



# THE UNITED BENEFICE of ST LUKE'S, ENDON with ST CHAD'S, BAGNALL

*Encounter, Encourage, Enable ... Committed to Sharing God's Love*

[www.endonstlukes.org.uk](http://www.endonstlukes.org.uk)

**Vestry (church office): 01782 502166 or 07517 653370**



**November 2024**

**INTERREGNUM Month 53**



## **REMEMBRANCE & MEMORIAL**

**Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> November**

**10.45am**

### **SERVICE of REMEMBRANCE**

followed by wreath-laying at the war memorial in the churchyard with bugler Keith Jervis. We welcome all members of our community to this special service. Tea and coffee will be served afterwards in the chapter house.



**6.30pm Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November**

### **OUR ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE**

for families who have been bereaved. Please pass the name of your deceased relative to Barrie if you would like it to be read out during the service. Tea and coffee served afterwards.

If you would like your loved one's name written in the Book of Remembrance please inform Shirley. Contact numbers for Barrie and Shirley are on the back page.



***'THE BOYS IN BLUE' ARE BACK! On Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November the City of Stoke-on-Trent Male Voice Choir will be coming to St Luke's again, this time with their Christmas Concert. See page 10.***

## NOVEMBER at ST LUKE'S

**3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY**

**9.15am HOLY COMMUNION**

**– Rev Philip**

**11.00am CONNECTIONS**

**10<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY**

**10.45am SERVICE OF**

**REMEMBRANCE**

**6.30pm MEMORIAL SERVICE**

**17<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY**

**9.15am HOLY COMMUNION**

**– Fr David**

**11.00am CONNECTIONS**

**24<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY**

**9.15am MORNING WORSHIP –**

**Barrie / Roger**

**11.00am CONNECTIONS**

## ECUMENICAL SERVICES

**Wednesdays:**

**Holy Communion at 9.15am**

**6<sup>th</sup> Nov at St Luke's**

**13<sup>th</sup> Nov at Methodists'**

**20<sup>th</sup> Nov at St Luke's**

**27<sup>th</sup> Nov at Methodists'**



## CONNECTIONS

**PLEASE NOTE: There is a "soft start" from 10.30 prior to the main service at 11am when folk will be welcome for a coffee and chat.**

**St Luke's CE Academy,  
Leek Road in the school hall  
with games for the children and  
refreshments.**

## NOVEMBER at ST CHAD'S

**3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY**

**10.45am FAMILY SERVICE – JP/KH/GB**

**10<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY**

**10.45am SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE –**

**MF/KH**

**17<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY**

**10.45am HOLY COMMUNION – Rev Barry**

**24<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY**

**10.45am MORNING PRAYER – Rev Carrie/MF**

## DATE FOR YOUR DIARY...

**SATURDAY 30<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER – Community  
Christmas Fayre in Bagnall village hall.**



## SKYDIVE for Parkinson's

Emma completed her skydive for '**Cure Parkinson's**' in memory of James. Thank you to all who have given so generously. Emma paid for her skydive herself so all donations have gone to the charity. A grand total of **£1070** was raised! Congratulations Emma on an amazing and challenging experience.

## ATTENTION! IF YOU LIVE ALONE... A GET-TOGETHER HAS BEEN ARRANGED ESPECIALLY FOR YOU!

Rev Patricia will be holding another evening meal event at her home 31, Hillswood Drive at 6pm on Saturday **2<sup>nd</sup> November**. She warmly invites members of our congregation who live alone. Please inform her as soon as possible if you would like to come.

