

SOLIHULL PARISH

NEWS



No. 526

SEPTEMBER 2021

PRICE 50p

TEAM CHURCHES

St ALPHEGE - The Square, Solihull B91 3RQ

St HELEN - St Helen's Road, Solihull B91 2DA

St MICHAEL - Bryanston Road, Solihull B91 1BS



Sunday services are:-

- 9.15 a.m. The Junction on Zoom – contact l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk
- 9.30 a.m. Eucharist Service at St. Helen's
- 10.30 a.m. Eucharist Service at St Alphege
- 11.00 a.m. Eucharist Service at St. Helen's
- 5.00 p.m. Choral Evensong from St. Alphege (live-streamed or recorded)

Mondays Midday Prayer live-streamed from St. Michael's Chapel

Wednesdays Midday Dwell Service live-streamed from St. Michael's Chapel

5.00 p.m. Choral Evensong from St Alphege (live-streamed)

Fridays 9.30 a.m. Praise and Play

Midday Prayer pre-recorded

Full details available on the homepage of our parish website at:

<https://www.solihullparish.org.uk>

Please don't hesitate to contact the Parish Office if you need any support or advice. It is always a pleasure to talk to you.

The Revd Simon Marshall
The Revd. Sue Chandler

WEDDING AND BAPTISM ENQUIRIES

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**If you need help of any kind, please
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0121 661 6343.**

One of us is on duty each day.

Contents

Editorial	2
Roundabout	4
Let us Pray	10
News from Team Churches	13
St Alphege	13
St Helen	20
St Michael	22
The Guardians of St Alphege	16
Music Matters	18
Pioneer Diary	24
Church for Families	27-30
Youth Stuff	31
Matters of Faith	50
For Your Diary	54
Address Book	56



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

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parishnews@solihullparish.org.uk

Cover picture

Statue of St. Michael slaying Satan as a dragon on the church of San Michele in Lucca, Tuscany, and Michaelmas Daisies.

Headlines

Future Pattern of Sunday Service at St Alphege Church	4
Consultation	4
Songs of Praise	5
Farewell to Jane	5
Letter from the Rector the Rev'd Canon Jane Kenchington	6
Jane and Richard Kenchington	8
Memorial Service for Diana Mitchell MBE 2pm Monday 11 th October	13
Michael Robert Southworth 14 th December 1942 - 29 th January 2020	14
Barbara Grace Semple 15 th April 1927 - 31 st March 2020	15
Solihull Parish Puppets	26
Creation Care - Encouraging Households to Care for God's World	32
St Alban Pilgrimage 27 th June 2021	34
Climate Sunday 4 th July 2021	36
Sermon Preached by the Rev'd Meg Guillebaud at St Helens on 4 th July 2021	38
Mothers' Union News	42
SCAH Solihull Churches Action against Homelessness	44
Knowle Male Voice Choir	46
Keswick Convention 2021	48

Editorial

The Tokyo Olympic Games ended nearly a month ago, on Sunday 8th August. Despite the initial uncertainty about the wisdom of holding the event during a pandemic, the Games proved to be spectacular and often surprising.

The Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 (as they were called, even though they took place in 2021!) seemed to highlight the tension between sporting success and what it means to be human. For example, these Games saw the first openly transgender athletes competing. Indeed, the Tokyo Olympics have been hailed as a turning-point for LGBTQ+ athletes in terms of how they are accepted and recognised as part of the Olympic community.

The Tokyo Games also highlighted the issues of mental health and well-being amongst elite athletes. Most significantly, the gymnast Simone Biles, one of the most decorated American gymnasts in the history of the Games, took the decision to withdraw from the gymnastics final to protect her physical and mental health. This was an act of great courage and integrity which meant that Simone had to reassess her understanding of what success is.

When she came back to participate in the balance-beam event, Simone Biles had to adjust her routine to make it less demanding and, therefore, less likely to score highly. But, in many ways, the bronze medal she won was her biggest achievement yet. "I wasn't expecting to walk away with a medal," she said afterwards. "I was just doing this for me, and what happens, happens."

The 2020 Olympic Games will also be remembered for a display of sportsmanship that delighted spectators around the world. In the men's high jump competition, on Sunday 1st August, Italy's Gianmarco Tamperi and Mutaz Barshim of Qatar were locked in first place after a tough few hours of competing. The two athletes, who are also good friends, were then given the option to settle matters with a jump-off. But Barshim had a better idea: why not give both athletes first place?

The official overseeing the event said that this was possible and the two athletes agreed to share gold medals. "I still can't believe it happened," said Tamperi. "Sharing with a friend is even more beautiful ... It was just magical." Some have described this as the best moment of the Games, demonstrating the ability to see beyond the traditional options of either winning or losing.

What this act of sporting greatness reveals is that there are always new ways to shape the world around us. In this case, the athlete Barshim saw another way ('a more excellent way', as St Paul put it!) to resolve the stalemate that he and his fellow competitor had reached. By asking if the first place position could be shared, Barshim created a richer outcome which expressed more fully the achievement of both athletes.

For those of us who are more used to running the race of faith (see Hebrews chapter 12, verses 1-2!) there is an opportunity here. We can follow the example of the Olympic high-jumpers and find new ways in the life of our parish to achieve a better result for everyone. As the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus clearly show, the time of winning at others' expense is over and gone; there is now a new season in which we are called to enable all people to enter God's kingdom, even if that means changing the way that things have always been done.

Of course, God is always ahead of us and calling us to new things. The words of Isaiah spoken to the people of Israel in their captivity are a vibrant and inspiring example: 'Stop dwelling on past events and brooding over times gone by; I am doing something new; it's springing up - can't you see it?' (Isaiah 43.18-19). May God give us the vision and the courage to see the new things he is doing in our midst.

Fr Simon.

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Roundabout

Future Pattern of Sunday Services at St. Alphege's Church

In May there was a consultation with members of the St Alphege congregation about the pattern of Sunday worship when pandemic restrictions were lifted, but in the light of current shortages of clergy within the Parish.

We are grateful to the many who took the trouble to respond. The clear result was that a majority favoured the option of reinstating the 9:15 a.m. Parish Communion and 11:00 a.m. Sung Eucharist. This would enable us to retain the link between the Junction and the Parish Communion and would also cater for long-standing different preferences in styles of eucharistic worship within the congregation. As part of this option, given scarce resources, it was proposed to suspend the 8:00 am Holy Communion as a weekly event but to try and arrange one or more said communions in the course of a month.

The D.C.C. and Deputy Wardens will strive to give effect to the wishes of the congregation in what remains of the Interregnum. However, the continuing shortage of clergy means that the time-scale for introducing more services is uncertain. Regrettably, we shall be unable to move to more than one Sunday Eucharist before October, and exactly how many services we can provide at that stage is still unclear. Meanwhile there will continue to be a Sung Eucharist each Sunday at 10.30am. Evensong will continue on previous lines, although some changes may have to be made with Joe Cooper's departure.

A special Songs of Praise is planned instead of Evensong for Sunday 5th September. More details will follow as stated on page 5.

We shall keep the congregation abreast of developments.

Consultation

Our new Rector and our community mission priorities We are about to look for a new Rector and we need your ideas about our church as we look at our community mission priorities. We'd like to ask you five questions:

1. What do you especially like about our church and why?
2. What do you think are the biggest problems for our church?
3. What would you like to see our church doing in the future that it doesn't do now?
4. How could our church do more in the community?
5. Any other comments?

The document has been circulated widely by email and post and a link to the consultation can also be found on the Parish Website. Please email profile@solihullparish.org.uk if you have any questions or would like to discuss your responses. Please let us have your ideas by Sunday, 5th September 2021.

Farewell to the Rector

In July the Parish sadly said goodbye to the Rev'd. Canon Jane Kenchington on her retirement

Farewell to Jane

Who can forget that memorable evening when some of us first met Jane – the “come and meet the candidates but you can’t ask them any questions” cheese and wine? We were told that her name was Jane and that was all we were allowed to know. Of course, I, like several others I imagine, went home and Googled her and found out who she was in less than five minutes! That evening, I felt that our prayers had been answered; here was the right person for our Parish. Seeing Jane’s eyes shine and to hear her enthusiasm for the post, you could tell that she knew it too.

I was on holiday when Jane was installed as Rector, so the next time I was in contact with her was by email. Someone had told me that she was about to do something which I thought would be a big mistake, so I emailed her to say so. Jane immediately invited me round to meet and have a chat. This is Jane’s open and refreshing style; she meets challenges head on and discusses them face-to-face. I soon discovered that I had been fed some misinformation, and we became friends from that day.

Jane and Richard have been huge supporters of the choirs and music at St Alphege. Jane has a wealth of knowledge and love of liturgical music, and Richard has played in the All-Age Worship Band, the Orchestra and he has sung with the 9.15 St. Alphege Singers and in our concerts, as well as attending many Wednesday recitals. On behalf of the choirs, I would like to express our appreciation and thank them both very much for this support.

