

SOLIHULL PARISH

NEWS



No. 568

JUNE 2025

PRICE £1.00

TEAM CHURCHES

St ALPHEGE -

The Square, Solihull B91 3RH

St HELEN -

St Helen's Road, Solihull B91 2DA

St MICHAEL'S CHAPEL -

Bryanston Road, Solihull B91 1BS

Sunday Worship at Oak Cottage School,
Greswolde Road, Solihull, B91 1DY



St Alphege (Sundays)

8.00 a.m.	Said Eucharist	
10.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist except:	
	Sunday 9.15 a.m.	All Age Eucharist in the church 8 th June
	Sunday 11.00 a.m.	Choral Eucharist in the church 8 th June
5.00 p.m.	Evensong	
Monday, Thursday and Friday	9.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Thursdays	10.30 a.m.	Said Eucharist

The Junction

9.15 a.m. Junction in the Oliver Bird Hall on 1st, 15th and 29th June

St Helen

Sundays	10.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
Third Sunday	10.00 a.m.	Morning Praise
Tuesdays	9.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer

The Junction joins the Sunday club at St Helen's at 10 a.m. on 22nd June.

St Michael, Oak Cottage School

Sundays	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist.
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St. Michael's Chapel

Wednesdays	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Wednesdays	10.00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist

Friday

9.30 a.m. **Praise and Play** – please e-mail Linda Hicks l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk

Full details on the homepage of the Parish website at: <https://www.solihullparish.org.uk>

Please don't hesitate to contact the Revd. Nick Parker or another priest if you need help in an emergency or any support (full contact details inside the back cover) or phone the Parish Office on 0121 705 5350. It is always a pleasure to talk to you.

WEDDING AND BAPTISM ENQUIRIES

Please contact the Parish Office:
life.events@solihullparish.org.uk

The Revd. Nick Parker
The Revd. Simon Marshall

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

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THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Visit our Website

www.solihullparish.org.uk

Want to email the Editor?
parishnews@solihullparish.org.uk

Cover picture

**Medieval stained glass image of St. Peter and St. Paul,
whose Feast Day is 29th June.**

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Editorial

A few days ago, I received a card in the mail from my daughter. On the front of the card was a lovely watercolour drawing of a blackbird, my favourite garden bird.

Blackbirds are one of our most familiar British birds, and have learned to thrive alongside humans in both rural and urban settings. At this time of year, the blackbird's beautiful, melodic song can be widely heard, especially at the opening and closing of the day.

On 3rd June, the Church celebrates the feast of St. Kevin, who lived from 498-618 and was a hermit at Glendalough in Ireland. A group of disciples gathered around him and a monastery grew up there. He is said to have lived to be 120 years old! One much-loved story about Kevin of Glendalough tells of a blackbird building its nest in his outstretched hands as he was praying. He kept perfectly still until the eggs hatched. Regardless of whether this story is true or not, it paints a beautiful word-picture of his spirituality. Concern for the natural world and all its creatures is a hallmark of Celtic Christian spirituality.

The late Seamus Heaney explored this tale in his poem *St. Kevin and the Blackbird*. He describes the moment when the blackbird chose to settle on St. Kevin's hand:

*... The saint is kneeling, arms stretched out, inside
His cell, but the cell is narrow, so*

*One turned-up palm is out the window, stiff
As a crossbeam, when a blackbird lands
And lays in it and settles down to nest.*

In compassion St. Kevin remains still and silent for the weeks it takes for the eggs to hatch and the fledglings to fly away:

*... now he must hold his hand
Like a branch out in the sun and rain for weeks
Until the young are hatched and fledged and flown.*

We might think St. Kevin foolish to give himself entirely to this task which, otherwise, would not concern him. How could he think it worthwhile to give up weeks of his life to this one task for which he will not be rewarded or thanked? Is one small creature and its offspring deserving of such sacrifice?

St. Kevin clearly thinks so. Indeed, he seems not to give his task much thought at all, but simply undertakes it in his role as a servant of the God of all creation. Heaney's poem continues:

*'To labour and not to seek reward,' he prays,
A prayer his body makes entirely
For he has forgotten self, forgotten bird
And on the riverbank forgotten the river's name.*

'To labour and not to seek reward,' he prays to Christ, who said, "Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor" (Mark 10:21), and whose unworldly challenge is reinforced by St. Paul, who urges Christ's followers to 'offer your bodies as a living sacrifice' (Romans 12:1).

This story of St. Kevin gives us an image of those who hold the helpless and vulnerable in a strong embrace: those who tend the sick in hospital or at home; those who search tirelessly

for survivors of natural disasters or missile strikes; those who bring water, food and medicine to those in war zones.

They choose to endure and to forget whatever might weaken that embrace, until they can lay their burdens safely down. Like Kevin of Glendalough, their outstretched hand offers a small space of security and hope.

May we be so devoted to our worship of our Creator, that we may respect and cherish all God has created.

Fr. Simon

SHEPHERDSON COURT DAY CENTRE

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Roundabout

The Bragg Family of Bell Ringers

Sand and Cooper, who writes most of these Parish Magazine articles about the bellringers, referred in her last one to families of ringers. I'd like to expand on one of these families as they were so important to the history of bell ringing in Solihull.

Sand and I both attended the Guardians' event "Light and Sound at St. Alphege Church" recently to talk about the bells. She dealt mainly with how bellringing works, including a demonstration on handbells using "volunteers" from the audience. I spoke about the forty-year period from 1891 to 1932, at the beginning and end of which two major overhauls of the bells took place and included some details of some of the ringers of the period.



One family I referred to were the Braggs. Sand mentioned in her article that there had been six Braggs who rang at Solihull. This was taken from a list of members which she compiled based on the Minutes Book. But in other research I've discovered three more Braggs who were not documented as members of the guild but who definitely rang here.

Who were these nine Braggs? The wider family would have been well-known in the village of Solihull in the 1890s. We know that different branches of the family were builders, bakers, butchers, funeral directors and more.

The first Bragg we know of who rang in Solihull was John Bragg (1844-1917). As far as we know, he stopped ringing before the local Guild was set up in 1891 so he was never elected



Roundabout

as a member. But two of his sons, John A. and Archer took it up. And two of John Bragg Senior's non-ringing brothers (Samuel and Charles) each had sons who joined in – Samuel and George (sons of Samuel) and Stanley, Roland and Harry (sons of Charles). The final ringer called Bragg that we're aware of is Charles W. from the next generation down. Oddly, he's not the son of one of the seven of the previous generation who rang, but of an older brother of Stanley, Roland and Harry.

You can see the problem of understanding the family tree when there are multiple Johns, Samuels and Charles! There's a tantalising hint that others of John Senior's generation also rang, but I haven't been able to find any evidence of who they are (yet!).

The Braggs were not just ringers but took up important roles in the Guild. Roland was our Ringing Master from 1935 to 1953 and no fewer than three others (Samuel, Stanley and John A.) were successively Tower Keeper from 1906 to 1961!