November 2024: ST LUKE'S CHURCH DIARY (ESL Endon St Luke's; EMC = Endon Methodist Church)		
F	1 <sup>st</sup>	
Sa	2 <sup>nd</sup>	8.30am PRAYER BREAKFAST 10.30am ART CLUB chapter house 6.00pm SPECIAL SOCIAL EVENT at Patricia's for those who live alone
Su	3 <sup>rd</sup>	9.15am HC 11.00am CONNECTIONS
M	4 <sup>th</sup>	
Tu	5 <sup>th</sup>	
W	6 <sup>th</sup>	9.15am MIDWEEK HC at ESL
Th	7 <sup>th</sup>	
F	8 <sup>th</sup>	
Sa	9 <sup>th</sup>	
Su	10 <sup>th</sup>	10.45am SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE 6.30pm MEMORIAL SERVICE
M	11 <sup>th</sup>	
Tu	12 <sup>th</sup>	
W	13 <sup>th</sup>	9.15am MIDWEEK HC at EMC 7.00pm LIFE GROUP
Th	14 <sup>th</sup>	
F	15 <sup>th</sup>	
Sa	16 <sup>th</sup>	
Su	17 <sup>th</sup>	9.15am HC 11.00am CONNECTIONS
M	18 <sup>th</sup>	
T	19 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am -12.30pm COFFEE, CAKE & CHAT chapter house <i>Last date for Christmas greetings for Dec newsletter!</i>
W	20 <sup>th</sup>	9.15am MIDWEEK HC at ESL 11.00am HILLSWOOD LODGE 7.30pm PCC MEETING
Th	21 <sup>st</sup>	
F	22 <sup>nd</sup>	
Sa	23 <sup>rd</sup>	
Su	24 <sup>th</sup>	TOY SERVICES: 9.15am MORNING WORSHIP 11.00am CONNECTIONS
M	25 <sup>th</sup>	
Tu	26 <sup>th</sup>	
W	27 <sup>th</sup>	9.15am MIDWEEK HC at EMC 7.00pm LIFE GROUP
Th	28 <sup>th</sup>	
F	29 <sup>th</sup>	7.00pm City of Stoke-on-Trent MV Choir Christmas Concert at ESL
Sa	30 <sup>th</sup>	<i>St Andrew's Day</i> Bagnall Christmas Fayre + St Chad's Tree festival



## TOY SERVICES with FOOD BANK COLLECTIONS: Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> November

Food bank items to Leek Food Bank and toys for Leek Salvation Army are invited again this year. Gifts appropriate for teenagers, babies and toddlers as well as toiletries are welcome. Christmas food items are welcome for the food bank. PLEASE DO NOT WRAP YOUR GIFTS but donations of wrapping paper are appreciated. See page 8 for list.



# CANDLE DEDICATIONS for NOVEMBER

For £2.50 you can keep the Candle of Hope or the Sanctuary Light burning for a week with a dedication. Thank you to all of you who have supported the candle dedications this year.

**Please contact Shirley on 504089 if you would like a particular date.**

Nov	CANDLE OF HOPE	SANCTUARY LIGHT
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Alan Jones in loving memory of his wife Joan on the anniversary of her death (Nov 4 <sup>th</sup> 2023).	The candle is kept burning by Geoff and Rosey Smith.
10 <sup>th</sup>	Andy Oakes in loving memory of his father, Peter Oakes (13 <sup>th</sup> ).	The candle is kept burning in memory of Ken Davis who died on Remembrance Day.
17 <sup>th</sup>	Lyn Pickering in loving memory of Ronald Pickering on his birthday (Nov 15 <sup>th</sup> ). From all the family.	The candle is kept burning by Marilyn Plant.
24 <sup>th</sup>	Ann Boulton to celebrate George's birthday (23 <sup>rd</sup> )	The candle is kept burning by Marilyn Plant.



## BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS to

**George Greatbatch (23<sup>rd</sup>)**

*If you would like your own or a family birthday included here please contact Ros 504137*

## ST LUKE'S HARVEST

Thank you to all who donated items for Leek Food Bank at our harvest thanksgiving service on September 29<sup>th</sup>. We were very pleased to welcome Lindsey Stockton, the project manager, to talk to us about the valuable and essential role of the food bank which sadly continues to be very necessary. *See pages 5 to 8 for a transcript.*

Thanks go also to Sue and Roger Forrester who delivered all the items to the Leek depot on the following Tuesday.

Once more we are grateful to Alan Williamson for providing a sheaf of corn to display in church reminding us of the vital role played by our hard-working farmers in feeding our nation all year round.

*See page 8 for harvest lunch pictures.*





## ST LUKE'S ENDON, HARVEST SERVICE - SEPTEMBER 29<sup>th</sup> 2024

*Project Manager, Lindsey Stockton, gave us her report in person...*

Thank you for inviting me to speak to you about the work of the Foodbank. We at Leek and District Foodbank have

just celebrated our 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary, having started in September 2013. We have a team of approximately 35 volunteers, and are open two days a week, Tuesdays and Fridays.

