

Sharing  God's Love

ST JAMES' CHURCH, CHRISTLETON

# PARISH MAGAZINE

JULY 2019



Serving the communities of:  
Christleton, Cotton Abbots, Cotton Edmunds, Littleton and Rowton.

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Sweet Dreams in the Parish Hall  
(See 'Cyclists' page: 3)



See Foodbank article  
(page: 4)

Reading the Magazine in  
the sun. (See 'Christleton  
High School' page: 18)

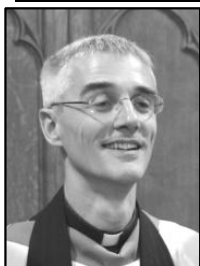


Crew, Youth and  
New Beginnings (page: 2)



Celia & Jim with  
Janet (page: 5)

## **THE NATURAL FREQUENCY OF LIFE:**



As I sit down to write this, I understand we have two parish events about to happen. The Village Show and Fete. While I am not entirely sure what the difference is between them, I am looking forward to

sharing them with you immensely.

I found myself asking the question what is a fete? Google tells me it is a feast or festival. This reminded me of our Messy Church session yesterday in the Parish Hall. A new and old way of being church for today, especially aimed at families. Crafts, play and conversation happen. There is a wonderful telling of a bible story, a song, and then a shared tea. It's great fun, delivered by a wonderfully faithful and talented team of people, and I would encourage you to find out more and come along.

Shameless plug now over (it won't be the last), I was reminded of Messy Church because Beryl told the wonderful story of the Prodigal Son (or more formally the parable of the Prodigal Son and his Brother, Luke 15.11-32). Do you remember that one?

In brief, the younger son – the Prodigal – asks his dad for his share of the inheritance. He goes off and has a great time, most likely an inaccurate translation of “he squandered his property in dissolute living”. Down and out, he ends up feeding some pigs before finally returning to his father. His father sees him coming, and filled with compassion runs toward him and embraces him. Then, clothing him in honour, throws a party for him. The older brother is a bit miffed.

It's another one of my favourite passages in the bible. In part, because I think it summarises the whole of God's story, the whole of the bible, and indeed the recurring story of our lives. The way I said it, almost 10 years ago (and will do again when I get any opportunity), was that God's story is a story of fracture, forgiveness, and feast.

*The fracture of a creation that spurns its creator. We see this in the younger son's move away from his father.*

*The forgiveness of Christ that reconciles creation to himself. We see this in the father, God, who runs towards his returning son, and embraces him.*

*The feast of happiness and blessing of being drawn towards the new heaven and the new earth. We see this in the celebratory party the father throws his son.*

There it is, the bible in 35 words no less!

This suggests to me that the key note or mode of Christian living is intended to be one of feasting on happiness and God's blessing. This, for me, gifts me much pause for thought and reflection. I wonder how is this key note of living as God intended (for us all) reflected in my life and the lives of the communities I share in.

Then, I remember where I started. In a place of thanksgiving and excitement of how we as a community will shortly embody feasts of celebration in the Village Show and Fete. I hope to see you there.

With my love and prayers,  
*Stefan, Rector*

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## **NEW BEGINNINGS; but first we need to say goodbye:**

It was with some sadness that we met as 'The Crew Youth Group' for the last time on Sunday May 19<sup>th</sup>.

There are a number of reasons why this is so but the most important and exciting reason is that, as part of our new service pattern initiative we are hoping, with God's grace, to develop a vibrant youth worshipping community which will meet to 'waste time with God' on the first Sunday of the month at 4pm. How often do we read in the scriptures

that we must give up the old in order to take on something new?

Rev'd David Garnett started the youth group when he started as Rector in 1987. This was in addition to the Sunday School and Disciple group which Gill Hibbert led. I'm sure there would have been a youth club or group in Charles Mack's day but 1987 is when I first became involved. We would invite teenagers to the Rectory on a Sunday evening to chat and have coffee and biscuits. Everyone was very shy at first, and giggly!