Jane, you came with a great vision for this Parish and have accomplished a lot. It is a great regret to many of us that events have prevented you from achieving all you wished to. You have pointed our ship in the right direction and, though we wish you were still onboard, we wish you God speed on your own voyage, wherever it will take you.

Pam Price
Parish Warden

Songs of Praise **Sunday 5th September**

On Sunday 5th September at 5.00pm, there will be a special ***Songs of Praise*** at St Alphege Church to replace the normal Evensong. You are invited to nominate your favourite hymns for this event. The service will include short commentaries on the hymns chosen and there will be refreshments afterwards. To nominate your hymns, please contact Stephen Linstead 705 1376 or sglrlml@btinternet.com

Although remaining Covid restrictions are expected to have been lifted by September, could those wishing to attend this service please inform the Parish Office in advance 705 5350 or office@solihullparish.org.uk This will help with arrangements for the service, including the provision of refreshments.

Roundabout

A Letter from the Rector the Rev'd. Canon Jane Kenchington

45 Park Avenue, Solihull, B91 3EJ

18 July 2021

Dear Friends,

Richard and I would like to say a huge thank you to you all for your very generous farewell gifts. The book of memories is fabulous; the cheque extremely generous, the flowers were/are beautiful and Richard loved the wine he was given. And the wonderful cake was delicious. Thank you.

We'd also like to thank all of you who organised such an enjoyable evening last Friday at St Helen's. The folk of St Helen's did us proud in terms of their hospitality and we're very grateful. Thank you to the choir who came and sang John Rutter's *Gaelic Blessing* – an anthem that was sung at our wedding 30 years ago. We were so glad to see so many people on Friday and to have the opportunity for some conversation, even though it was quite brief in order to get round to everyone. Apologies to those whom we didn't manage to chat to.

If ever you are travelling south down the M5 and fancy visiting us, do get in touch - we'd love to see you. Our new address will be:

7 Warren Croft, North Nibley, Dursley, Glos., GL11 6EN Telephone 07779 991 760

janekenchington@gmail.com

Meanwhile, this comes with our love and prayers for you all and for Solihull Parish,

Jane Kenchington

A Prayer for Jane

Prayed by Fr. Simon at the service before Jane's Leaving Party

Jane, as you set out on your journey,
may God make clear the roads before you
and greet you with kindness when you arrive.

May the adventure call you to what needs to be left behind, and the wild warmth of the Spirit cherish within you all that should stay.

God bless to you the portion of earth beneath your feet, and may the compass of your heart point you to the welcome of new friends and the surprise of undiscovered gifts.

And though the world be strange,
know that there is nowhere you are not at home.

For each day that you rise up

and each night that you lie down

we will open our eyes under the same sun and close them under the same sky.

Jane, go gently and courageously, and our love go ever with you.

And may God's peace be your dwelling place and let your deep belonging find a home there.

Amen.



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Roundabout

Jane and Richard Kenchington

Leaving Party – 16th July 2021

It was a shock when we heard of Jane's early retirement at the end of January. But they are still here! But not for much longer as their refurbished house – no doubt scrutinised closely by Richard on the engineering side – is now more or less ready and they will be leaving us next week.

So, although it is a long period since then, it is good that we can now meet in more numbers, in a more normal way than would have been possible then.

In 2015 Jane and Richard joined us from the West Country.

But the latter half of the 2010's have not been easy for the country or the Parish, and has culminated in the most traumatic year in most of our lives. During these years Jane, our Rector, much supported by Richard, has brought the Gospel of Jesus Christ to our Parish with enthusiasm and led us into new ways of mediating the Gospel to people in our community.

Jane saw the need to make changes for our changed world which has greatly helped the Parish address important issues enabling us to be well prepared for the next stage of our life of witness in Solihull.



Jane has a passion to bring the good news about Jesus to people and one of her desires was to have a Pioneer Minister to particularly work in the old St Francis Area but also to encourage and lead us all in mission in the widest sense in our Parish. And so we have

welcomed Suzette to be with us and we are much enjoying her ministry.

I have particularly valued Jane's support of Just Explore Groups with which I have been involved and she has given us great



Roundabout

encouragement and made recommendations for many people to come to our groups and hopefully they moved on in their faith from this.



One of the last projects I am aware of is the 800 Years of Christianity in Solihull that Jane pioneered and pushed forward and we experienced some of this early in 2020. It was so sad that COVID prevented much from taking place, but we do hope that we may be able to revive some of these initiatives as the restrictions are being lowered and allow us to do more.

But much of the work of people in ministry is unseen and so we really do not know the effects of their hard and loving work amongst so many of us. Jane epitomised this. I do know myself of a number of people she has personally cared for and encouraged and no doubt many of us here can testify to being encouraged and helped by Jane and/or know of others for whom the same is true; and having become warden recently, I have seen some of the documents in the Parish files which testify to the amazing amount of work Jane has undertaken, some of which has been very difficult and taxing and some of which has caused her a lot of pain. Of course we are sorry that Jane is leaving early in the midst of her ministry to us.

So, these thoughts of mine are just a snapshot of all that Jane and Richard have been to us. But Ann Colloby has compiled a lovely book a memories and messages which gives a better overview of their ministry and we will be presenting this to Jane shortly. Ann unfortunately cannot be here today as she is away on holiday.

In recognition of her service in her ministry Jane was recently appointed an Honorary Canon of Birmingham Cathedral which gave us all much pleasure and was much deserved.



Richard, you have unwaveringly supported Jane and the Parish during your time here and we have much valued your presence and contributions to our life. Again, I am not aware of many of these, but one I am aware of is Richard's support for the Christian Men Together Group and his role in developing that into a well-established and lively gathering. Richard tried hard to get a clay pigeon shooting outing going – but we did not quite get there! Thank you for this and all the other contributions you have made and for all you have been to us.

So, Jane and Richard, we do thank the Lord for you and pray for continued better health and good and fulfilling lives in Gloucestershire.

Andrew Williams

Let us Pray

Calendar and Prayer Intentions for September 2021

1	Giles of Provence, Hermit, c.710	Members of religious communities	Widney Manor Road
2	Martyrs of Papua New Guinea, 1901 & 1942	Our Archdeacon, Simon Heathfield	Willoughby Drive
3	Gregory the Great, Bp of Rom & Teacher, 604	Our Bishops, David & Anne	Winterbourne Road
4	Birinus, Bp of Dorchester, 650	the Readers of our Parish	Winthorpe Drive
5	14th Sunday after Trinity	The people of St Alphege Church	Witham Croft
6	Allen Gardiner, Founder of S th American Mission Society, 1851	Those who work in the Touchwood Centre	Witley Avenue
7	Feria	The staff and pupils of the schools in our parish	Witley Farm Close
8	Birth of the Blessèd Viirgin Mary	Those caring for children and grandchildren	Wollescote Drive
9	Charles Fuge Lowder, Priest, 1880	The clergy of our parish	Woodbury Grove
10	Feria	Those waiting for the results of medical tests	Woodfield Road
11	Feria	Those who work at the Core in Solihull	Woodlea Drive
12	15th Sunday after Trinity	The people of St Helen's Church	Woodperry Avenue
13	John Chrysostom, Bp of Constantinople & Teacher, 407	Ruth Marshall, our Reader-in-training	Woodside Way
14	Holy Cross Day	That we may declare our faith in Christ in word and deed	Woodston Grove
15	Cyprian, Bp of Carthage & Martyr, 258	Those suffering for their faith in Christ	Wroxall Road
16	Ninian, Bp of Galloway, c.432	Staff and residents of local care homes	Albany Gardens
17	Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen & Visionary, 1179	Spiritual Directors and Confessors	Alderbrook Road
18	Feria	The St Alphege bell ringers	Alderham Close
19	15th Sunday after Trinity	Our Parish Wardens & Deputy Wardens	Alderminster Road
20	John Coleridge Patteson, 1st Bp of Melanesia, and his companions, Martyrs, 1871	Those persecuted for their faith.	Alderpark Road
21	Matthew, Apostle & Evangelist	Our Pioneer Minister, Suzette Maguire	Alderton Close
22	Feria	Our church treasurers	Alderwood Place
23	Feria	Those exploring religious vocations	Alston Close
24	Feria	Our church musicians	Alston Road
25	Lancelot Andrewes, Bp of Winchester & Spiritual Writer, 1626	Those living in poverty	Anchor Lane
26	16th Sunday after Trinity	Our part in God's mission in Solihull	Arley Road
27	Vincent de Paul, founder of the Congregation of the Mission, 1660	The work of Solihull Churches' Action on Homelessness	Ashborough Drive
28	Feria	The work of our Parish Church Council	Ashbrook Crescent
29	St Michael & All Angels	The people of St Michael's Church	Ashby Court
30	Jerome, Translator of the Scriptures & Teacher, 420	Bible Translators	Ashlawn Crescent

The Church prays for the community daily: please include these topics in your personal daily prayers.

A Home for All?