For the first 7 years of our existence our usage figures remained fairly stable, with an average of 500 vouchers and 1200 people each year. In 2020/21, with Covid, this increased to approximately 700 vouchers and 1700 people, which was then replicated in 2021/22.

And then the cost of living crisis hit. Our figures for 2022/23 were 1319 vouchers, feeding a total of 3072 people. This represented an increase of 88% in Foodbank usage from the year 2021/22 to the year 2022/23, and this increase was reflected across the country in all Foodbanks.

In 2023/24, more than 3.1 million emergency food parcels were distributed by food banks in the Trussell Trust network— the most parcels ever distributed by the network in a year.

We at Leek distributed 2745 food parcels – a 10% reduction from 2022/23 – BUT THIS IS NOT AN INDICATION OF ANY LESSENING OF HARDSHIP OR NEED IN THE LOCAL AREA AND STILL REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF 122% FROM PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS -

I feel that the reduction in numbers was primarily due to the increased financial support we are able to offer our clients. 2023/24 saw the first full year of our in-house CA service. Our advisor, Matt, is based at the Foodbank during our opening hours on a Tuesday and Friday afternoon. He sees clients in order to get an overview of the issues they are facing and then can refer them onto the bigger Potteries Moneywise team based in Hanley. This is a project funded by a grant from the Trussell Trust, has been running since the end of 2022 and provides an absolutely invaluable service for our clients.

In addition, we can refer clients for the Household Support Fund – money which is distributed nationally and used locally at the discretion of the individual councils. The funding is reviewed every 6 months enabling clients to benefit again from a new tranche of funding. The latest round of funding has enabled clients to access not only supermarket vouchers - £65.00 plus £20.00 for each dependent - but also a grant of £450.00 towards their utility bills. This has been invaluable as an additional boost to clients' income, particularly for those who are left with no income whilst they are awaiting the commencement of benefit payments.

We are seeing more and more people, who, despite their best efforts, are unable to improve their financial situation, and are using our services on a regular basis. Recent research by Citizens Advice confirms what we are seeing and what people are experiencing, showing that in 2023-4, 5 million people were in a negative budget, including 1.5 million children - this has increased by 54% since 2020-1. A further 2.35 million were living on empty, only avoiding a negative budget by cutting back their spending to unsafe levels.

50% of the people whom CA help with debt are in negative budget, so they know that they will be seeing them again. We are one of the few places from which they can seek help. We have worked hard to increase awareness of our services – or even of our existence as many people were unaware that there is a Foodbank in Leek. We are getting a lot more first-time clients who are referring themselves to the Foodbank, either by phone, or just turning up at the door.

It is not just people on benefits we are helping, we are seeing an increasing number of people in work who are unable to afford the basics. We are seeing more pensioners, and an increase in rough sleepers, as well as an increase in families with young children. Nobody is immune to this financial crisis.

Officially clients are meant to obtain a referral from one of our partner agencies to enable them to get food, but more and more they are coming directly to us, and we are happy to issue them with



food. When people pluck up the courage to come to seek help, they should be given that help at the first port of call, not sent away to get the right forms filled in.

The important thing is that they are signposted to the relevant agencies that may be able to help them with the underlying causes behind their need to use the Foodbank, and we are able to do this because of the close links we have built up over the last few years.

We have close links with the local council, social housing providers, homelessness advice, social prescribers, energy advisors, police, social care and many more agencies.

We have a close relationship with all our referral agents, and if we have any particular concerns regarding a client when they attend the Foodbank, then we will follow this up with their referral agent.

We provide our clients with a food parcel for 3 days, although our provision is usually very generous and will last considerably longer than this. The food we give out is all non-perishable, which has led to some concern regarding adequate nutrition for our clients, specifically young children.

We run a scheme with Ash's Butchers in Leek, whereby we issue our clients with a voucher for £10.00 to spend, and the staff at Ash's then help them to spend it by advising on what to buy and how to cook what they buy.

During the growing season we also benefit from fresh vegetables which are brought in both by our keen gardening volunteers and also by local allotment holders who inevitably will have a surplus of produce.

For any clients who have dietary intolerances we always keep a stock of supermarket vouchers. And we belong to an organisation called Neighbourly, which means that we are able to collect "surplus" food from Sainsbury's, Lidl and Aldi – which can be a wide range of items from fresh produce to cakes and bakery to long life products with damaged packaging.