The earliest dated ringing by a Bragg in Solihull is 1896 and we continued to benefit from at least one of them until as recently as 1969. On several occasions seven of them rang together in a band of ten.

John A. (elected 1897), Samuel (1897), Stanley (1899), Roland (1902), Harry (1920) and Charles W. (1945) are the six members Sand identified. In addition to John Senior, mentioned above, there is no evidence that George and Archer were ever elected to the Guild. George's ringing career was quite short (two quarter peals in 1907) so perhaps he never was. But Archer rang here from 1907 to 1945. However, only one minuted meeting took place between 1906 and 1935 so I suspect he was a member but that we just don't have the evidence to prove it.

Guild members or not, it's no exaggeration to say that between them, the Bragg family sustained bell ringing in Solihull for decades and that we would have been much worse off without them.

Keith Whitehead

First Communion

On Sunday 11th May Ethan, Ivy, Nathaniel and Victor were joined by friends and family when they received their First Communion at St Alphege.

All of the children have been invited to join a Junior Growth Group to enable them to understand more about their faith and give them a good foundation in their relationship with God. Please do **pray for them as they continue on their journey of faith.**

Linda Hicks



Roundabout

History of St. Alphege Church Event



Tuesday 16th June 7 p.m.

This event is a fundraising event for Mothers' Union Charities. We support three charitable areas:

The Overseas Fund, for Literacy and Development, mainly in Africa, the Birmingham Fund for local projects such as Women's Aid and Shelter for victims of domestic abuse, and the Away From It All (AFIA) fund which provides short holidays and day trips for families in need of a break.

Do come and join us for an evening to hear about the history of our beautiful church and to enjoy a cheese and wine supper.



A Parish Event arranged by Mothers' Union

**Monday 16th June
7.00 p.m. in church**

Everyone from across
the parish is welcome

The History of St Alphege Church

- a talk by Carol Southworth

£10 to include Cheese and Wine.

St. Michael's, A Reminder

St. Michael's Church worships at Oak Cottage School, Greswolde Road, Solihull, B91 1DY on Sunday mornings,

Please see the St. Michael's News article on page 32.

Mothers' Union Meeting the President!

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Diocese of Birmingham

Kathleen Snow is our newly appointed Worldwide President of Mothers' Union. She lives in Canada and has undertaken many leadership roles within Mothers' Union before starting our new triennium as Worldwide President.

On Thursday 3rd April, I attended a day of Worship and Celebration to welcome Kathleen alongside Canterbury Provincial President, Comfort Idowu-Fearon, and Zonal Trustee, Julia Jamieson.

The event was held in Holy Trinity Church, Coventry, and it was a wonderful, uplifting day. There was an exhibition of projects and works from MU Dioceses across the West Midlands and our display for MU Birmingham received much interest and praise. It was a great opportunity to meet other MU branches to learn and exchange different ideas and initiatives.



It was quite amazing to see how much outreach to local communities Mothers' Union organises and puts in place. As an example, this includes baby hampers, marriage preparation days, dementia fiddle aprons, premature baby knitting, A&E toiletry bags, prison work, Women's Aid and holidays & days out for families in need.

We enjoyed a companionable lunch followed by a service of welcome where each Diocese gave Kathleen a small local gift - we gave her an apron depicting Birmingham landmarks

and a bar of Cadbury/Bournville chocolate.

Kathleen spoke about the much needed and valued work of MU and inspired us all with her closing message...

"Be joyful, keep the joy in the work of Mothers' Union,
Be unified – one in spirit, Inspire one another,
Let your light shine, Join us...Join in"

Please do get in touch if you are interested in joining us or finding out more information about what we do.

Elaine Diskin
St. Alphege Mothers' Union
Diocese Vice President

Email office@mubham.org.uk

<https://www.mothersunion.org/diocese/birmingham>

Roundabout

Children and Young People Honour VE Day with Red, White and Blue Planting at St. Alphege Victory Garden

Children and young people from the parish came together this week to mark the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day by planting vibrant red, white, and blue flowers in the St. Alphege Victory Garden.

The commemorative planting, organised by the church and preschool, served as a tribute to those who served and sacrificed during the Second World War. With trowels in hand and smiles on faces, the children carefully arranged the planting display symbolising remembrance, unity, and peace.



THE JUNCTION



"This is more than a gardening project," said Ben Yates, Chair of St. Alphege Preschool. "It's a living act of remembrance, and a way for our younger generations to connect with the stories and legacy of VE Day in a meaningful way."

The Victory Garden, originally established to reflect the wartime spirit of resilience and self-sufficiency, has been a place of reflection, learning and celebration. This year's anniversary planting will remain on display throughout the summer, inviting visitors to pause and remember the events of 8th May 1945.

We would like to thank the Sainsbury Community Fund for donating funds to purchase the plants and tools for the children.

St. Alphege Choirs Summer Concert Sunday June 29th 7.00 p.m.

The Summer Concert will be in St. Alphege Church and will include favourites like Handel's *Zadok the Priest* and Parry's *I was Glad*, and also some new music including Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*. Admission will be free. We will be repeating the same concert during the following week on our Malta tour.

This concert is part of the new *Solihull Choirs Festival*. Many choirs will be performing throughout the weekend, mainly in The Core Theatre, Theatre Square and on the Mell Square stage. The *Rising Stars Choir* will take place on Friday afternoon at 5 p.m.

Full details are on the website below.

<https://www.solihullchoirfestival.co.uk/schedule>

Chris Thomas

Pictures in the Parish News

The Editor is delighted to receive your pictures for publication in the Solihull Parish News; however, we have noted that several pictures have been sent to us embedded in a Word (.doc or .docx) format file. Word files are splendid, and highly optimised for sending text; however, they are not good for pictures, as the quality is reduced by a factor of between 10 to 100 to one, furthermore they are usually surrounded by white space which we have to remove.

Therefore could contributors please send us pictures in .jpg format, as produced directly from your camera or phone. A suitable quality picture has a typical 'jpg file size of between one and four Megabytes.

Thank you.

**Carol Southworth
Roger Edwards**

Roundabout

St. Alphege Eco Group

Saturday 7th June: Love Your Burial Ground Eco Fun Day at St. Alphege Church 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Last month, we informed you about an exciting week coming up in June, which we very much hope you will all be a part of. *Love Your Burial Ground Week* is a celebratory week, which has been run for many years by Caring for God's Acre. This year, we will be joining in the fun with an Eco Fun Day in St. Alphege Church grounds.

All are welcome to come and join us on Saturday 7th June 11 a.m. -2 p.m. Bring family, friends and maybe even a picnic if the beautiful weather we have been having lately continues! There will be fun activities for all ages and refreshments will be available. Please see our poster for more details. We would particularly like to draw your attention to our *Plant Swap and Sale*. Donations of spare plants, seeds or fruit and vegetable produce would be very much appreciated.