Creationtide, or the Season of Creation, is the period in the annual church calendar from 1st September to 4th October, dedicated to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life.

Christians join the Psalmist in proclaiming the Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it. (Psalm 24:1) However, the current climate crisis is accelerating ecological instability, which results in the loss of habitats that are homes for millions of species, including humans whose homes are at risk due to climate conflict, loss and damage.

As people of faith, our baptismal call compels us to till and keep God's garden, and participate in the renewal of the whole inhabited Earth, so that life may flourish and all may have a just and sustainable home.

The Season of Creation is the annual Christian celebration of prayer and action for our common home. Together, the Christian family around the world unites to pray and protect God's creation. The 1st September is the *World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation*, and the 4th October is the *Feast of St. Francis of Assisi*, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations.

This year the theme of *Creationtide* is, "A home for all? Renewing the oikos of God." *Oikos* is the Greek word for "home," or "household." By rooting our theme in the concept of *oikos*, we celebrate the integral web of relationships that sustain the well-being of the Earth.

The word ecology (*oikologia*) describes the relationships between animals, plants, non-sentient organisms and minerals that play a vital role in maintaining the balance of this beloved community. Each creature is important and contributes to the health and resilience of the biodiverse ecosystem in which it lives. Humans belong in the right relationship within this Earth community. We are made from the same stuff of the Earth, and are cared for by our co-creatures and the land.

On the Sundays of the Season of Creation we will use a liturgy which focuses our attention and devotions towards God the Creator and Sustainer of all things. Our sermons will help us to think more about our place in the world and what we are called to do to live as joyful and responsible parts of the created whole.

For more information, and lots of resources, about the Season of Creation, please visit: <https://seasonofcreation.org/>

Fr Simon.



Live and streamed services are being held at St. Alphege's and St. Helen's churches.

Details are inside the front cover of this magazine and on the Parish Website.

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From the St Alphege Register

Baptisms

5th September Seth Laird
12th September Tobias Swift
26th September Taio Lorenzo Valentino Forde

Weddings

18th September Christopher James Holtom and Louise Amanda Lodge
25th September Michael Anslow and Margaret Mortiboys

Funerals

30th July Jane Jones
2nd August John Brian Griffiths

Interment of Ashes

26th August Barbara Grace Semple
29th August Michael Robert Southworth

Memorial Service

3rd August Edward Hughes
26th August Barbara Semple

Names taken from the Chantry Book for Remembrance in September

Geoffrey John Day	Vernon Cecil Davis	Reginald Bernard Aston
Peggy Oswald	Noreen Porter	Sue Hewitt
Wendy Patterson	Alice Shirley	Eileen Rivers
Alison Peat	Nigel Paul Ladbrooke	
Harry Pilkington	Colin Pittaway	

Memorial Service for Diana Mitchell, MBE **2p.m. Monday 11th October 2021**

A Memorial Eucharist and interment of ashes will be held at 2pm at St Alphege, Solihull. Fr Simon will preside. There will be refreshments afterwards at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Homer Road. Diana died in March 2020, just before the start of the first Covid lockdown and her funeral was held at the Crematorium with the then maximum of five mourners. If you would like to attend, her family would be delighted if you could come. We cannot be certain as to the Covid related restrictions, if any, that will apply on the day, so we are collecting a guest list in advance in case there is a limit on numbers attending, as at the time of writing (2nd August). Please contact Will or Phyllis Davies on 0121 705 0790 or email will.davies285@gmail.com.

Michael Robert Southworth

14th December 1942 – 29th January 2020

Mike was born in Lancashire and attended Merchant Taylors School, Crosby, before going to the University of Bristol, where he met Carol, to read History. They both then took post-graduate teaching certificates at the University of Exeter, married and moved to Solihull. Mike began teaching History, with some cricket and hockey, at King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Boys where he remained for fifty years. His lifelong love of music and the theatre soon led him to become involved in directing plays, musicals and revues, some of which he wrote and one of which he took to the Edinburgh Fringe. For many years he took school trips to the First World War Battlefields of Northern France, for which he wrote detailed guide booklets. His academic and extra-curricular achievements led to his being awarded the national Lifetime Achievement Award for Teachers in 2009.

The family, soon with four children, attended St. Michael's Church where Mike served on the D.C.C. and the P.C.C. He also directed Gilbert and Sullivan operas for the St. Alphege G&S Society with Canon Wilkinson as Musical Director and later with other conductors after the Rector's retirement. He also directed shows for other local societies. After our son William joined the St. Alphege Choir, Mike accompanied the Choir as Housemaster on their Cathedral Weeks.

Mike greatly enjoyed reading and travelling, particularly to France, latterly spending time there in the Summer with children and grandchildren. He was extremely proud of his family, the rock for us all. His humour, his enthusiasm and his determination are greatly missed.

Mike's funeral was held just days before the first lockdown and he was honoured by the presence of the Headmaster, Governors, many colleagues and Old Boys and the School Choir, with the School closed for that day, and many friends from across the country. His portrait now hangs in the hall at King Edward VI Camp Hill School.

The Southworth Family

St Alphege Pre-school

Pre-school places are available for children who will turn 3 years of age in the academic year beginning in September each year. St. Alphege Pre-school offers highly experienced and qualified staff. The last two Ofsted Inspection results rated us 'Outstanding'. Please see web-site for further information www.stalphege-preschool.org.uk – or email Tammy Ellender, Manager: manager@stalphege-preschool.org.uk Application forms available from the Oliver Bird Hall or email the Admissions Secretary – admissions@stalphege-preschool.org.uk for a copy.

Wraparound

We also offer a wraparound service for nursery Children attending St Alphege Nursery. Email: Tammy Ellender: manager@stalphege-preschool.org.uk

No1 Club

Before and afterschool club is held at OBH by highly qualified staff offering a range of activities for all. Tammy Ellender: manager@stalphege-preschool.co.uk or No1club@stalphege-preschool.org.uk

Barbara Grace Semple

15th April 1927 – 31st March 2020

Barbara Grace Semple, the second of four daughters, was born on 15th April 1927 to John and Grace Semple at Barton Stacey, Hampshire. When Barbara was about eight, the family moved to Blisworth in Northamptonshire, from where Barbara was eventually educated at Northampton High School for Girls. On leaving school she trained to become a teacher at Furzedown College in S.W. London. Initially she worked in Primary schools but soon moved to Secondary where Biology was her main subject, teaching at Rushden Secondary Modern School. However, her lifelong interest in Art and Architecture took her to study at Brighton School of Art for a year and then went on to teach Art and Architecture for several years in Bournville, Birmingham.



After her mother's death in 1965, Barbara toured the U.S.A. and Canada. She was encouraged by Canadian friends to return to Vancouver in 1966 to do a modular B.A. degree. When she came back to England, she taught in Islington, London and then at Solihull High School for Girls. This is when she established links with St. Alphege, especially enjoying the music offered here by organ and choir. She also regularly attended concerts given by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. In the school holidays, Barbara travelled abroad extensively, enlarging her knowledge of Architecture and Art from different cultures.

Barbara's last years were spent at St. Bernard's Residential Care Home where she settled well and was happy despite her failing health. She is survived by seven nieces and nephews, and by her two younger sisters whose words have been used to write this 'in memoriam'.

Because Barbara died at the beginning of the first national lockdown in 2020, the family were unable to celebrate her life in the way they would have liked. They have chosen to hold a memorial and bury her ashes at St. Alphege on 26th August, 2021.

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The Guardians of St Alphege Parish Church

The Guardians of St Alphege Church was established as an independent non-denominational charity 40 years ago, to raise funds to assist with the maintenance and preservation of one of the finest medieval buildings in Solihull Borough.

Our Annual Membership is priced at only £15 per adult or £25 per couple and we are always delighted to welcome new members. Our supporters enjoy a sense of 'belonging' to our Parish, and even if they have moved away they still remain friends and 'Guardians'. If you are new to the Parish or new to The Guardians and would like to get to know other Parishioners, then our friendly social events are a great starting point for familiarising yourself with a large congregation and getting to know others.

If you would like to join us or find out more, please have a chat with our Membership Trustee, Margaret Oswald. Tel: 0121 722 4092, or visit the website www.the-guardians.org.uk and download an application form.

We are always keen to recruit new Trustees and Social Committee Members - the tasks are not too onerous, please just ask us for information! We comprise a small Social Committee of four, with four Trustees, meeting 3 or 4 times per year, plus the AGM and any social activities you would like to attend.

With warm wishes to you all.

Ruth Morton
On behalf of the Trustees

GUARDIANS FLOODLIGHTING

The Guardians Floodlighting Scheme is available for anyone who would wish to celebrate or mark an occasion, or to commemorate a date.

The cost is £8.00 for 2 hours; £14.00 for 4 hours. Please give 14 days notice.

Forms are available from the Guardians' notice boards in St Alphege Church or in the Oliver Bird Hall.

Names are displayed on monthly lists on these notice boards and also in the Parish magazine and acknowledged with a card sent to the donor.