We also have a "help yourself" trolley in our cafe, which enables our clients to select long life items which are little more exciting than baked beans and pasta!

We are still receiving very generous donations via our various collection points, private donations, schools and churches, but these are not meeting the demand that we are facing. We therefore need to purchase items in bulk from the supermarket. Luckily we have very generous financial donations as well, so – for now – this is something we are able to afford to do.

In 2023/24 we purchased 16% of our stock, and, so far this year, we have purchased 17.5% of our stock. We hold regular food drives at Morrisons and Sainsbury's, and put appeals out at harvest and Christmas to all our regular donors to try to boost our stock levels.

But emergency food is not the long term solution to hunger.

The Trussell Trust continue to campaign at national level, with their Guarantee our Essentials campaign. They are working with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to call for an Essentials Guarantee within Universal Credit, which means that the basic rate at least covers life's essentials like food, household bills and travel costs. This formed an integral part of their general election manifesto.

At a local level, I am very keen that we work alongside any potential increase in benefits, to try to ensure that clients have the knowledge and skills to be able to make best use of their income.

A large number of our clients, through no fault of their own, lack the basic life skills that you and I perhaps take for granted, whether this be from not having them passed on from parents, or because they are no longer mandatory on the school curriculum. This is a situation that we are keen to try to improve, and we have a member of the maths department from Buxton and Leek College providing budgeting and money management advice to clients.

This summer, Trussell Trust has also been running their "laying it all out on the table" campaign. The idea of this is to 'lay out on the table' the devastating consequences of a social security system that isn't protecting people from going without the essentials. Foodbanks have been asked to hold tablecloth sessions, in which their clients are supported to contribute their thoughts and feelings on their own circumstances. Here is what our clients have said ...

"After a marital breakdown myself and my children found ourselves homeless and struggling financially due to swapping to a single claim with universal credit."

"I am on universal credit with 4 children and I work part time to try to get by. What money comes in goes out more or less within a few days. The Foodbank has been a massive help for my family. Without this I would have had to go without."

"Lack of money, lonely and depressed, I have given up. I lost my benefits, my home. I used to work 12 hour nights, now I have mental health because I have lost family members. My benefits will be returned but I have no money for food while I am waiting so I use the Foodbank."

"We come to the Foodbank because we don't have enough money to live on since the price of food went through the roof."

"I started to use the Foodbank late last year. It was upsetting me and my children how much the cost of living had gone up and I was struggling to provide for my children on a limited amount of money."

"Financial stress harms relationships and affects mental health".

"I've got pension and pension credit but it's behind the cost of living. This doesn't cover my bills so I use the Foodbank. First 2 weeks I manage then money gone. I try to buy food but everything gone up in price. I've got £40, £30 needed for electric/gas, that leaves me £10. No car to go to cheaper supermarket."

"I use the Foodbank because I am homeless. They have helped me a great deal. Without them I would have nothing to eat and other things."

"One of the biggest issues is housing. No social housing, long waits for it to become available when offered and Local Housing Allowance rates don't reflect the rising costs of private renting. No home = no job = poverty."

What I haven't included is all the comments thanking us for what we have done and referring to us as "life savers". We have become the first port of call for a wide range of issues, and this isn't right. Much as we are humbled by our ability to help and the gratitude we receive from our clients, there should be more help out there.

This is a case study from our Foodbank of how the "social security" system offers no "security" – A man in his 40s, with ongoing severe anxiety/depression came to us in 2022 as he was rough sleeping. After a few months he was moved into emergency temporary accommodation and is now in long term social housing. He was presented to us at the beginning of June as he had been sanctioned by DWP for non-attendance at an appointment. This was despite the fact that the appointment occurred during a period covered by a fit note from his doctor. Sanctioned for a 56 day period, then an additional 14 days added as it was his second sanction in a 12 month period!!

Since the beginning of April we have fulfilled 45 vouchers for clients who are insecurely housed, and 26 for clients who are of no fixed abode.

These figures are not a true representation as we often can't give food parcels to our homeless clients as they have no cooking facilities. We therefore go to the supermarket to buy food they can eat cold or, for those clients who are not drug or alcohol dependent, we can issue supermarket vouchers. This leads me onto my second case study...