Eventually we started to meet in the Parish Hall every Sunday evening and even planned some weekends away. Our first trip was to the Yorkshire Dales where we did some pot-holing and walking. We were camping and the weather on the first night was absolutely dreadful. Tents blew down and folk got soaked. Sue Eccles spent half the night making hot chocolate for everyone. Somehow we got everyone into a dry sleeping bag under canvas. Meanwhile, our rector slept through it all in his car!! We never let him forget it.

Undeterred, we planned another weekend away the following year, this time to Matlock Bath. A number of our contingent had to go home early with upset tummies (possibly from swimming in the stream which ran through the campsite). Despite all of that, we have some very happy memories.

As time moved on Sheena took over then Richard and then a paid youth worker, Andy, from the light project was with us for a year. It was Catriona, however, who got the group to name themselves 'The Crew'. They got their own logo and had hoodies and t-shirts which they wore with pride. It was a vibrant group doing lots of activities such as sleepovers in the parish hall and fundraising initiatives.

Since then the group has struggled to achieve the same numbers. We have been unable to find a dedicated youth leader and so we've been meeting monthly and generally just chilling out and chatting. We are a small but loyal group and I have learnt so much from

them. I look forward to continuing to worship with them at our new 'service'. It's going to be more of a 'worship space' rather than a service, led by the youth doing what they want to do.

Many of you will have memories of belonging to The Crew, or the youth group that preceded it so please do share those memories with us.

This isn't the end but the beginning of something different, something exciting and something relevant for our young people.

*Tina Lightfoot*

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### **THE CONTACTLESS TERMINAL:**

We've carried various words about the availability of the 'new' contactless terminal in church, especially in the May magazine, but then Liz reported in June that there was a glitch. The money wasn't finding its way to St James but getting stuck along the line. All very embarrassing for Liz who is championing the system. We still don't know what really happened but the blockage has now been cleared and it all works OK.

So, once again, please try it out by using your contactless credit or debit card to transfer £3, £5 or £10 of your hard earned cash to us - it really will be appreciated - and such donations will normally be gift aided, under the GASDS small donations scheme, to give us even more without you needing to specify that. Thank you. Liz is looking forward to seeing its use!

*(Editor, on behalf of Liz McClure)*

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### **CYCLISTS TAKE OVER HALL:**

I am writing to express my thanks to the entire Christleton community for welcoming us over the weekend. The Windsor Chester Windsor long distance ride was an enormous success, with approximately 110 riders completing the event.

This is one of the longer events of the year, at 600km/375 miles. Audax UK is the charitable body that oversees these events, and they take place around the UK throughout the year. The shortest rides are around 60 miles, with others stretching to nearly a thousand. The events are run entirely by volunteers on a non-profit basis. The ethos is for riders of all ages to challenge themselves over long distances, and to see the best of the wonderful British countryside.

Riders have to check in at stops along the way, whilst keeping within time limits. They have to reach checkpoints, known as controls, within a maximum time. However there are also minimum limits; if a rider manages to arrive before their allocated time, they cannot stamp their card. This ensures that the rides do not become a race. All that is ever published after events is a list of finishers in alphabetical order. There are no 'winners'. To win means to get around the route whilst being self-sufficient.

The only 'prize' is your fully stamped card, known as a brevet. Some rides also qualify participants for other events, or earn them achievement badges. The only competition is with yourself...oh, and often the great British weather.

Naturally these riders work up very healthy appetites; this is where people like myself, June and our fantastic volunteers come in. Some like myself ride events, and like to help others to take on a challenge. Others like June are not cyclists, but like to see people warmly welcomed and well fed. Like the riders, we have volunteers from all walks of life. It is a fantastic community, and there is nothing like a hectic session in the kitchen to forge lasting friendships in a short space of time.

In many ways, this is how we feel about our host venues. We could possibly run these checkpoints in anonymous industrial units or lay-bys, but that is not the spirit of Audax riding. It is in the village halls and schools that riders get a feel of the community they are visiting. Without the cooperation and support

of venues such as Christleton, both the Parish Hall and the village itself, these events simply wouldn't happen. It is with this in mind that we once again want to express our thanks. I hope we left your lovely hall as we found it, and that residents were intrigued but never disturbed by our presence.

