miles are throwing themselves against the headland creating a noise I can feel in my chest as much as I can hear with my ears. Spray lifts and catches the light. Below me, a pair of grey seals are riding the swell, seemingly unbothered by the churning water, turning lazily in the foam as though the Atlantic in full voice is simply home.

And as I sit, deep in thought, it seems to me that this is exactly what that single ancient sentence from the Book of Genesis was describing — the gathering of the waters, and the emergence of land. Wherever you believe those words came from, they carry the weight of something that is profoundly true. This is how the world is — the sea there ... the land here ... and the boundary between them is being endlessly, restlessly, and gloriously contested.

We live lives that resist stopping. There always seems to be something more pressing or unfinished than rest. But I wonder whether the invitation to simply sit — not to pray in any formal sense or to think great thoughts, but just to be present with what is in front of us — is in itself a form of paying attention to the one who made all this.

You do not need to be in North Devon — a park bench, a canal towpath, or a garden in the rain will suffice — but the point is to stop, look, and let it speak, because it usually does.

Concert at St John's



The Vale Royal Singers provided a miscellany of music for the enjoyment of packed audience during the evening of 19th June with most people staying on for a glass of wine and some friendly banter after the singing had ended. The evening has raised a most welcome sum of over £1400 towards our running costs.

St John's Café



Our next afternoon café will take place on Thursday, 16th July, between 2.30 and 4.30pm. Join us for a free cup of tea, coffee or glass of squash, a slice of cake and a chance to meet up with neighbours and friends.

Opening Hours
Monday - Saturday
10am - 5pm
Late night Thursday
until 8pm.

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