A woman in her late 30s came to us with two teenage daughters, whom we supported for 7 months, whilst she was living in a hotel. We provided some food which she could make use of – only having a kettle in the hotel room – but primarily toiletries and supermarket vouchers.

She had been allocated a house in Leek, but, nobody seemed to have any idea when it might be ready, as there are huge issues with the turnaround of the already inadequate number of social housing properties. This is my local campaign !

I have had two meetings with SMDC and Your Housing – with more to come – regarding the woeful provision of social housing in Leek. This has a huge knock on effect on the Foodbank, as we have to support homeless clients for far longer than we really should do. Your Housing admit to having major issues with the turnaround of vacant properties – due to a problem with recruiting and retaining contractors, but also due to a lack of a substantive programme of maintenance over the last 10 years, resulting in major works needing doing when the properties do become empty, and nobody to do them!

I continue to be a thorn in their side and to bombard them with emails.

So, there is a lot more to running a Foodbank than just distributing bags of food, some of it very rewarding, but some of it incredibly frustrating.

We are very lucky to live in such a generous community and to have the financial security to know that we are going to be able to continue to support our clients, unlike some other Foodbanks, who very much live hand to mouth. It would be so lovely to think that there was an end in sight to the need for Foodbank support. So far this year, we have seen a 17% reduction in usage, so things are going in the right direction but there is still a very long way to go.

In the meantime, we just need to continue to do what we do to our best ability.

Thank you for listening and thank you for your support.

#### FOOD:

Longlife semi-skimmed milk

Pasta sauce

Tinned carrots/corn

Instant mash

Tinned custard

Tinned tuna

Tinned fruit

Rice – 500gm/microwave pouches

Tomato ketchup

Chocolate biscuits

Dry dog food

Jam

Fruit squash

Longlife sponge puddings

Coffee - 100/200gm

Tinned meat

Tinned rice pudding

Pasta n sauce / instant noodles

#### CHRISTMAS ITEMS:

Christmas cakes and puddings (not home-made)

Chocolate bars for children

Tins of ham, salmon, fruit, cream, custard and soup

#### HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS:

Washing up liquid

Multi surface cleaner (no bleach)

Cleaning cloths/sponges

Laundry liquid/capsules/powder

#### TOILETRIES:

Shampoo and conditioner

Shower gel

Toothpaste and toothbrushes

Deodorant

Razors and shaving foam

Toilet rolls

We would also be very grateful to receive any good quality, used carrier bags. Christmas items are also welcome at this time of year. See box above for suggestions.

## HARVEST LUNCH

Huge thanks are due to Rev Patricia and her team for providing the sumptuous harvest lunch enjoyed by about 30 of us after the harvest thanksgiving service on September 29<sup>th</sup>. The casseroles were delicious and topped off with a selection of homemade cakes and desserts. The harvest loaf was a very special addition made by Patricia with a little help from a couple of us on the Saturday morning and complete with a harvest mouse!





# OUR FIRST COFFEE, CAKE & CHAT MORNING...



What a lovely buzz at our first coffee morning at St Luke's on Tuesday October 15<sup>th</sup>! All the seats were soon filled. Tea and coffee flowed and homemade cakes and biscuits disappeared like the proverbial snow in the sunshine! Thank you so much Shirley, Sue, Sylvia and Patricia who worked so hard to make it happen. If you missed it, make sure you come along to our next one in November. If you need a lift there is bound to be someone who can help to get you there! The next Coffee Morning is planned for Tuesday, **November 19<sup>th</sup>** from 10.30 to 12.30. Do come along and bring a friend or two!

## PCC MEETING

The next meeting of St Luke's PCC will take place on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm in the chapter house. Members please print your own minutes if you can.

# The Methodist Church



- **Every Sunday** 10.00 Worship
- **Mondays** 10.00 – 1.30 Community Café (not bank holidays).
- **Wednesdays** 9.15 Holy Communion  
Alternately with St Luke's Parish Church
- **Thursdays** 10.30 Fit-as-a-fiddle: Exercise, conversation and coffee
- **Friday Friends** 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> **November** 10.00am – 12.00noon
- **Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>** 10 - 12 Coffee Pot Café (see notice outside church for details)
- **Friday** 6pm 'Blast' – youth club for 7-11 year olds (during term time)



## THE BOYS IN BLUE

### 'O Holy Night'

#### HERE AGAIN!

The City of Stoke-on-Trent Male Voice Choir will be entertaining us once more at St Luke's following their very popular visit last April. This will be a Christmas Concert on **Friday 29th November** at 7pm. Tickets are £7.50 from Sue Forrester and include hot drinks and mince pies. Don't miss this! If you can help out on the night please see Sue.