For further information please contact the Scheme organiser:-

Sheila Payne, 0121 706 0520.

The Church was floodlit to remember the following:

6 th July	In loving memory of Jackie Goodman.
8 th July	In loving memory of John Barnsley on his birthday.
11 th July	Colin Price, with love on your birthday.
13 th July	In loving memory of Eric Morton on the anniversary of his birthday 13 th July 1928. Sadly missed by June, children and grandchildren xx
21 st July	In loving memory of David Francis Wright on his birthday.
4 th August	In loving memory of Elsie Greasley.
11 th August	Alan Wilson. In memory of a loving father.
17 th August	Remembering James Frangou, a loving husband and adored father. Sadly missed by Barbara and Diana.

FRIENDS OF ST ALPHEGE MUSIC

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Music Matters

Joe Cooper, Director of Music and Musical Outreach

is leaving to take the prestigious post of Director of Music at Bangor Cathedral

An appreciation by Nick Cahm, Chairman of the *Friends of St. Alphege Music*

I only joined the choir in early 2018 so arrived fairly well into Joe's tenure. How I came to join the choir I think helps us to understand the importance of music at St Alphege as well as the huge role Joe has played in it. In mid-May 2017, through a mutual friend, my son Josh and I sang with the St Alphege choirs at Lichfield Cathedral for the concert where Aled Jones was singing. Singing with the choirs, I was immediately struck by a number of things (and no, sadly it wasn't how impressive Aled was!). Firstly, it was how the children were at the centre of the choirs. Where I was singing at that time, back in Sutton Coldfield, children were undoubtedly important, but the focus was not the same. Secondly, it was how well drilled the whole choir was, there was no waiting for the person next to them to start singing before they started, there was a crispness to the singing and a togetherness that I had not experienced with a choir. Finally, there was the organisation of the choirs. People knew where they were meant to be, there was good discipline and more than anything choir members were enjoying being members of a successful organisation.



All of these aspects that I noted started and finished with Joe. Whilst, undoubtedly, I noticed the herculean efforts of people like Isabel and Alison immediately at that event (and of course plenty of others once we joined the choir), the musical togetherness, discipline and enjoyment were down to Joe. When I decided late in 2017 that Josh and I needed a change of choir, my thoughts immediately turned to St Alphege and the observations I made at that event in Lichfield. I have never regretted our decision to move.



Joe has an exceptional talent for communicating, educating and enthusing. He can take anyone, adult or child and make them a better singer and musician. He doesn't do it by belittling but by consistent constructive feedback and care. He is not afraid to feedback to the adults as well and I think for the most part people understand that he is doing it because he wants to make people realise their potential. I know I am a different singer (hopefully better) having been with the choir just over three years and made more

improvements than in the 10 years with my previous choir. Josh too has grown in confidence and ability, not least with his more recent organ lessons with Joe. It is with the children of the choir where those improvements are so plain for everyone to see. We have a great mix of super-talented children that come through the choirs at St Alphege, but most of them start from a base where that talent could easily be missed. Joe takes the time to enable these talents to shine and I suspect some people observing, perhaps parents or parishioners are amazed at the development that happens in such a short amount of time. They should rightly be proud of the achievements of the children, but also owe huge gratitude to Joe for allowing them to flourish. Bangor are lucky to be gaining Joe from us and we hope that his



legacy will provide a platform for us to continue excellent music-making in Solihull well into the future.

Before I finish, however, I need to mention someone else – Simon. We are not only losing Joe to Bangor, but also Simon. Simon is an excellent foil to Joe. He is often in the background just getting things done in a precise and efficient way. We all know Simon's single-mindedness and attention to detail, but it is those things that help with much of the music-making. He is also an outstanding musician. I have very fond memories of the concert where he and Joe basically duetted the whole of the Shostakovich Piano Concerto and other equally challenging pieces. However, it is with his alto singing where he will be most missed. Having a reliable high-quality voice if/when others may falter often saves a performance. Simon has certainly saved us a few times (but hopefully not too often). He also has performed as Cantor numerous times and performed many excellent solos. His contribution to the choirs will be greatly missed.



Simon and Joe have not only contributed greatly to the musical life of St Alphege but also to other events that would not have happened without their commitment and dedication. *Friends of the Music* events like the Beer Festival and the Gin and Jazz were conceived by them and made a reality. This took vision and pure hard work. These events enabled the work of the Friends to continue and were great events that reached out both to existing supporters of musical work in the parish and also to people that may not have had previous interaction with St Alphege or its music. Theirs will be a tough act to follow.

All that remains is on behalf of the *Friends of St. Alphege Music*, and the Parish, to wish Joe and Simon a successful next step in Bangor and look forward to hearing of great things from them in the future.

Wednesday Lunchtime Music Recitals, 1.10pm to 2pm

In order to keep everyone safe, masks must be worn and social distancing and other Covid safety measures will be in place. Admission is free of charge and a retiring collection is held in aid of The Friends of St Alphege Music (registered charity 511237). Please could we ask that you book a place by visiting <https://www.trybooking.co.uk/BBOF>. We regret that refreshments are currently not available.

Isabel Baumber

1 st September	Frank Stubbs and Darren Hogg – trumpet and organ
8 th September	Angela Sones – organ
15 th September	Performer TBC
22 nd September	Tony Pinel – organ
29 th September	Tenby Duo – saxophone and cello

August found us moving closer to “normality” in our worship at St Helen’s; we returned to one service at 10:00am on Sundays and the long awaited permission to sing (but not with gusto). Another affirmation of life before Covid was the traditional sharing of our worship during August with our friends at St Michael’s, although this has been the case for many months. Our hope is that we will be welcoming back more of St Helen’s family provided that infections continue to decline. In the meantime, we are grateful to Andrew Williams for streaming our worship so that more people can join us if not in body, then in spirit.

More of our friends who hire out our space are returning to us, which is another encouraging sign.

We were privileged to host Reverend Jane’s leaving party in the grounds to the rear of the main hall. The weather was very kind which meant that many from the parish were able to attend. All guests were very generous in the provision of refreshments and a good time was had by all. We were also grateful that Joe Cooper, with members of the St Alphege Choir, attended. They provided us with some beautiful music which was especially appreciated by Jane and Richard. We wish Joe every success in his new position at Bangor Cathedral; we also wish Jane and Richard every blessing in their new life in Gloucestershire. Thank you, Jane, for all that you did for our Parish.

We were saddened at the passing of Jean Jones at the great age of 98. Our thoughts and prayers are with Trevor, Ann, and all their family.

We had a very happy and successful *Welcome Back Coffee Morning* in the open air, at the rear of the church on Wednesday, 30th June, and had good numbers from both congregations and a large number of the invited residents from St Helen’s Road. We had over 80 come over the two hours and we all enjoyed drinks and lots of cake! Special thanks go to all those who worked so hard in the kitchen and those who brought cake for us all to enjoy. It was a very enjoyable morning and an opportunity to come together and to get to know our neighbours in the road better.

We are planning to have a *Harvest Songs of Praise* at 4pm on Sunday, 12th September, hopefully outside, weather permitting, and to include a performance from the puppets, drama and some favourite hymns and some Harvest hymns, all led by St Michael’s Music Group. Both congregations are again invited and we will be inviting our neighbours to come and join us. We plan to enjoy tea and cakes after the service and are hoping and praying for good numbers to attend.

We will continue to take every precaution to ensure the safety of all who worship at St Helen’s and hope and pray that more of our church family will be returning to us.

Jean, Phil and Chris

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At St Michael's we would normally be celebrating our Patronal Festival at the end of September, but at the time of writing we don't know whether we shall be back at the school or not, or how we shall celebrate.

In the meantime, here is something about St Michael's Day.

Michaelmas Day is the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel, celebrated on 29th September. St. Michael is the patron saint of the sea and maritime lands, of ships and boatmen, of horses and horsemen. He was the Angel who hurled Lucifer (the devil) down from Heaven for his treachery.

Michaelmas Day Is Traditionally the Last Day of the Harvest Season.

The harvest season used to begin on 1st August and was called **Lammas**, meaning 'loaf Mass'. Farmers made loaves of bread from the new wheat crop and gave them to their local church. The custom ended when Henry VIII broke away from the Catholic Church, and nowadays we have harvest festivals at the end of the season near Michaelmas Day.

Curfew

Michaelmas used to be a popular day for the winter night curfew to begin - the first hint that winter was on the way. Curfew took the form of a tolling of the church bell, usually one strike for each of the days of the month that had passed in the current year and generally rung at 9pm.

The word curfew may derive from the French word *couvre feu*, meaning 'cover fire'. Curfew was the time when household fires were supposed to be doused. The bell was tolled every night, apart from Sunday, until **Shrove Tuesday**.

Chertsey is one of the last places to still ring a Curfew bell at 8pm from Michaelmas Day to Lady Day (29th September to 25th March). Their oldest Curfew bell dates from 1380!