I hope we can visit your lovely part of the world again, and I hope the cake and provisions we left were enjoyed.

Kindest regards,  
*June and Dan James.*

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### **WEST CHESHIRE FOODBANK:**

This is an organisation run in partnership with local churches and community groups. It helps local people in crisis. St James' Church has supported the Foodbank for several years.

#### **Facts:**

- 9651 (up 22%) three-day emergency food supplies given to people in crisis in the 12 months to March 2019 (3553 to children)
- £721 average monthly rent for a house in the North West of England.
- 1 in 5 of the UK population live below the poverty line.

#### **How can YOU help?**

- **Donate Money:** Big or small every gift you give helps transform lives.
- **Volunteer:** Volunteers are the life blood of Foodbanks.
- **Donate food:** Place your donations in the box at the back of church. There are regular updates of which foodstuffs are needed. This is then taken to the West Cheshire Foodbank warehouse in Ellesmere Port.

Thank you.

Local contact:  
Mike Lightfoot 07787 421357.

## **CELIA'S STORY 2019:**

One of the nice things about being Parish Administrator is meeting some really nice & interesting people and the following is the story that evolved following receipt of an e-mail.



I opened an e-mail on 4 April 2019 from a lady called Celia Bensman saying that she lived in Colorado, USA and that in June this year she was coming on a cruise ship to Liverpool for a day and hopes to travel to Chester & Christleton to see the church where her mother & father were married in 1941. She also mentioned that her mother was born in Littleton Hall. Soon after her parents were married they moved to Scotland but her mother died when she was 4½ & she doesn't remember her at all.

I responded to the e-mail from Celia and said that from the information she had given me about her mother & father, I thought I knew someone who would probably be able to give her some information about her family & that person of course, was David Cummings. When I spoke to David a short while later he instantly knew the family names I was talking about and was able to tell me where some of the family graves are in the churchyard including one of a 2 day old little girl, Elizabeth Maude, who turned out to be Celia's mother's sister of whom she had no previous knowledge.

I was then able to e-mail all this information to Celia in Colorado & needless to say she was thrilled with everything David had found that I had passed on to her including a picture of Littleton Hall, of course still standing today which she thought would have vanished by now.

We then had to work out how Celia & her husband Jim were going to get from Liverpool docks to Chester & we agreed they would take a train & I would meet them at the station to go to Christleton/Littleton. The best made plans ..... because it all went

'pear shaped' the day before they were due to dock in Liverpool because that was when we'd had such heavy rainfall for 3 days that Merseyrail cancelled all trains between Liverpool & Chester. I e-mailed Celia to warn her of the railway problem which had not improved by the Thursday morning when they were due to visit us so they booked an Uber from Liverpool & I arranged to collect them from Chester station. During all the time when the e-mails were going backwards & forwards prior to Celia leaving the USA, I'd mentioned that when we did meet I wouldn't have to have a 'rose between my teeth' for identification because she had looked at all the mug shots on the Christleton website so she was able to identify me waiting by the exit!

So, after an exciting few moments when we met for the first time we drove to Littleton where we met David, & Celia was able to see part of Littleton Hall. This was quite a moment for her because she didn't think the house would still be standing after all these years. We then drove on to Christleton & to St James which was another landmark for Celia to take in & met up with John who was doing his usual Thursday morning jobs. Celia thought St James church was beautiful, she felt very peaceful there & could easily see how proud we all are of St James. David pointed out the family graves for Celia to see and she'd brought a few family photographs with her of her parents wedding day & David was able to take some photographs of Celia & Jim standing in the same 'spot' as those on her photographs from 1941 ie: by the Lych-gate (*see cover*) and the sundial.

I'd booked a table at the Ring O' Bells for lunch so after a brief history of the Christleton buildings in the centre of the village from David, we walked over to the pub & after a warming cup of coffee enjoyed a lovely lunch and plenty more chat.