## CHRISTMAS WREATH WORKSHOP

Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> December

2.00 - 4.00pm in the chapter house.

The ticket price of **£22.50** includes all you need to make a wreath with the exception of your individual decorations e.g., lights, baubles and bows. This year we will be weaving the wreath ring from ivy strands making it a very organic and recyclable Christmas decoration. Please see Sue for tickets. Only 20 places.

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

As usual I will be happy to include greetings in our December newsletter with donations to the Christian Blind Mission. Please let me have your wording and donation by **November 19<sup>th</sup>**. This is important so that a cheque can be sent off before Christmas. (Sometimes Sheila receives late donations in mid-Jan when the cheque has already been dispatched!) **Ros**



## ENDON COMMUNITY CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

This will be held in the Methodist Church on Tuesday, **10<sup>th</sup> December** at 7.00pm. **Please contact Ros or Ann if you would like tickets at £7 each.**



## THE CONNECTIONS TEAM

has just designed and printed this new banner which is now displayed outside St Luke's Academy. Let's hope it will encourage a few more folk to go along on a Sunday morning.



**Come follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad**

## FOOD FOR THE EARS

The **Lichfield Diocesan Digest Sound Magazine** passes its thirty-five year anniversary this autumn.

Founded in 1989 under the leadership of Dean of Lichfield, John Lang, former Head of Religious Broadcasting at the BBC, it is an audio publication dedicated to serving the Lichfield Diocese.

Designed for the visually impaired and for anyone preferring audio over print, the Digest provides an accessible way to stay updated on diocesan news, events, and faith-based initiatives.

Distributed on USB sticks, the Digest features a wide range of spoken content, including poetry readings, parish magazine highlights, sermons from Lichfield Cathedral, and messages from the bishops. It also delivers updates on church projects, stories of faith from parishioners, details of upcoming events, and reports on charitable efforts. Produced regularly, the magazine connects listeners to the Church's mission, fostering a sense of inclusion for those unable to engage with traditional printed materials. As an early example of inclusive outreach, the Digest has embraced modern audio technology to serve the entire community.

We have had a sound studio by the cathedral for many years where some of our recording takes place. In the early days, programmes were distributed on cassette tapes, before moving to USB memory sticks. In many ways, the Digest like many 'talking newspapers' has been a pioneer, well ahead of the recent phenomenon of podcasts.

However, as audiences and audio content evolves, so must the Digest. We are now seeking volunteers to help expand its reach. Whether it's contributing ideas, recording material, or assisting with distribution, we need fresh perspectives and new voices. Based in the cathedral close, we also work virtually and travel throughout the diocese. If you're passionate about helping us reimagine the Digest for a contemporary audience, please reach out to **Gregory Platten**, Canon Chancellor at Lichfield Cathedral and Chair of the Digest, at [gregory.platten@lichfield-cathedral.org](mailto:gregory.platten@lichfield-cathedral.org).



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## ST CHAD'S NEWS



**This year...a Christmas Tree Festival  
in St Chad's church on Sat 30<sup>th</sup> Nov.**



The church will be decorated with many Christmas "trees", all donated and decorated by individuals or organisations. There will be a prayer tree where you can write your own prayer and decorate the tree. The church will be open on **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November** to coincide with the Community Christmas Fayre in the village hall. Other times of opening will be published later.

## People love to visit churches, chapels and cathedrals!

Recent visitor surveys have shown that more people are visiting cathedrals this year, with an increase in visitors of 17% since 2022. They come for a variety reasons, attending services and concerts, enjoying the heritage and history and visiting exhibitions. This increase in visitors is the

result of hard work and lateral thinking, focusing on making these special places appeal to those who may not be regular attendees.