Goose Day

Michaelmas Day is sometimes also called Goose Day. Goose Fairs are still held in some English towns, but geese are no longer sold. A famous Michaelmas fair is the Nottingham Goose Fair which is now held on or around 3rd October.

Michaelmas Superstition.

Folklore in England holds that the devil stamps on bramble bushes or as they say in some areas, spits on them. Therefore, one must not pick blackberries after Michaelmas.

The reason for this belief has ancient origins. It was said that the devil was kicked out of heaven on St Michael's Feast Day, but as he fell from the skies, he landed in a bramble bush! He cursed the fruit of that prickly plant, scorching them with his fiery breath, stamping on them, spitting on them and generally making them unsuitable for human consumption. Legend suggests he renews his curse annually on Michaelmas Day and therefore it is very unlucky to gather blackberries after this date. If the breast bones of the goose are brown after roasting the following winter should be mild, but if the bones are white or have a slight blue hue then the winter will be severe. The Victorians believed that trees planted on this day would grow especially well. In Ireland and northern England, it was thought that if you ate goose at Michaelmas, you would have good luck for the rest of the year.

In Ireland, finding a ring hidden in a Michaelmas pie meant that one would soon be married. Happy St Michael's Day!

Paul Smith



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Life through a Lens

I have always trusted history. That is, I have always believed that what has been documented from times gone by, for our information, has been the absolute truth. However, I am reading a biography of Edward III, and I am now learning that some of those who wrote about him previously, especially around the 19th century, did not necessarily document the whole truth about him. As biographer Ian Mortimer says: *"Social change allowed a new front of politicised historians to step forward.... Indeed, within a short while they were only too ready to kick the heroes of yesteryear."* But how can this happen?

Well, it's a timely reminder that we each look at life through our own lens. Those 19th century political historians looked at Edward III through their particular lens and found him lacking but, before we criticize them, we need to see and acknowledge that we are capable of doing exactly the same thing. In short, it's like we are all wearing an invisible pair of glasses, that have evolved as we have grown-up and moved through life.

We each have our own lens – our own invisible glasses - that we look at the world through. These lenses are shaped by our childhood learning, our prejudices, our social circle and status, and our gender to name but a few of the influences on us and around us throughout our life. If we remain unaware of our own lens or glasses, then we can erroneously believe that 'our way is the only way' and see others and their ideas as lacking.

As we come again to embrace mission within the parish, it is important that we recognise that we all look at life through our own lens, and that we can judge others by it. We only have to hear someone being interviewed on TV, for example: *"You don't expect it. You should have been told about it earlier and you could have changed your behaviour."* What they should perhaps have said was, *"I didn't expect it. I should have been told earlier and I could have changed my behaviour."* Without even realising it, that person is projecting his or her lens onto the world – and we can all do it: after all, why wouldn't everyone think and behave the same way as them/us? The point is, they don't, and that doesn't necessarily make either person wrong. Awareness is key.

As Christians, and especially as Christians involved in mission, we need to make the effort to learn to see the world through God's lens, not our own. Not surprisingly the Bible is our first port of call on living life through God's lens and, in my opinion, especially the fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. However, we also have other people-made tools to help us to remember to put the Biblical lens in place. One of those people-made tools is the list of the 'five marks of mission':

- **To proclaim** the Good News of the Kingdom
- **To teach, baptise and nurture** new believers
- **To respond** to human need by **loving service**
- **To transform** unjust structures of society, **to challenge** violence of every kind and **pursue peace and reconciliation**
- **To strive** to safeguard the integrity of creation, and **sustain and renew** the life of the earth

Who wouldn't want those things? Who wouldn't want to see the world through the lens of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control, to proclaim, to teach, baptise and nurture, to respond in loving service, to transform and challenge, in the pursuit of peace and reconciliation, to strive to sustain and renew the life of the earth?

Ruth Marshall preached at St. Alphege recently as a part of her Reader training, and she used a quote that really jumped out at me at the time: *"Sometimes, we have to lose something precious in order to gain something priceless."* (Author unknown.)

Our lens is bound to be precious to us: for each of us it's the way we have learned to see the world. It often protects us. It's the way we have learned *to survive* in this world. Things like that are sometimes hard to give up. We wonder what will happen to us if we lose our own unique lens on the world. After all, it's been sufficient for us up until now and we might like where we are. But *"Sometimes, we have to lose something precious in order to gain something priceless."*

And remember, *we can't do any of this on our own:*

But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. (2 Corinthians 4:7)

Paul reminds us that when we give up what is precious to us, we allow God to show the world, including Solihull Parish, his glory *through* us – priceless indeed!

A daily prayer for this time:

Loving and generous God,
Now we see through a glass, darkly *
But you see things clearly, through your perfect lens.
Help us to lose what is precious to us
To gain something priceless – your view of the world:
Your lens – your love; your joy; your peace; your patience;
your goodness; your kindness; your gentleness;
your faithfulness; and your self-control.
And may each of us become a beacon of your love
In our lives and in this parish.
In Jesus' precious name.
Amen.

*1 Cor 13:12

Keep safe and thanks for listening!

Suzette.

Solihull Parish Puppets

After nearly 15 months of not being able to rehearse and perform together, Solihull Parish Puppets finally met up in St Helen's Chapel to record a performance to a song about The Good Samaritan in July. We were concerned that we might be very out of practice and not be able to pull it off, but thanks to the brilliant efforts of Jacob McClenaghan, who was in charge of the recording, Paula and Grace McClenaghan and Grace Carter, along with me, we were able to rehearse and record in 2 hours flat!

The recording was to be shown via Zoom at The Junction on 11th July. I understand it was very well-received!

We certainly felt that we had risen to the challenge and felt inspired to continue in our mission to spread the Gospel and share God's love using puppets.

Now here's the thing. We really do need more

people to get involved! If you think you could help out in any way from learning puppetry skills and performing to directing, recording and filming to making costumes, or even being an extra adult at rehearsals for safeguarding purposes, please get in touch. We would love to train up some new young puppeteers (10 years +), especially as our current enthusiastic teens make plans to go off to university!

Interested? Contact me, Ruth Sabbagh, at ruth_sabbagh@msn.com or Linda Hicks, l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk. We would love to hear from you!

Ruth Sabbagh



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While the children are settling into preschool/nursery/school, the Junction will resume meeting over Zoom to worship together as a community with the usual mix of songs, bible stories, prayers and activities.

Here are the themes for September:

5th Sept **New Beginnings** (Time to share good things from the summer and to share what we're excited or nervous about in the days/weeks ahead)

12th Sept **The Lost Sheep**

19th Sept **Great Big Green week** (Bring along something that you have created)

26th Sept **St Michael and All angels** (Get ready to take part in a Kahoot Quiz all about angels!)

If you would like to attend you need to register with Linda
l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk to receive the Zoom link.

Back to school



If September brings some kind of new beginning for your family, such as a child starting preschool, nursery, school or moving up a class, it can be helpful to know that God is always with us wherever we go. The start of a new term is an opportunity to ask for God's blessing on the places we will go and the people we will meet.

Here's a simple way to do this:

- Look in your child's school bag. Often there is a name tag built in. You can usually take the paper slip out of the tag.
- Write on the back of the paper slip a simple prayer for your child, for example, 'Dear God, please bless (child's name) at (preschool/nursery/school) this year', or similar words.
- Replace the card in its holder, and nobody will know the prayer is there except you, your child and God.
- If the bag doesn't already have a tag, you can use a keyring (one of those with a plastic frame and a paper insert) and attach it to the zip.

Parents: if you take a bag or briefcase to work (or even if you just have a handbag or sports bag) why not make yourself a blessing label too?

Plan for each day

Starting a new morning regime can be stressful but planning ahead for the next day is a great way to reduce morning panics and get the day off to a smooth start. So the night before, try doing a few things ahead of time.


Helping your child pack their bag and laying out their outfit or school uniform can help. Make their packed lunch the night before too, if they have one. Saying a simple prayer each night at bedtime can help children relax and know God will be with them through everything they'll do the next day. Ask your child if there are any special things happening, whether there is anything they're excited about. If they have any worries or think there might be problems to tackle the next day, let them know they can hand their worries to God, because Jesus promised that everyone who has problems can come to him, and he'll find a way to lighten the burden. You might then like to pray with your child about those things, to say thank you for everything that's going well, and ask for God's help with the challenges. The following prayer is an example, but simply talking to God like a friend is often the easiest way to pray!

*Loving God, thank you for all my friends, and my teachers/carers.
Thank you that I have the chance to learn new things every day.
Please bless everyone at school/nursery, and please bless me too.
Help me to know that all day long, whether I'm having fun
or whether I'm feeling upset, you're there for me.*


Amen

Make a memory

If your child recently had a first day at school or nursery or playgroup, keep the photo of them that day as a reminder, and of how special the moment is. You could take one at the same time each year, and create an album – pick a background that won't change, so you can see how they've grown!