Churches Count on Nature

Churches Count on Nature 2025 runs alongside *Love Your Burial Ground Week*. This is a joint initiative promoted by *Caring for God's Acre*, the Church of England, the Church in Wales and A Rocha UK. During the fun day, we will be recording the plant and animal species we find within the churchyard. The data collected will enable us to plan how best to support and encourage wildlife conservation.

Love Your Burial Ground Week Saturday 7th- Sunday 15th June

If you cannot make it on the day, there are some activities running throughout the week that you can still be a part of.

Show us your best nature-inspired photograph taken within the church grounds! Our photography competition is open to all ages, with prizes for the best adult and best child entries.

Our nature-inspired children's art competition is open to all aged 16 and under. You can draw, paint, collage, sculpt... anything goes! The only rule is that your entry must fit the theme of 'All Things Bright and Beautiful'.

Please see our separate posters for details of how to enter. Entries to both competitions will be displayed on the Eco Church display board at the back of St. Alphege Church.

More Information

For more information about any of the above, please take a look at www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk or email ecogroup@solihullparish.org.uk.

Natalie Satchwell-Hounsell
On behalf of St. Alphege Eco Group

 **ST ALPHEGE ECO GROUP'S**

PLANT SALE AND SWAP

**SATURDAY
7TH JUNE 11:00-2:00**

To celebrate Love Your Burial Ground Week and Churches Count on Nature, we will be hosting a plant sale and swap as part of St. Alphege Eco Day.

Bring your surplus plants, seeds or fruit and vegetable produce to be swapped or sold (for a small charity donation) and share tips with fellow gardeners.




If you are able to donate any plants, seeds or fruit and vegetable produce, please email ecogroup@solihullparish.org.uk or bring them along on the day!

Come and join us at

St Alphege Eco Fun Day

Saturday 7th June 2025
11am - 2pm

Get involved in making our church more eco friendly and help spread awareness of making eco friendly changes in our world. Fun activities for all ages. Everyone is welcome!

- Prayer/memorial tree creation
- Decorating prayer stones
- Wildflower seed scattering
- Bag hunt and nature count
- Reflexology
- Children's activities
- Plant swap and sale
- Making bird nesting boxes and bug hotels

Bring a picnic, friends and family and enjoy the lovely green space we have here at St. Alphege Church!

Look out for further details of our photography and art competitions as part of Love Your Burial Ground Week. Prizes to be won!

Love Your Burial Ground Week and Churches Count on Nature
A week focusing on the beautiful wildlife of our church yards, a joint initiative promoted by Caring for God's Acre.

For more information contact: ecogroup@solihullparish.org.uk



 **ST ALPHEGE ECO GROUP'S**

CHILDREN'S ART

**ENTRIES BY
SUNDAY 15TH JUNE**

To celebrate Love Your Burial Ground Week and Churches Count on Nature, children aged 16 and under are invited to enter our nature-inspired art competition. You can draw, paint, collage, sculpt... let your imagination run wild! Digital art is also welcomed. The only rule is that your entry must fit the theme of:

'ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL'

COMPETITION

Parents
Email your child's entry to ecogroup@solihullparish.org.uk or hand your entry in at the parish office. Please include your child's name and age and a parent's name and contact number.



 **ST ALPHEGE ECO GROUP'S**

PHOTOGRAPHY

**ENTRIES BY
SUNDAY 15TH JUNE**

To celebrate Love Your Burial Ground Week and Churches Count on Nature, you are invited to take a photograph that celebrates the natural beauty of St. Alphege churchyard.

Prize for best adult and best child entry.
Open to all- no professional experience required!
Your nature-inspired entry must be taken within the church grounds.

COMPETITION

Email your entry along with your name and contact number to ecogroup@solihullparish.org.uk or take a printed copy to the parish office.



Roundabout

**You are
Invited
to Alpha**

**For the
Explorers,
Open-minded
Still thinking
curious**



Start Date – Tuesday 10th June 2025 Time - 7.30pm

- then Tuesdays after that. See below for dates and course content.

Where - St Michael's Chapel, Bryanston Road. B91 1BS

Alpha is a series of excellent videos followed by group conversations that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith in an open, friendly environment. Everyone's welcome. Whatever your background or beliefs, you're invited.

To sign up or find out more,

Email alpha@solihullparish.org.uk Or ring Parish Office - 0121 705 5350 www.solihullparish.org.uk

Alpha Course in Solihull Parish

Here is a List of the Sessions. Tuesdays at 7.30pm

Session 1	Is There More To Life Than This?	June 10th
Session 2	Who Is Jesus?	June 17th
Session 3	Why Did Jesus die?	June 24th
Session 4	How Can I Have Faith?	July 1st
Session 5	Who Is The Holy Spirit?	July 8th



"Mostly** Monday Group" dates,

May to June 2025 (including Lent)



**** Formerly '4th Monday Group', '*Mostly Monday Group*' is a Bible study group that meets monthly (at least) at the Greville Arms, Cornyx Lane.**

All dates are 1.45pm for a 2pm start at the Greville Arms, Cornyx Lane, unless otherwise stated.

N.B. Please let Suzette know before the day if you are coming along for the first time or are a regular and can't make it. Thank you.

Monday 23rd June

Contact Suzette: s.maguire@solihullparish.org.uk

or 0121 7090884

**PLAY THE
ORGAN
YEAR 2025**

www.rco.org.uk/play

FREE WEDNESDAY LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITALS

As part of the ongoing Wednesday lunchtime recital series at St Alphege Church, we are holding two special organ recitals in July 2025. Admission is free and all are welcome.

Wednesday 9 July - Callum Alger, Head of Chapel Music, Solihull School

Wednesday 16 July - Liam Condon (Assistant Organist, St Alphege Church) & Harry Brown (Senior Organ Scholar, St Alphege Church)