Actually, it's possible that even more people are visiting burial grounds, be they churchyards, chapel yards, cemeteries and of course cathedral grounds. A survey in 2018 found that more than half the visitors to churchyards were neither entering the church building nor visiting a particular grave, they were there to enjoy the peace, tranquility, bird song, flowers and history of these special outdoor places. They were also making use of facilities such as surfaced paths, benches, ramps and other accessibility features. For those of you who care for and love your local churchyard, can you

help to make it even more welcoming for visitors? Is there any information on the more interesting memorials to be visited, the locally famous or infamous or perhaps particularly beautiful stone carving? Could you put up a list of the wildlife to be seen at different times of year or steer people to spend time in the presence of a veteran tree and think how long it has been growing there?

Managing a churchyard for both people and nature really creates a space that looks cared for, is accessible but still full of the peaceful and enriching sights and sounds of wildlife that people so enjoy. By the autumn, all of your grassland areas will be cut short but can you leave a small patch of tussocky grass, nettles and hogweed around the back, perhaps by a compost heap, so that insects and other invertebrates have somewhere to overwinter? This will be used by frogs, toads, newts and slowworms who will be feeding on these invertebrates as well as by small mammals and birds. Hedgehogs in particular need shelter like this as well as food such as worms, slugs and beetles.



Do you have any berry-bearing shrubs or hedges? Could they be left until the late winter before pruning or trimming in order to feed and shelter birds and small mammals? If there is ivy present you may have noticed the buzz of ivy bees on the flowers in September, flowers which have now been replaced by small black berries. Birds such as thrushes, blackbirds, pigeons and blackcaps love these berries which are rich in fat so good winter

tuck! Autumn is a great time to make deadwood piles from windblown twigs and branches, pile up autumn leaves to rot down and perhaps erect some bird and bat boxes.

All of this work will enhance your churchyard so that it is teeming with even more life next spring and summer, giving pleasure to locals and visitors alike.

Harriet Carty

*Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor, [harriet@cfga.org.uk](mailto:harriet@cfga.org.uk), [www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk](http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk)* - individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code **diomem22**

*Bullfinch eating autumn berries, photograph by Andrew Fusek Peters*



# **November Prayer Focus**

- Those severely affected by the ravages of Hurricane Milton
- A ceasefire and lasting peace between Israel and Gaza.
- Non-escalation of war as Hezbollah and Lebanon are now involved
- For peace amid the current unrest following the murder of the three children in Southport
- Those affected by M-Pox and those trying to stop its spread
- Our new government
- The US presidential election
- Rev Denise Williamson our new Methodist minister based in Endon
- An end to people-trafficking and the ongoing problem of refugees and asylum seekers crowding into unsafe boats to cross the Channel
- The desperate plight of the people of Afghanistan under harsh Taliban rule
- The people of South Sudan enduring great hardship and near famine conditions
- The wife and family of opposition leader Alexei Navalny and the repercussions of his death in Russia and around the world
- Ukraine and the urgent need for arms and an end to the war
- Safety for shipping in the Red Sea and the financial consequences of longer journeys around the Cape
- Our king and the Princess of Wales as they undergo cancer treatment
- The families of all those whose loved ones have been murdered
- The truly horrendous situation in Israel and Gaza and especially the hostages
- A permanent cease-fire and the release of all hostages and for desperately needed aid getting into Gaza
- Climate change and the urgent need to combat its effects
- Those taken prisoner
- The current threat from China, Iran and N Korea supporting Russia in the war in Ukraine
- All aid agencies and volunteer recovery teams
- Those seeking justice for women in Iran and regime change
- All hostages in Iran awaiting release especially Morad Tahbaz and Mehran Raoff
- The huge problem of loneliness
- Loved ones and all in our parish who are currently unwell
- Improvements in the treatment of cancer, heart disease and neurological conditions
- Our church wardens and worship leaders during the interregnum
- The future of our benefice as we enter our fifth year of interregnum
- Those affected by the recent upsurge in knife crime
- The widespread drug problem especially in Stoke-on-Trent
- Lou Macari's hostel for the homeless
- The problem of the millions of plastic bottles afloat in our oceans and the tons of 'space junk' orbiting our planet
- The problem of river pollution brought about by discharge of sewage
- All who have lost loved ones recently
- The Trussell Trust food banks still needed as much as ever