Prams to Preschool - Praise and Play *is back!!*



Praise and Play is now meeting in person at 9.30 am every Friday morning for a mix of songs, a Bible story, craft and chat, but you'll need to bring your own cuppa and biscuits!



Booking is ESSENTIAL and numbers are limited so please email Linda Hicks:
l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk to book your place.

Youth Stuff

This summer was again a quieter holiday than it has been before the lockdowns and restrictions as unfortunately our summer camps we usually take groups too were again cancelled.

They were however online and we made the most of that, through watching the online talks and then coming together to discuss and gather our thoughts on what was said. One particular thread was based around what 'church means to us, our families, towns and the world' and then from that what 'church should be for those same groups'.

We also had a great end of term scavenger hunt and BBQ at St Helens, which going forward we hope socials will once again become a more frequent half termly event.

As the term starts Youth sessions will once again resume, the schedule will be as in the table below, pending any restrictions or other guidance. However we are at the time of printing unable to give times for the sessions for various reason, which I can only apologise for, however please feel free to contact me (j.minal@solihullparish.org.uk) and I will send out the details as soon as we have them.

Monday 6 th Sept	Our games and fellowship session in room 6 in the Oliver Bird Hall, for all youth aged year 9 and up, in the Oliver Bird Hall
Wednesday 8 th Sept	Jr Refresh - Our Bible study session for Years 6-8, with a mix of discussion, prayer, worship, and activities. In the Oliver Bird Hall
Friday 10 th Sept	This session is open to all youth ages, meeting in room 6 of the Oliver Bird Hall between in which we play games, chat, and have fun.
Monday 13 th Sept	Our games and fellowship session in room 6 in the Oliver Bird Hall, for all youth aged year 9 and up, in the Oliver Bird Hall
Wednesday 15 th Sept	Refresh - Our Bible study session for Years 9 and up, with a mix of discussion, prayer, worship, and activities. In the Oliver Bird Hall.
Friday 17 th Sept	This session is open to all youth ages, meeting in room 6 of the Oliver Bird Hall between in which we play games, chat, and have fun.
Monday 20 th Sept	Our games and fellowship session in room 6 in the Oliver Bird Hall, for all youth aged year 9 and up, in the Oliver Bird Hall
Wednesday 22 nd Sept	Jr Refresh - Our Bible study session for Years 6-8, with a mix of discussion, prayer, worship, and activities. In the Oliver Bird Hall
Friday 24 th Sept	This session is open to all youth ages, meeting in room 6 of the Oliver Bird Hall between in which we play games, chat, and have fun.
Monday 27 th Sept	Our games and fellowship session in room 6 in the Oliver Bird Hall, for all youth aged year 9 and up, in the Oliver Bird Hall
Wednesday 29 th Sept	Refresh - Our Bible study session for Years 9 and up, with a mix of discussion, prayer, worship, and activities. In the Oliver Bird Hall.

Creation Care – Encouraging Households to Care for God’s World

This November the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) will, it is hoped, galvanise world leaders into action on environmental issues.

The terms ‘eco-anxiety’ and ‘eco-fatigue’ express how the scale of the crisis can lead us either to obsessiveness or to inaction, but what does both a godly and a realistic response look like?

This autumn churches are encouraged to particularly focus on climate change. The newly formed Solihull Parish Environment group will amongst other things be seeking out resources to get us all thinking and acting and I’ve been taking a look at one of them:

The Creation Care scheme aims to encourage households to make changes to care for God’s earth. A household can be an individual or a family and the scheme covers 7 areas of household life:

- Worship and prayer
- Home
- Garden
- Travel
- Food
- Possessions
- Community and global engagement



To get started go to <https://creationcare.org.uk/about/> and click on the link to register your household and you can then make a start by completing a questionnaire that covers each of the 7 areas. This will tell you how well your household is doing at each of these aspects of caring for creation, and hopefully give you ideas of ways you can improve.

Once you reach an award level, you can receive a certificate. There are three levels of awards: Gold, Silver and Bronze. To get to bronze level overall, you need to have achieved at least bronze level in every area. Similarly for silver, you need to have reached at least silver level in each area. And for gold, you need to have reached at least gold level in every area. Gold is really ambitious, so don’t be surprised if it takes you a while to get there!

I’ve registered all 3 churches in our Parish as part of the Creation care scheme and it’s really exciting to be amongst some of the first churches in the country to sign up. I’m the nominated contact person for the scheme so will be advised when households have received an award level and it will be fantastic to be able to give out certificates during a service, to celebrate what households have achieved, and inspire others to take part.

I know that one household in our Parish has already reached bronze level. Will you be next?

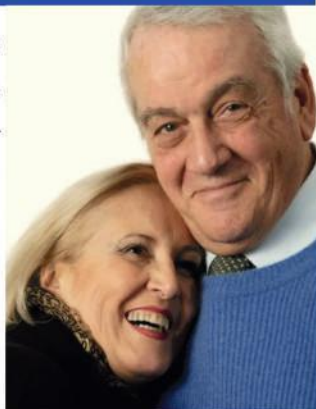
As for my household - we have currently achieved gold in the Worship and prayer and Possessions category but we have much work to do in Community and Global Engagement so no award for us just yet!

Linda Hicks

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St. Alban Pilgrimage 27th June 2021

This year the annual pilgrimage to commemorate the Martyrdom of St. Alban, the first British martyr, took place this year not through St. Albans city centre but through Verulamium Park. The procession has taken this route, regarded as the traditional route following the path Alban would have taken, from judgement to execution. The procession started at St. Michael's Church, just outside the park, reputedly built on the site of the basilica where the Roman authorities condemned Alban to death sometime between A.D. 209 – 313. The monk Gildas, writing in the Fifth Century, mentions the martyrdom and the Venerable Bede in his History dates it to A.D. 305, before the toleration of Christianity allowed by the Edict of Milan in A.D. 313. Alban had sheltered a Christian priest, later named as Amphibalus, from the authorities and been



Shrines to both Alban and Amphibalus existed in the church of the Benedictine Abbey, now the Cathedral, before the Norman Conquest but were destroyed in the Reformation, then restored in modern times when fragments of the Medieval structures were discovered.



converted by him. When the soldiers came for the priest, Alban put on the priest's vestments and was arrested and dragged before the magistrate, tried and condemned to death. He was taken through what is now the Park and beheaded at the top of Holywell Hill where the cathedral stands today. Amphibalus was subsequently arrested and executed.





On the day of the pilgrimage representatives from all the parishes in the Diocese came to the Cathedral for a Eucharist in the morning, there were activities in the Abbey Orchard and then the procession formed. The procession was headed by a crucifer and verger ahead of the Bishop, followed by all the Cathedral clergy. Each parish group had its own banner and between these groups were the 12ft. high puppets representing Alban and the other characters in the story. There were also children dressed as Roman soldiers, a chariot, lions, Britons, a band and people dressed as roses, Alban's flower. There are usually roses laid at his shrine. The procession wound its way to the Cathedral where a short service was held outside before everyone moved inside for

Festal Evensong at which the full Choir sang and the preacher this year was Dr. David Hoyle, Dean of Westminster. It was both a moving and a spectacular occasion, which engaged a large number of people despite the drizzle.

Carol Southworth



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Climate Sunday 4th July 2021

On 4th July a climate-themed services were held across the parish and the sermons by the Revd. Meg Guillebaud are reproduced in this magazine. Very different in focus, I hope that have brought home to everyone the importance of taking action to mitigate the effect of Climate Change.

Climate Declaration

The Climate Sunday website asks that as well as holding a climate-focused service, we all as individuals sign The Climate Coalition's 'The Time Is Now' declaration. The text of the letter is set out below.

Dear Prime Minister,

The time is now to lead the UK towards a healthier, greener, fairer future. Ahead of hosting the United Nations climate summit in Glasgow in 2021, we can build back better together if we:

- ***Unleash a clean energy revolution*** that boosts jobs across the UK, making our transport, power and housing fit for the future
- ***Protect, restore and expand our green and wild spaces;*** allowing nature to thrive, taking carbon from the air and boosting the nation's health
- ***Leave no one behind*** by increasing support to those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change at home and abroad

The UK must lead the world by ensuring our recovery gets us on track to net-zero emissions and limits the rise in global temperature to 1.5 °C. Our best chance of building a resilient economy goes hand in hand with tackling climate change.

Please can I encourage you all to go onto the website <https://www.thetimeisnow.uk/declaration> and sign the letter. It will make a difference

Nation's Climate Sunday service in preparation for Cop 26. Please support this 4.00pm Sunday 5th September (see separate advert)

Beryl Moppett



You're invited!

Nations' Climate Sunday Service

Churches prepare for COP26

5 September at 4:00 pm

Glasgow Cathedral and online

Register: <https://nationsclimatesunday.eventbrite.co.uk>



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Sermon preached by the Rev'd. Meg Guillebaud at St. Helen's on 4th July 2021

In 1967, Dr Lynn White, an American environmentalist, accused Christians of being the cause of the ecological crisis because of their insistence that Genesis 1 shows that humans are the peak of creation and that Genesis 1.27-28 says that God gave them authority over all created things and this means that they can do what they like with creation. But is this what Genesis 1.27-28 really means? And what does the rest of the Bible teach about humans and our relationship to creation? In 2011, I published a small book called *The Bible and the Environment (Lulu)*, primarily to help African Christians realise their responsibility for the Environment and I now want to share some of the insights I gained then. There are a few copies for sale after the service if you want one, cost £5.