1.10pm, 9 & 16 July 2025

ST ALPHEGE CHURCH
Solihull



Let us Pray

Calendar and Prayer Intentions for June 2025

1	Easter 7: Sunday After Ascension	Flying doctors and missionaries to remote regions.	Henley Crescent
2	Feria	For a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit.	Henwood Lane
3	Martyrs of Uganda 1885-1977	For all facing persecution because of their loyalty to Christ.	Herbert Road
4	Petroc, Abbot, 6th century	For the mission of Truro Diocese to its residents and visitors.	Hermitage Road
5	Boniface (Wynfrith), bishop, martyr, 754	For the ecumenical work of the Diocese in Europe.	Heronfield Way
6	Ini Kopuria, Melanesian brotherhood, 1945	For an end to racism in the Church.	Heyford Grove
7	Feria	For a Church which is intercultural and inclusive.	High Street
8	Pentecost (Whitsunday)	For all being baptised and/or confirmed today.	Hillfield Mews
9	Columba, Abbot, Missionary	For the ministry of the Iona Community.	Hillfield Road
10	Feria	In thanksgiving for Celtic spirituality.	Hollings Grove
11	Barnabas the Apostle (Festival)	For all who lack self-belief to find encouragement.	Holly Oak Grove
12	Feria	For all exploring a vocation to ministry.	Hollyberry Avenue
13	Feria	For all sitting exams at this time.	Hollyfield Avenue
14	Richard Baxter, puritan divine, 1691	For the renewal and revival of the Church.	Homer Road
15	Trinity Sunday	For all preachers and teachers of the Word of God	Hunningham Grove
16	Richard, bishop, 1253	For our bishops Michael and Esther.	Huntley Drive
17	Samuel and Henrietta Barnett, social reformers	For safe affordable homes and universal education.	Kelmarsh Drive
18	Bernard Mizeki, martyr, 1896	For peace, justice, and reconciliation.	Kelvedon Grove
19	Corpus Christi (Festival)	In thanksgiving for Christ's gift of Holy Communion.	Keresley Close
20	Feria	For the homeless and the charities who support them.	Kilsby Grove
21	Feria	For Warm Welcome and the hospitality of our churches.	Kinchford Close
22	Trinity 1	For the work of Compassion UK and sponsored children.	Kingsbrook Drive
23	Ethelreda, Abbess, c.678	For monastic communities and the Diocese of Ely.	Kinsham Drive
24	Birth of John the Baptist (Festival)	For those finding it difficult to conceive.	Kirton Grove
25	Ember Day	For our spiritual renewal through prayer and fasting.	Knightcote Drive
26	Feria	For candidates preparing for Ordination.	Ladbrook Road
27	Cyril, bishop, teacher of the faith, 444	For theological colleges and seminaries.	Lady Byron Lane
28	Irenaeus, bishop, teacher of the faith, c.200	For apologists and defenders of the faith.	Langford Croft
29	Trinity 2 / Peter and Paul, Apostles (Festival)	For all churches so dedicated.	Langtree Avenue
30	Peter and Paul, Apostles (transferred)	For the Church's	Laxton Grove

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

From the St. Alphege Register

Baptisms

None

Weddings

None

Renewal of Vows

None

Funerals

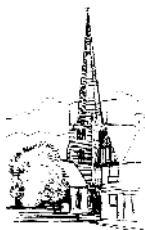
2 nd May	Dorothy Sawle at St. Alphege
13 th May	Jean Parfitt at Robin Hood Crematorium
27 th May	Michael Weale at St. Alphege

Interment of Ashes

2 nd May	Dorothy Sawle
9 th May	Diana Harris
	Irene Pugsley
23 rd June	Ken Hewitt

Names taken from the Chantry Book for Remembrance in June

Albert Thomas Clark	Michael Hartley	George Sabbagh
Muriel Greasley	Mary Josephine Marston	John Sawle
June Hale	Jordan Page	Doris Starbuck
Henry Raymond Hall	Harry Pinfold	
Ross Harper	Colin Price	



S t A l p h e g e
Sunday 8th June
9.15 a.m. All Age Eucharist
11.00 a.m. Choral Eucharist

Worship Notes for June 2025

June is a month of transition from Eastertide to the Season of Pentecost – sometimes unhelpfully known as Ordinary Time and counted, week by week, by how many Sundays it is after Trinity.

The first Sunday in June (1st June) is the seventh and final week of Easter, also known as the Sunday after Ascension. It is a Sunday dedicated to the invocation of the Holy Spirit encapsulated in the Collect:

*O God the King of glory,
you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ
with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:
we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,
But send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us
and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.*

The following Sunday (8th June) we celebrate Christ's gift of his Holy Spirit upon the disciples at Pentecost, a Jewish harvest festival, which explains why it was such an international crowd. This important day is marked by the liturgical colour red, reminding us that the Holy Spirit appeared as flames resting upon each of the disciples. Its alternate name of Whit (White) Sunday is due to the tradition of conducting baptisms and confirmations on this day with the candidates attired in white.

Another important feast day, Trinity Sunday, falls the following week (15th June) – a day famed for lay preaching as clergy choose to delegate the task of explaining how God is both one and three! On this Sunday we return one final time to the celebratory colour of white or gold before the long green season begins. This Season of Pentecost will run until the end of October and doubtless more on that next month.

Other important feast days within the month of June include Corpus Christi (the Day of Thanksgiving for Holy Communion) on the 19th and the feast of Peter and Paul, Apostles, on the 29th, this year falling on a Sunday.

Aside from the various dedications and feast days, we also look forward to welcoming some guest preachers in the month of June. Speakers from Compassion UK will visit each of our district churches to talk about their work transforming lives through child sponsorship. And on 29th June our Area Dean, the Revd. Tony Rindl, will visit St. Helen's.



Those attending services at St. Alphege during Holy Week and Easter will know my appreciation for the priest and poet Malcolm Guite.

The following poem from his book 'Sounding the Seasons' captures all that this extraordinary month promises.

Pentecost

Today we feel the wind beneath our wings
Today the hidden fountain flows and plays
Today the church draws breath at last and sings
As every flame becomes a Tongue of praise.

This is the feast of fire, air, and water
Poured out and breathed and kindled into earth.
The earth herself awakens to her maker
And is translated out of death to birth.

The right words come today in their right order
And every word spells freedom and release
Today the gospel crosses every border
All tongues are loosened by the Prince of Peace
Today the lost are found in His translation.
Whose mother tongue is Love in every nation.

Malcolm Guite 2012



Pentecost Banner from St. Michael's Bartley Green

Revd. Nick

June 2025 Services

Sunday 1st June – Easter 7

St. Alphege	8.00 a.m.	Said Eucharist
Oliver Bird Hall	9.15 a.m.	The Junction
St. Helen	10.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
St. Alphege	10.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist
St. Michael	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist
St. Alphege	5.00 p.m.	Evensong

Wednesday 4th June

St. Michael	10.00 a.m.	Eucharist
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Thursday 5th June

St. Alphege	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist, Prayers for Healing & Anointing
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Sunday 8th June – Pentecost

St. Alphege	8.00 a.m.	Said Eucharist
St. Alphege	9.15 a.m.	All Age Holy Communion with Parish Puppets
St. Helen	10.00 a.m.	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St. Michael	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist
St. Alphege	11.00 a.m.	<i>Choral Eucharist</i>
St. Alphege	5.00 p.m.	Evensong

Wednesday 11th June

St. Michael	10.00 a.m.	Eucharist
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Thursday 12th June

St. Alphege	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist
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Sunday 15th June – Trinity Sunday

St. Alphege	8.00 a.m.	Said Eucharist
OBH	9.15 a.m.	The Junction
St. Helen	10.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
St. Alphege	10.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist
St. Michael	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist
St. Alphege	5.00 p.m.	Evensong
St. Helen	6.30 p.m.	Eucharist + Laying on of hands for Healing, and Anointing

Wednesday 18th June

St. Michael	10.00 a.m.	Eucharist
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Thursday 19th June – Corpus Christi

St. Alphege	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist
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St. Alphege	7.30 p.m.	Eucharist
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Sunday 22nd June – Trinity 1

St. Alphege	8.00 a.m.	Said Eucharist
St. Helen	10.00 a.m.	Holy Communion and The Junction Sunday Club
St. Alphege	10.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist
St. Michael	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist
St. Alphege	5.00 p.m.	Evensong

Wednesday 25th June

St. Michael	10.00 a.m.	Eucharist
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Thursday 26th June

St. Alphege	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist
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Sunday 29th June – Trinity 2

St. Alphege	8.00 a.m.	Said Eucharist
St. Alphege	9.15 a.m.	The Junction
St. Helen	10.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
St. Alphege	10.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist
St. Michael	10.30 a.m.	Eucharist
St. Alphege	5.00 p.m.	Taizé

Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer is ordinarily said each weekday, and all are very welcome.

Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays at St. Alphege at 9 a.m.

Tuesdays at St. Helen's at 9 a.m.

Wednesdays at St. Michael's Chapel at 9.30 a.m.



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

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

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



The Guardians of St Alphege Parish Church

The Guardians team were very pleased with the response to the first event of 2025 when we heard about, and saw, the new lighting and the tower team, important features and members of both the St. Alphege and Solihull communities. We have also enjoyed great weather and beautiful Easter services. But we cannot rest!

Future events

Tuesday 10th June 6.00 to 8.00 p.m.

Drinks Party *hosted by Ann Taylor*

Ann and the trustees are now in the final stages of organising this popular gathering for members. Booking is now open, with a response before 9.00 a.m. on Monday 9th June appreciated. To book just contact myself via the e-mail below. The cost is £10 per person and includes food and drink. We will have a raffle, so do bring suitable tempting prizes.

Monday 16th June 7 p.m. St. Alphege Church

Tour and History of St. Alphege Church

Carol Southworth and the Mothers' Union invite Guardians to join them for the evening. Admission cost is £10 for the talk and a cheese and wine supper. All profits will go to Mothers' Union charitable funds. Please see adverts in this magazine.

Thursday July 10th 7.00 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. St. Alphege Church

The Stained Glass Windows of St. Alphege Church

Please see flyer in the magazine for details. This is an open fundraising event which Phil Godfrey is organising. Martin Ayers has asked me to remind those planning to attend, and get the best views, to bring a pair of binoculars!

Autumn Coffee Morning

This will be hosted by Margaret Oswald. Details of this popular gathering will follow.

Thursday 2nd October 7.30 p.m. Oliver Bird Hall

Guardians AGM

Christmas Lunch

Judith Hetherington has kindly agreed to organise this event. Details will follow.

Other News.

This is being written on a trip heading north so will be brief. It is something of a pilgrimage hopefully taking in Lincoln, Durham and Lindisfarne. The haunts of medieval people of substance; St. Hugh, St. Aidan, St. Cuthbert and St. Bede. The last three precursors of another: St. Alphege.

Roger Shinton (Trustee)
[email: rogershinton@outlook.com](mailto:rogershinton@outlook.com)



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 21 days' notice.

Forms are available from the Guardians notice boards in St. Alphege Church or in the Oliver Bird Hall. Alternatively, you can contact Sheila Payne, details below.

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

For further information please contact me on the phone or email below if you don't know about the Floodlighting Scheme and would like to learn more. It's open to all.

Sheila Payne

Scheme organiser:-

0121 706 0520

email: russellpayne110@aol.com

The Church was floodlit in May 2025 to remember the following:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 2 nd May | In loving memory of Tony Davies. |
| 4 th May | In loving memory of Norman and Freda Rolfe, married this day in 1935. |
| 12 th May | James Mawson. In loving memory of a dear father on his birthday. |
| 24 th May | In loving memory of Bill Stirling on his birthday, from Iris and the family. |

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Music Matters

The choirs were privileged to be part of a very moving Holy Week, leading towards our customary celebratory Easter services. Three of our young instrumentalists, Emma, Thomas and Victoria, played at the beautiful Taize service on the Wednesday of Holy Week. This was followed by Maundy Thursday where we sang Duruflé's setting of the Gregorian chant *Ubi Caritas et Amor* (where there is love and charity, God is there) and Tallis's '*Verily, Verily*'. Good Friday included the All Age 'Exploring the Easter Story' service where our



younger choristers enjoyed participating in the activities; some of our Ladies' Choir were at the Walk of Witness; and a large choir of Senior Choristers, Ladies and Back Row provided the music for the afternoon 'Devotions at the Foot of the Cross' service. The reflections offered by the clergy and readers were interwoven within Sanders' setting of *The Reproaches* creating a very powerful service with liturgy and music working as one.

Saturday evening was the Easter Vigil service with the blessing of the Paschal candles, the lighting of the new fire, and a joyous Mass setting by Vienne: his *Messe Solennelle* for choir and double organ, with excellent accompaniment from Liam and Harry, with Harry playing the church organ and Liam creating a chamber organ on the Clavinova.

Their closing voluntary was an organ duet by John Rutter, Variations on an Easter Theme. On Easter Day, our Junior Choristers enjoyed the All Age service, and our Seniors and Back Row sang at the 11 a.m. Choral Eucharist. After working hard all week, the choristers enjoyed an Easter egg hunt outside the church – and everyone enjoyed plenty of chocolate!





We were lucky to have had the support of two outstanding young organists throughout Holy Week, and as part of our ongoing participation in the Royal College of Organists 'Play the Organ Year 2025', we will have the opportunity to hear more of Harry and Liam performing together with their duet recital on Wednesday 16th July at 1.10 p.m. – put the date in your diaries now!

Another event as part of 'Play the Organ Year' was an Introduction to the Organ Afternoon held at Solihull School Chapel in partnership with the school's music department on 3rd May.



The afternoon was led by Liam, Chris, and Callum Alger, Head of Chapel Music at Solihull School. A group of ten young people from year 2 to year 11 (and their parents) thoroughly enjoyed learning about the organ with demonstration pieces performed by Liam and Callum, Chris's human pipe organ activity, learning about the stops and how the organ works, and having a go on the instrument themselves. Callum will also be doing a recital at St. Alphege, on Wednesday 9th July – so that's another date for your diaries!

Isabel Baumber

Wednesday Lunchtime Music Recitals, 1.10pm to 2pm

All are welcome to the Recitals. Admission is free of charge and a retiring collection is held in aid of The Friends of St. Alphege Music (Registered Charity 511237).

Recitals are held weekly during term time and refreshments are available from 12.30 p.m.

Isabel Baumber

Recitals recommence on Wednesday 30th April."

4 th June	Christopher Churcher
11 th June	St. Alphege CE Junior School SongSquad
18 th June	Lewis Kirk and Harry Brown (trumpet and organ)
25 th June	Himley Duo (Anna Downes – violin / Tony Bridgewater – piano)
2 nd July	No recital



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CHURCH 4 FAMILIES

June

Sunday Worship

The Junction is a short family focussed service that meets on Sunday mornings. Here are the June themes:

On **1st June** the Junction will meet at 9.15 a.m. in the Oliver Bird Hall. We will be thinking about the glory of God and will be going outside to look at God's glorious world and collect things that show his glory.