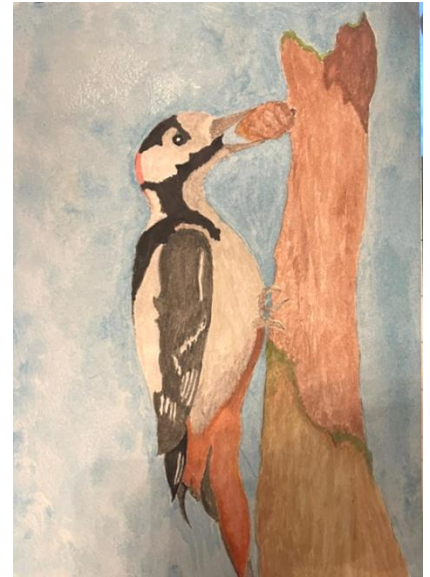


## THE FLOWER & CRAFT CLUB

Next meeting:

Wednesday **November 6<sup>th</sup>** from 1.00 – 3.00pm in the chapter house. Remember you are welcome to come along just for a chat and a cuppa! It was lovely to welcome two visitors to our October meeting and we hope they enjoyed themselves.

The photo shows an L shaped arrangement demonstrated for next month's meeting



**THE ART GROUP** is meeting on Saturday **2<sup>nd</sup> November** from 10.30am to 12.30pm in the chapter house following the prayer breakfast.

On the right is a first attempt at painting a woodpecker by a new Art Group member. Do you fancy trying your hand?

## PRAYER BREAKFAST

The next prayer breakfast will be held on Saturday, **November 2<sup>nd</sup>** at 8.30am for breakfast and prayer at 9.00am.

## LIFE GROUP MEETINGS

These will continue on Wednesdays, **November 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>** at 7.00pm in the chapter house led by Rev Patricia. All are welcome.

## PASTORAL TEAM (Phone nos on back page)

### HILLSWOOD LODGE CARE HOME:

**next visit Wed November 20<sup>th</sup> at 11.00am**

Volunteers are welcome to help boost the singing. There is room for 6 or 7 of us. Please inform Shirley or Rev Patricia if you are able to come. The residents really do enjoy these services and the chats afterwards.

**HOME and CARE HOME VISITS:** Pastoral team members regularly visit folk who are no longer able to attend church. Do get in touch with Shirley if you know of anyone who would like a visit.

**WALKS followed by refreshments:** Listen up for details of the next walk.  
Do join us.

Roger Simpson, St Luke's warden / worship / PCC chair	01782 502006
Barrie Jackson, reader / Administrator (* tel no for church enquiries)	07510 074097 07517 653370*
Rev Philip Robinson (minister w Permission to Officiate)	07983 863372
Rev Patricia Robinson (organist, also minister w PtO)	07854 418488
Sue Forrester, Flower & Craft Club / Foundation gov / Safeguarding Officer / St Luke's Facebook / Art Club	07854 043187
Deb Podmore, Connections / school chaplain	01782 773383
Sheila Simpson, St Luke's Electoral Roll Officer	01782 502006
Shirley Brindley, candle dedications / pastoral tm	01782 504089
Steve Dale, St Luke's treasurer	07894 098011
Sheila Hurst, St Luke's Gift Aid Sec / MU rep	01782 503622
Ros Benson, newsletter / St Luke's website / PCC Secretary	01782 504137
Kath Howell, St Chad's PCC chair / warden / worship leader	01782 304616
Julia Podmore, St Chad's warden / treasurer	07980 802121
Pat Saul, St Chad's PCC vice-chair / secretary	07973 863930
Muriel Finney, St Chad's worship leader	01782 302229
Peter Millard, St Chad's buildings / warden's team	01782 505338
Emma Ashworth, St Chad's warden's team	07861 730806
Claire Houston-Brown, St Chad's Safeguarding Officer	07779 667470
Sheila Tipper, St Chad's news contact	01782 534647

For the duration of the interregnum the newsletter is available on-line as a PDF attachment and on the church website.

Paper copies are available for those without internet access.

Please submit notices for our next newsletter to Ros Benson

by **Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> 2024**

either by e-mail [jandrbenson@btinternet.com](mailto:jandrbenson@btinternet.com) or phone 504137.

### ST LUKE'S CHURCH OFFICE

Unless involved with funeral duties Barrie mans the office on Mon, Wed, and Fri from 10.30am to 1.00pm using **07517 653370**. During these times the church is open for private prayer.



### ST LUKE'S DAY 18<sup>th</sup> October

Year 5 from St Luke's CE Academy visited the church to celebrate St Luke's Day. The pupils were a credit to their school and their families. An absolute delight! **Sue**