First and foremost, the whole Bible stresses that the world was made by God and for His glory. E.g. Psalm 24.1 says that the earth is the Lord's and everything in it. Creation is God's and not a plaything for us to use as we please.

I have recently read a Grove Booklet called *The Book of Job and Environmental Ethics* by John J Bimson. I have always loved the last few chapters of Job which this booklet concentrates on. In these chapters God makes it clear that He delights in the sheer exuberance and diversity of created things, whether or not humans benefit from them. E.g. Job 38.25-27 states that God sends rain on desert land "with no inhabitants" so that grass can grow for insects and reptiles. Sadly, several of the animals mentioned in these final chapters are already extinct and others are endangered.

Secondly, Genesis 1.27-28 does indeed say that God gave humans dominion over the earth, but those who stress this often forget Genesis 2:15 where it says that God put the man in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Thirdly, the whole Bible makes it clear that there is a relationship between humans and creation which was changed as a result of sin. The land was polluted by the corruption of God's people. Jeremiah 12.4 and Isaiah 24.4-3 both tell us that the land became parched and withered because of their wickedness. Indeed, Hosea 4.1-3 says that the land mourns because of their sin. We only need to watch David Attenborough's programmes to see the truth of these words.

Fourthly, the whole Bible tells us that creation teaches us about God. Romans 1:20 says that everything that can be known about God, His eternal power and divine nature, can be understood through what He has made. During this time of lockdown, the reduction in traffic noise meant that birdsong was heard again, and many people said how going for walks in woods and the countryside had restored their equilibrium and sense of well-being. Psalm 19.1-4 says that the heavens declare the glory of God and Job 12.7-9 urges us to go to the animals, birds and even fish to learn about God and his wisdom and power. I heard recently that the Japanese railways were having problems with the build-up of air pressure in tunnels until the designer was watching a kingfisher and wondered how it managed the air pressure as it dived! As a result, he designed the bullet trains following the form of a kingfisher! If we allow species to become extinct then there is less and less to teach us about our world and our God.

Probably the best known and loved verse in the New Testament is John 3.16: God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. The Greek word used for world is *kosmos*, from which we get cosmology.

God loved the whole cosmos. In other words, it is not only the people of the world that God loves, but the whole world as well as the sun moon and stars – the whole cosmology.

A verse which has become very precious to me is Colossians 1:19-20. All things not just mankind were redeemed by his blood shed on the cross.

Finally, one verse in the Old Testament both challenges me and encourages me. Read 2 Chronicles 7.14. It is addressed to God's people, those who are called by his name. It is not addressed to everyone. If we call ourselves Christians, we have taken Christ's name and we are called to humble ourselves and pray and God promises to hear our prayer and "heal our land." This is such an encouragement that God will heal our land, even at this late date, but we must pray in earnest and do all we can to restore and to care for his creation so that once again it can declare the glory of God.

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Afternoon Tea

Thursday 5th August

In August, we were finally able to meet in person in the Oliver Bird Hall and it was lovely to get together. Several of our elderly members had not been out since the start of the pandemic, so they really appreciated seeing everyone again.

We enjoyed scones with jam and cream and home-made cakes, along with cups of tea and coffee. This was a very informal meeting, no speaker, but we all just enjoyed meeting and talking after such a long time in isolation.



September Meeting



We are planning a meeting again in September, Covid permitting, with a *Show and Tell* theme. Please put Thursday 2nd September at 1.30pm in the OBH in your diary.

Once again, this will be an informal meeting, without a speaker. Members are asked to bring along any object - for example, an ornament, photo, jewellery, toy etc. - which has a particular significance for them. Then each of us can talk about what the object means to us.

We can arrange lifts - contact Elaine (705 3265) Pat (705 8761) or Julia (744 3540).

Admission of Parish Wardens and Churchwardens

Our Parish Wardens and Churchwardens were admitted to their roles on Tuesday 20th July at a Deanery Service at St Michael & All Angels, South Yardley.

The service was conducted by the Area Dean, the Revd. Nick Parker. All the wardens were present at the service but, unfortunately, Phil Godfrey was away when this photo was taken later!



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Solihull Churches Action against Homelessness

SCAH September 2021

Many in the Parish may already be aware of the work that SCAH does in the community and has been doing now for more than 28 years.

However, we always want to heighten awareness of what we at SCAH strive to achieve in helping not only the homeless in our borough, but also the disadvantaged, abused, threatened and those who are just trying to start a new life for themselves and their families.

The help we give is focused on providing the basic essentials for everyday living, clean bedding to sleep in, cooking utensils to cook meals with and plates to eat from and cups to drink from. The things that most of us take for granted.

And Solihull is not immune to social problems, deprivation and child poverty.

In 2020 SCAH helped over 200 adults and over 70 children to restart their lives. This represented an increase in the need for help of nearly 20% on the previous year.

Year to date in 2021 we have assisted over 115 adults and 24 children already.

In order to provide this help we rely completely on donations and contributions. In the past 12 months we have been very successful in attracting material donations from major retailers in the area including ASDA, Morrisons, Marks and Spencer and Tesco and financial grants from the West Midlands Police and Crime Commission and the Heart of England Trust as well as from JLR in Solihull. This has meant that we have been able to continue providing the highest level of care and support throughout these lean times.

Our forthcoming fund-raising event is our regular Flag Day. Unfortunately, in 2020 we had to cancel the event for obvious reasons, but the next SCAH Flag Day is now scheduled for Saturday 11th September in Solihull town centre. Not only does the event bring in much needed financial support we are also able to spread the word about the work SCAH is doing.

This year we are looking to attract more volunteers to help us on the Flag Day on 11th September, which will be in the morning of the 11th, starting at 0900. If you are interested in helping, please do make contact with us. Every little bit helps in these times.

Please do visit our website at www.scah.org.uk for more information on the work SCAH does in the community.

Please feel free to email me, David Roots, or the Secretary Louise Cox with your contact details. My email address charitydevelopment@scah.org.uk or, alternatively, call me on my mobile 07483 882082. Louise can be reached at secretary@scah.org.uk or call her on her mobile on 07880 546767.

We look forward to hearing from you.

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Knowle Male Voice Choir

It is now nearly 25 years since a group of men from Knowle Parish Church started the St John's Singers in 1997 under the directorship of Rosemary Watts. Over the years it has changed its name to the Knowle Male Voice Choir and grown substantially with the involvement of singers from Lapworth Church and of non-church members from across the area including Dorridge, Hockley Heath, Bentley Heath, Solihull, Balsall Common and Shirley.

Since 2013 the choir has been led expertly by Jake Fifer and by our accompanist Jean Lowe and the quality of performance has improved year on year. This has helped further boost membership and prior to COVID19, the choir had 30 members and was performing 3 or 4 times a year raising money for local and national charities. Our repertoire also grew to cover a broad spectrum of music ranging from songs from the shows through Welsh hymns to classical music.

The last 16 months or so have of course been difficult for everyone including the choir. However, KMVC is now re-emerging and in good spirits and health in spite of a number of the choir (and Jake) catching the virus at various points. During the lockdown period, the choir kept going with weekly Zoom rehearsals, which have been less than ideal but have maintained the contact between members and the sense of camaraderie that exists. Only three members of the choir have left during the period and those were due to either leaving the area or declining eye-sight. That in itself is testament, we believe, to how much the members appreciate both the musical and social aspects of the choir.

Live rehearsals resumed in a member's garden in June and we have now started our normal weekly rehearsals back at Dorridge Methodist Church at 7.30 on Wednesday evenings from July 21st. Our intention is to continue rehearsals during the usual summer holiday period so that we can be ready for a first public concert in October or November. The date and location are yet to be decided. It should be noted that the musical debrief at a local hostelry is an integral part of Wednesday evenings.

The photo shows one important aspect of choir life - a formal concert at Knowle Church. experience for many of the choir!

As we get back to near normality, we would love to see lots of potential new members come along to our rehearsals on Wednesdays. There is no formal audition, just a 5 minute check with Jake to see which section (tenor, baritone or bass) you might fit into best. There is no need to be able to read music, although that is clearly an advantage to you if you can. Guide-tracks are provided for all pieces and sections so that you can practise at home. All ages are equally welcomed. There is no need to have sung in a choir before, and there is no risk of embarrassment as we are a friendly and supportive bunch! In other words, what is there to lose in giving us a try?

All that is needed is an enjoyment of music, a desire to take on a challenge and achieve something very satisfying as a group, and availability and willingness to attend rehearsals regularly on Wednesdays.