On **8th June** everyone will meet in the church building at 9.15 a.m. for a special **All age worship** service to celebrate Pentecost.

We will be joined by the Parish puppet team!

On **15th June** the Junction will meet at 9.15 a.m. in the Oliver Bird Hall and will be exploring the Trinity using apples and paper chains!

On **22nd June** the Junction will be joining the Sunday club at St. Helen's Church, St Helen's Road, B91 2DA (off Buryfield Road)

On **29th June** the Junction will meet at 9.15 a.m. in the Oliver Bird Hall. We will be learning about Peter and Paul the rocks on which the church was founded and will be decorating rocks.

Other Activities

Saturday 7th June **St Alphege Eco Fun Day** St. Alphege Church 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Friday 27th June **Messy Church** St Helen's Church 4-6 p.m.

Pause and Pray Every Monday in term time 9.00 a.m. Room 5 Oliver Bird Hall

Praise and Play Every Friday in term time 9.30-10.30 a.m. Oliver Bird Hall



Facebook page

What?

Lots of hands-on crafty fun
A short celebration story and prayer
Ending with a hot meal for all!

When?

Friday 4.00pm - 6.00pm
16th May | 27th June | 18th July

Where?

St Helen's Church, St Helen's Road,
B91 2DA (off Buryfield Road)

Who?

EVERYONE! Children, bring your
friends, but be sure to bring an adult!

Cost: £2 per person, max £7 per family

Booking is essential.

email - l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk





Pause and Pray



A chance to pause, and reflect on the week ahead

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Any questions contact: Linda Hicks l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk

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email - l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk

Youth Stuff

The Youth Group continues to meet on a Friday evening in the Oliver Bird Hall.

Are you, or is someone you know in Year 6 and above, interested in joining a church youth group? If so, then do consider joining Solihull Parish Youth on a Friday evening, 5 p.m. – 6.20 p.m. in Room 6 at the Oliver Bird Hall. The sessions include pizza, activities and games. The aim is to provide a safe space to have fun and where faith and friendships can grow.

There is no charge, but registering before you come along for the first time is essential.

Please email Lynn Smart for more information and for the registration link: l.smart@solihullparish.org.uk

Lynn Smart

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There was a lot going on at St. Helen's in the week leading up to Easter. We delivered cards to all those in St. Helen's Road and to some of our other neighbours. There were two services in our chapel: Maundy Thursday Communion with foot washing, taken by Roger, and a Tenebrae service (a moving service which has been held in St. Helen's chapel for many years) on Good Friday evening, taken by Nick. We had several visitors joining us for our Easter morning service, as well as a viola and a flute accompanying our worship. An empty wooden cross was at the front of the church all week and after the morning service we served refreshments (including mini eggs) outside for everyone, and a number of those who live in St Helen's Road joined us to put flowers on the empty cross.

On Palm Sunday we had our usual dramatised reading of the Passion which is always very moving and a good opportunity for many of the congregation to take part. This was followed by our ADCM at which we had more people than we have had for several years. Like the other churches in the Parish it would be lovely to have another warden to share the load!

Our two Lent groups met every week and finished the course, looking at the final chapter of Tom Wright's book on the Monday after Easter. These groups continue to meet fortnightly using different study guides and are an important part of our fellowship, providing pastoral care as well as the valuable learning and discussing and praying together which we all find so important for our faith.

In May we look forward to welcoming 2 visitors at our morning services. Bishop Maurice Sinclair will be with us to speak and lead our Communion Service on 11th May. After years of mission service in South America, Bishop Maurice was Principal of Crowther Hall CMS College in Selly Oak, then Bishop of Northern Argentina & Primate of Southern Cone and is now retired. He will be speaking about the church in South America and the diocesan partnership with the Anglican church of Bolivia. Amy Tan (curate at Knowle Church who lives in St. Helen's vicarage with her family) will speak on 18th May at our Morning Praise service.

It was with great sadness that we heard in mid-April that the Montessori school that has been based at St. Helen's for 30 years is having to close at the end of the summer term. We have had a close relationship with the Principal over all these years and feel very sad for them and of course the loss of income for us is significant. We hope and pray that another nursery may want to use our youth hall and other facilities in the future. If you hear of any potential groups looking for accommodation please do let us know!



Chris and Jenny Carrington

JOIN PHIL GODFREY FOR AN EVENING OF

Travelling Tales

Saturday 21st June 2025, 7.00pm
St Helen's Church, Solihull

A charity evening in support of FOPV (Friends of Potters Village) to raise funds for a much needed Pickup truck. We need £30,000 and currently have £26,000. This need is now desperate, in order that we can buy the New (Second Hand) truck before the old one collapses or the price goes up! Just £4000 to go!

Hear about Phil's travels adventures in **Norway, Peru, Slovenia, Thailand and Paris**

All made possible by a lovely bequest, with which I was told to go and travel (in the nicest possible way!)

Tickets £17 includes a Fish & Chip Supper (bring your own drinks) available from Phil Godfrey on 0121 705 3923

More details at:

www.justgiving.com/page/philip-godfrey-appeal3



End of an Era

Avid readers of 'Parish News' will be aware that our use of Sharmans Cross School has been terminated at very short notice. Fortunately, Fr. Simon has arranged with the headteacher of Oak Cottage School for us to use the school for our Sunday worship. We had our last service at Sharmans Cross on Easter Sunday, which seems very fitting as for us it will herald new beginnings. The service was joyous as befits Easter and we then entered the logistics part of the operation as we started to move our 'stuff' for want of a better word,



out of the school. The proposal was to have the service on Sunday 27th April in the chapel and the first service in our new home on 4th May. At the time of writing the move has yet to happen. I'll let you know how things progress in the next magazine.



Holy Week and Easter Services

Fr. Simon held a Maundy Thursday service with a difference. This was a simple service of telling the Maundy Thursday story with readings, reflection and silence culminating in a sharing of bread and wine. Simple it was, but it had depth of meaning and was a very fulfilling act of worship.

Easter Sunday Sunrise Service was held in Oak Cottage Garden at dawn. This was well attended by those who like their Easter to start early in the morning.



60th Anniversary

We had originally planned to hold our 60th Anniversary around this time, but events threw us a curveball as we had to find new premises, so we have postponed this celebration until St. Michael's Day at the end of September.

Paul Smith



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A Gift

Confession time. I really like the Richard Osman programme “House of Games”. I have several favourites among the rounds that they play: I absolutely love ‘answer-smash’, and a close second favourite is a round entitled “And the answer isn’t.” In that round, there is one question with four answers. One of the answers is the correct one, but the other three answers have been written by the fellow contestants alongside the person answering the question. (There are shades of ‘Call My Bluff’, which was another favourite some years ago.)