For more information about what we do and what is involved, contact our Chairman, Haydn Rees, on kmvc14@gmail.com or phone 01564 782873.



Enjoy music?

Fancy a challenge?

Want to make new friends?

Like to do something good for your mental and physical health?

If so, why not come along to our rehearsals at **Dorridge Methodist Church at 7.30 on Wednesday evenings?**

No Auditions

After 15 months of Zoom rehearsals we are excited to be restarting live rehearsals shortly. We would love to see as many new faces as possible !

For further information email kmvc14@gmail.com or phone Haydn on 01564 782873

Keswick Convention 2021

We spent a wonderful week at the end of July in Keswick. We did some walking and enjoyed the beautiful scenery and exploring the attractive town. But the main reason for our week there was to attend the Keswick Convention, something we have talked about doing for many years and finally got round to (originally booked for last year!)

Keswick Ministries exists to inspire and equip Christians to love and live for Christ in His world. It began in 1875 with the first Convention, held on the vicarage lawn of St. John's Church in Keswick. Since 1875, the Convention has brought Christians together from across denominations under the banner: 'All one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:28). It attracts some 15,000 Christians from the UK and around the world to Keswick every summer (over 3 separate weeks) and provides Bible teaching for all ages, vibrant worship, a sense of unity across generations and denominations, and an inspirational call to serve Christ in the world. It caters for children of all ages and has a strong youth and young adult programme.

Throughout the year there is a varied programme of teaching for both those in any form of church leadership and Christians of all denominations. Many resources are produced – books and digital resources to help Christians live for Christ. There are also weekends for churches to enjoy excellent Bible teaching, sung worship and the time to gather together in a wonderful location.

We learnt so much from the morning Bible readings on Exodus. This is a book that can seem rather hard to read, but the speaker, Tim Chester, just made it come alive! If you ever thought the Old Testament was irrelevant and boring listen to his talks on the website. Each evening there was an Evening Celebration with worship and a talk by a different speaker and there were also seminars on a variety of subjects. The worship was led by a very gifted small group from a London church and was a highlight for us. We sang (behind masks!) traditional and well-known hymns but also modern worship songs and it was all very sensitively led. Everything is 'optional' as there is no charge made, though obviously there are huge costs and the expectation is that those who can will give generously to cover these and to enable those who can't afford it to be able to go.

Accommodation is not provided and we booked a delightful one-bedroom flat in the centre of the town, near the Lake, which was ideal. We had time each morning to walk or shop or relax before the Bible teaching at 11.15am and then every afternoon free, so it was the perfect combination.

There are three fundamental priorities which shape all that Keswick Ministries does as it serves the local church.

- Hearing God's Word
- Becoming like God's Son
- Serving God's Mission

With all the challenges and difficulties of the pandemic and the other issues we have faced in the parish, we feel that many others could also benefit, as we have, from this incredible ministry. The priorities above are vital for us as the local church in Solihull. Do look at the website and plan to go along to one of the weeks next year. Please do contact us to chat about it more!



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A Quiet Word from Eddie

Eddie Askew was widely known on two counts: as the former International Director of The Leprosy Mission, and as one of our best-selling Christian authors. He was also a talented artist, as is evident from the illustrations in some of his books. This extract is from the concluding part of his memoirs, entitled "Edge of Daylight". The whole book is a delight to read, of serious intent, as one would expect from one who spent his life dedicated to working with leprosy patients, but also tinged with a subtle and engaging sense of humour. You can get information about this book as well as the author's other writings online, or from The Leprosy Mission, Goldhay Way, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough, PE2 5GZ

Martin Tunncliffe

My experience of prayer has changed over the years. Like many Christians I used to batter God with my needs. Each morning I'd give him my instructions for the day. Tell him in some detail whom I'd like him to bless and strengthen, and what projects he ought to take a particular interest in. It was almost as though he depended on me for information rather than the other way round. I looked to him to change the world dramatically, especially the bit around me . . .

I've found that prayer needs fewer and fewer words. It's easy to crowd God out with too much speaking. Somehow we're not geared to listen, but prayer is a dialogue and the times of listening now seem more important to me than the words I say. Shortly after taking early retirement, my wife Barbara and I went on a three-day retreat. It was a great experience. Three days of silence. There were about 20 of us but no one trespassed on our time. We were together yet apart, apart yet together. There were no demands made on us. Not by the organisers anyway. The demands came through the silence. It was an opportunity to begin to clear out my personal storerooms, the attics and cellars, and to begin to look at all the baggage I was keeping and which I thought important. As I've continued the process of taking it out, dusting it down and examining it closely, I've begun to discard. The spaces created give a little more room in which God can work.

Silence itself can be prayer. It can also be self-indulgence, something that has to be guarded against. Long addresses to God don't seem to work as well as a less arrogant approach. In quiet God helps me search my mind and communicates in his way rather than mine. The silence of retreat, the opening of heart and mind to the God *who is nearer to me than I am to myself* can be pain or joy. Pain when I'm shown things I don't want to know about. Times when he helps me dredge from the depths attitudes I didn't know I had. Joy in the quiet waiting without words and finding in it a presence hardly identifiable. And with it always a yearning for more. Waiting is the hardest thing.

**From "Edge of Daylight"
By Eddie Askew**

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For Your Diary

Thursday 2nd September : 1.30pm in the OBH.

An informal meeting on the theme of **Show and Tell**. Bring along an object of particular significance to you and be prepared to tell us about it.

Thursday 7th October : 1.30pm in the OBH.

The latest information is now on the parish website Mothers' Union page.

You can access this on www.solihullparish.org.uk/mothers-union and also from the website homepage top menu by clicking on **Connect** and then on **Mothers' Union**.

We are keeping in touch with our members and are offering help to those of you who request it. If you need help now contact:

Elaine Diskin on 0121 705 3265 or Chris on 0121 243 4340 or Susan on 0121 270 6132.

WIVES' FELLOWSHIP

I have decided to start a monthly Lunch Club. The first date will be Friday 1st October. Further details from Carol Caldicott.

Carol Caldicott
0121 705 3168



9.15am

S t A l p h e e

The Junction by ZOOM

for information e-mail l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk

OLIVER BIRD HALL BOOKINGS

Enquiries are welcome for the use of the Hall for social gatherings, christenings, anniversaries, meetings, etc.

Visit the website on:

www.solihullparish.org.uk/church-hall-hire

or contact the Parish Office:

Tel: 0121 705 5350 / 0121 270 9740 Email: office@solihullparish.org.uk

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SOLIHULL PARISH SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding Coordinator

Viv Dobson, vhdobson@gmail.com

07960 783636

SOLIHULL PARISH PCC & DCC CONTACTS

<i>Parish Wardens</i>	Andrew Williams , arwilliams399@gmail.com Pam Price , colandpam@ic24.net	0121 705 3268 0121 704 3104
<i>PCC Minutes Secretary</i>	Meryl Homer	
<i>PCC Treasurer</i>	Ron Crowdy , 18 Wellington Grove	0121 705 3253
<i>Parish Electoral Roll Officer</i>	Stephen Linstead , 20 Silhill Hall Road	0121 705 1376
<i>St Alphege Deputy Wardens</i>	Susan Gomm , 10 Silverbirch Road Sheila Sayers , 636 Streetsbrook Road	0121 705 0015 0121 705 5331
<i>St Alphege Stewardship Recorder</i>	Frank Upton , 1 Rectory Road	0121 705 2963
<i>St Helen Deputy Wardens</i>	Phil Godfrey Jean Fewins	0121 705 3923 07925 688897
<i>St Helen Hall Bookings</i>	Jeremy Eade , solomere@aol.com	0121 706 3831
<i>St Michael Deputy Wardens</i>	Keith Wilson Merrill Flood	0121 778 2295 0121 705 3291

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The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily the views
of *Solihull Parish News* or of *Solihull Parish*.

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Would all advertisers please ensure that any changes they might require to their advert, or notice of cancellation, are routed through the Advertising Manager (Tim Drakeford, 42 Fowgay Drive, Solihull B91 3PH, Tel 705 4494) in sufficient time to meet the copy date for the issue in which they wish the changes to take effect. The copy date is usually the first Friday of the preceding month, but the exact date of the next copy date is shown below. Similarly, would new advertisers please ensure that their requirements for advertising space are also routed through the Advertising Manager in plenty of time to meet the required copy date.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE OCTOBER EDITION OF THE PARISH NEWS

MUST BE IN BY FRIDAY, 3rd SEPTEMBER PLEASE.

Email to parishnews@solihullparish.org.uk or leave in the Parish Office

SOLIHULL PARISH STAFF & CONTACTS

Team Rector

(The position is currently vacant)

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(Not available Thursdays)

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St Michael's Church Centre, Oak Cottage,
Bryanston Road, Solihull, B91 1BS

simon@solihullparish.org.uk

0121 704 4730

Team Vicar for St Helen

(Not currently available)

The Revd Helen Greenham

Pioneer Minister

(Not available Fridays)

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0121 704 0171

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