It is amazing sometimes how we are told a definition of something and we’re as certain as we can be that that is correct – until we hear the next one and then we begin to doubt; and then we hear the next one and so on, *ad infinitum*.

So, where am I going with this?

Well, if I were to say to you the phrase ‘ordinary time’, would you know what I meant? If you didn’t, or you were unsure, you might look at the word ordinary and assume you know what it meant. So, play along with me please: “Ordinary” in this instance means what?

- A) Commonplace; with no special or distinctive features.
- B) Ordinal numbers (to name and count the Sundays).
- C) Outside of the regular Christian church seasons.
- D) A time to rest.

If you said (B), well done! This is where the word ordinary comes from in this instance, the phrase ordinary time. If you said (C), then you’re in the right area too – well done. And if you said (A) or (D), then don’t worry, in my experience you have a lot of company. (Hence the motivation behind this article.)

So, ordinary time is called ‘ordinary’ not because it is commonplace or unimportant, but simply because the weeks of ordinary time are numbered. (From the Latin word “ordinalis”, meaning ‘order’.)

Ordinary time falls outside of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, the more easily recognisable seasons during the Christian year. So, play along with me please: how many of the 52 weeks of the year fall into ordinary time?

- A) 33 or 34
- B) 23 or 24
- C) 43 or 44
- D) 13 or 14

If you said (A), well done! Ordinary Time falls on either 33 or 34 Sundays per year – that’s over half of the year! – so what are we meant to do about it?

Well, during Ordinary Time we celebrate “the complete mystery of Christ”, and we do this in order to be fed and to grow more Christlike ourselves. We are reminded of these things in

the symbols linked with ordinary time – Green, for hope, life and growth; and the loaves and fishes, for a deepening of our faith through a season of spiritual nourishment.

It strikes me too, as a wellbeing practitioner, that ordinary time is very much about being in the moment. Not collapsing in a heap as we recover from Christmas or Easter; or relishing the time to get well prepared for Christmas and Easter 'because there's not much else going on'; but focussing on Christ in the 'here and now'.

So, my challenge to us all is, What is each of us going to do when ordinary time begins on 16th June (until the Saturday before the first Sunday in Advent)? How are we going to attempt to deepen our faith? What will we do to enable us to be in a place for potential growth? Maybe you'd like to spend some time pondering those questions, and more.

As things stand at the moment, (it's 2nd May as I write), I hope to run a Quiet Evening, 6 p.m. for 6.30 p.m. until 9 p.m. on a weekday evening around June/ July, while we still have the light evenings. In this way, those who work during the day may be able to come along for the first time. Do register your interest with me and keep a look out for further details nearer the time.

Finally, do pray with me:

God, I appreciate the extra effort and energy we pour into our Holy Days. I love when the sanctuary is fuller than usual. I love the banners and flowers and special music. And, God, I love ordinary days like today. Days when we bring our best to worship you in the regular part of the church year. Days like today remind me how much of our life is spent in ordinary time. We go to work. We go to school. We wish it was the weekend or vacation or any day but today. God, give us the courage to live in the now. Help us to live into the ordinary days of our lives and of the church year. Remind us again that this day is a gift from you in all its ordinariness. For this day, we give you thanks, Gracious God, because you gave us another day to love you and to love each other. On this ordinary day in ordinary time, we will worship you, Loving God. Amen.

Thanks for listening!

Suzette

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Jesus Leads, We Move

Dear friends,

It's been a joy to spend time with Rev. Nick over the past year, exploring how we might share the heart of *Compassion* with your church families. I've worked with Compassion growing partnerships with churches for the last 5 years, and I'm passionate about how God is using this ministry to release children from poverty in Jesus' name. I live in Sutton Coldfield with my wife, Gez, and our three children PJ, Annie & Ada.

At Compassion, we see beyond the hardship of poverty to the incredible potential God has placed in every child and family. Partnering with more 8,900 local churches in 29 countries, we support and amplify the work they're already doing—because the local church knows its people best.

Sponsoring a child through Compassion is about more than giving—it's about relationship. Letters, prayers, and encouragement are simple but powerful ways to help children grow in heart and spirit. (Imagine if every UK teenager had someone writing to say, "I believe in you.")

The impact is lifelong. Richmond Wandera, once a sponsored child, is now a church pastor and Compassion UK trustee. He founded the Pastors Discipleship Network, equipping churches across East Africa. His is just one of many stories of sponsored children who grow up to be changemakers in their communities.

You can read Richmond's full story and watch a short video here
www.compassionuk.org/blogs/ugandan-church-future

As international funding declines and costs rise, the need grows more urgent. But we are not overwhelmed — we are invited. Invited to follow Jesus' lead, to move with compassion, and to stand with churches around the world bringing light into dark places.

You can find out more and take action now at www.compassionuk.org/hope/SOLIHULL or scan the QR code below.

We'll be visiting and speaking at St. Helen and St. Michael on Sunday 22nd June, and St. Alphege on Sunday 29th June. I look forward to sharing more stories of hope and transformation with you.

In Christ,

James Spencer
Head of Church Partnerships – UK North
Compassion UK
+44 (0) 7714 370 007
james@compassionuk.org



The Guardians

The Stained Glass Windows of St. Alphege Church Insights into the Art and History

Thursday July 10th 7.00 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

**Phil Godfrey and stained glass
window restorer Barry Brady
will lead this event.**

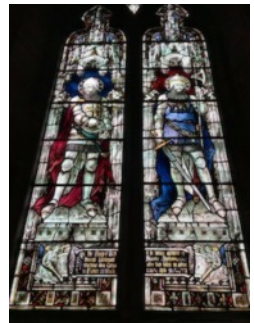


The story behind the windows and the work of a Stained glass Restorer.

Small group tours will then allow a closer examination and discussion of each window.

Refreshments available.

If possible, bring your binoculars.



Entente *Cordiale*

Saturday June 28th 2025

Shirley Methodist Church, 3:00pm

Enjoy a Summer Afternoon of great works by English and French Composers, showcasing the music that Chandos singers will be performing in Normandy at the end of July.

Conductor: Dexter Drown
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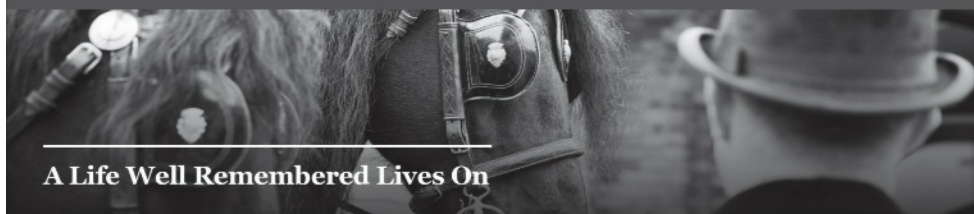
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News from the Wider Church

On 21st April, 2025, the world learned of the death of His Holiness Pope Francis. People of many different faith traditions - and those who profess to have no religious faith - have paid tribute to Francis and his ministry as leader of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Archbishop of York issued a statement which included the following words:

"‘Let us walk together, work together, pray together.’ These are the words Pope Francis said to me when we met in 2023. They sum up his vision for the church, both the Roman Catholic Church but also ecumenically.

Francis’s whole life and ministry was centred on Jesus who comes among us not to be served, but to serve. We saw that compellingly in Francis’s service of the poor, his love of neighbour especially the displaced, the migrant, the asylum seeker, his deep compassion for the well-being of the earth and his desire to lead and build the church in new ways. Francis showed us how to follow Jesus and encouraged us to go and do likewise."

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Rt. Revd. Dr. Shaw Paterson, included these words in his statement about Pope Francis:

"In recalling his contribution to Christian witness, we hear renewed the call made by His Holiness in *Laudato* to care for the earth as our common home, and in *Fratelli tutti* to discover the presence of Christ in each human being. We join with all Christian people in the prayer of Pope Francis:

*Grant that we Christians may live the Gospel,
discovering Christ in each human being,
recognizing him crucified
in the sufferings of the abandoned
and forgotten of our world,
and risen in each brother or sister
who makes a new start.
Amen."*

May we look to the example of Pope Francis and, in so doing, learn to follow Christ more closely and faithfully.

Fr. Simon

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Update from the Parish Wardens

During April the Guardians held a very enjoyable *Light and Sound* evening in St. Alphege with people enjoying the demonstration of the lights as Andy Halstead showed them off. This was followed by Sand Cooper and the Bell Ringers describing the ringing of the bells and ended with some willing volunteers trying to play a tune with hand bells which actually sounded very good with lots of running around. Thanks to Roger Shinton and Andy Moore and all others who took part. Please do support the Guardians and become a member if you can – there are potentially more expenses to come on the maintenance of the church.

Thank you to our clergy, lay ministers, musicians, and many others who made Passion Week and Easter so meaningful and worshipful. Parish Youth did an inspiring dramatic reading of the Palm Sunday Passion narrative, the Walk of Witness was very well attended and this year musicians from Jubilee church led the music in Mell Square and were joined by our choir members. Easter Sunday brought good attendances for our joyful services for all our congregations.

As expected, when the new Electoral Roll was drawn up recently, the numbers on it dropped from 478 last year to 303. If you missed the deadline, don't worry. You can apply to be on the electoral roll at any time. Have a word with one of your wardens or get in touch with Stephen Linstead.



St. Michael's has moved to Oak Cottage School for its Sunday Morning Services with the first being on 3rd May and it was a very good occasion with the Band playing so well. People felt at home from the start and we look forward to reaching out to the local community from there and hope with the school we can have some services and activities together and share premises.

The *Alpha Course* which went well last year is being run again in June – this time there are just 5 Sessions which are being held at St. Michael's and you can see details elsewhere in the magazine. Do come and encourage others to come to explore the faith and perhaps to refresh your faith. The videos are excellent and there is plenty of opportunity to discuss and ask questions and to eat puddings!

Please do continue to pray for our Parish and our Mission to it.

Pam Price
Andrew Williams
May 2025



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Do You Love Me?

After His resurrection Jesus met with Peter by the lakeside. His words were not of condemnation for Peter's betrayal but a simple question

"Do you love me?"

It is a good question for us all to ponder concerning our relationship with Jesus. Do I love Him? How do I know that I love Him and I do I show that I love Him?

There is a song in the musical Jesus Christ Superstar which says

"I don't know how to love Him."

A question I ask myself is how do I as an elderly white heterosexual man know and show that I love Jesus?

The word love can be used very loosely and can refer to widely different feelings and contexts.

Whom do I love and how do I show it?

I love my wife and my children. I love our cat, music, Leicester City Football Club, a good curry, leading and preaching in church, close friends, strong beer, growing plants, playing the guitar, reading etc. etc. etc.

Each of these loves is felt and expressed in different ways, intimacy, deep emotional commitment, respect, acceptance, dedication and service, admiration, communication, affection, forgiveness, empathy, sharing, loyalty, companionship and so on. Unlike the sentiments stated in many songs, love isn't only about feelings which sweep over us, it is also about decision making and priorities. We sometimes confuse liking and loving.

However, there is a true song entitled "Love is a Many Splendoured Thing" which in all its aspects it is indeed.

So, back to loving Jesus. How do we know and show we love Him?

We can see lots of ways love for Him is known and shown in the Gospels. For instance, the first disciples make an effort to seek Him out and stay with him, they know and feel His acceptance and companionship, Mary defers to him at the wedding in Cana, saying to the servants

"Do whatever He tells you."

Thomas shows loyalty and solidarity, the disciples and crowds show admiration, astonishment and appreciation. Levi invites Him to a feast and introduces him to his friends, Zaccheus nearly falls out of a tree and having spent time with Jesus offers to compensate generously any whom He has cheated. Mary anoints His feet extravagantly and dries them with her hair, Martha prepares food and hospitality, Mary sits at His feet and listens.

Maybe, above all, love is about being connected.

In the film "Frozen" a song has the lines:

"Please don't shut me out again, please don't slam the door. You don't have to keep your distance any more".

Jesus in His love makes the first move to us.

We love because He first loved us.

Peter was chosen by Jesus to be the rock on which the future church would be built. Jesus could have chosen James for his family relationship, Paul for his intellect, but He chose Peter for his love.

Peter replied to Jesus, "You know that I love you." Then Jesus responded with how to show that love in action.

"Feed and tend my sheep. Follow me"

I don't know how to love Him?

God Bless
Revd. Roger

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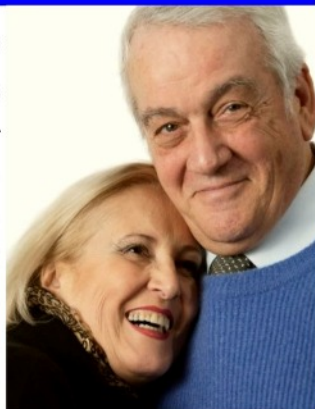
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Thursday 5th June : 1.30pm in the OBH. *Strawberry Tea* and a talk by Wendy Westley about her book '*Sun Hats and Staying Home*'.

Monday 16th June : 7.00pm in church. *Church Model and Tour* with Carol Southworth.

Thursday 19th June : 10.30am in church - *MU Corporate Eucharist*.

Thursday 3rd July : 10.30am. *A Visit to St Patrick's Church, Salter Street*
followed by *Lunch* at The Bull's Head, Earlswood.

Thursday 17th July : 10.30am in church - *MU Corporate Eucharist*.

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

WIVES' FELLOWSHIP

This friendly monthly Lunch Club will meet on Friday 6th June. If you would like to find out more or join the group, please telephone Carol Caldicott on the number below.

Carol Caldicott
0121 705 3168

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

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