Celia & Jim didn't have to be back on their ship in Liverpool until 10 o'clock that evening so had plenty of time, so after lunch David took us on a drive around

Christleton/Littleton village and gave a potted history of the area whilst en route into Chester via the inner ring road which was as close as we could get to the centre due to the pedestrianisation of the City but at least they saw a mixture of the old and new Chester.

We then made our way via the motorway to Hooton station to find out if trains were running to Liverpool which they were by now thanks to water being pumped out of the station and helpful Merseyrail staff on the platform.

We then said our farewell to Celia and Jim and of course wished them a safe and enjoyable journey for the rest of their time in UK. They were going to the Isle of Man the following day and then on to Scotland where Celia has family in Glasgow who they were going to meet up with before visiting the Isle of Skye in the Western Islands.

She wrote to me after her visit to Chester & still couldn't believe that we (David more than me) had been able to produce so much information about her family and was still trying to take it all in. She now eagerly awaits the photographs which David took to show her family back home.

Celia and I will keep in touch with one another from now on via the wonders of e-mail because we had built up a wonderful rapport during our e-mail exchanges and who knows, maybe John & I will visit them in Colorado sometime or they'll come back to UK for a further visit but whatever happens a firm friendship has been established simply from opening an e-mail.

*Janet Milton*

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## **FRIENDSHIP CAFÉS:**

Chester Centurion Rotary have been running two Friendship Cafés for two years and we wanted to let people know about them.

One is held in the Kingswood Building, Newton, 10.30 am to 12 noon and the other one is held at The Bawn Lodge, Hoole, 2.00pm to 3.30pm.

The cafés are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each Month except for August. Both are free of charge to the users but any donations are always welcome as this helps with costs and we like to do something special for December.

At the Bawn we do a mini afternoon tea, at Kingswood last year we served homemade Scotch Pancakes – my husband is a great chef. He also makes Rich Fruit Cakes that people use as a base for Christmas cake or simply enjoy as they are, and he does charge for the cakes as he gives money raised to Charity. He also makes wonderful Maderia Cake to an old family recipe.

The Café at Kingswood is held in the Craft Room. The Management do not charge us for the use of this, as the Rotary supply the tea, coffee biscuits etc. We were fortunate to obtain a grant from the Local Councillors' budget for the initial costs of all the items required to set up the café.

The Cafe at Bawn Lodge is held in their rear room and Adam the Manager and one of the Managing Directors of the owners of the Bawn Lodge kindly supplies us with Tea and Coffee free of charge. He is a wonderful Guy and likes to give something back to the Community.

What do we do at the cafés? We chat, make new friends and we definitely have fun. We do have a selection of books about various decades etc, and quizzes if people want to do that, but generally the current attendees simply like to chat - some reliving memories, some just catching up with what is currently going on. We always have a laugh.

We would love to welcome some new people to either of our Cafés if you know of someone who may benefit from an informal get together because they have dementia, or have been the victim of a stroke and maybe

lost the confidence to communicate, or just because they are a bit lonely and need a bit of company and something to look forward to once a month. For more information or if you would like to volunteer then please get in touch with Dee on 07581 035 234 as she would love to hear from you.

*Doreen Marchant-Stubbs  
(Chair Chester Centurion)*

## **PEOPLE WE REMEMBER:**

### **Nora Wain**

Villagers will be sad to learn of the death of Nora Wain at Heath Lane Nursing Home on 10<sup>th</sup> May aged 92yrs. Nora and her husband David were long time residents of Skips Lane, in Christleton where they had taken over the family firm of Boat Builders, building leisure craft for the canal industry after WWII. This was one of the first places in the UK where you could hire cruisers to enjoy holidays on the canals. It is hard to believe that there were three such boat yards in Christleton. The Wain Yard was later named "The Inland Hire Cruisers Ltd" and probably one of the factors that gave rise to the Inland Waterways Association in 1946, founded by Tom Rolt a good friend of the Wain's. David went on to create the Llangollen Canal Museum, and was a member of The Inland Waterways Commission and an active member of The Government Advisory Body for Inland Waterways for many years.

David and Nora were prominent members of the Christleton Players Theatre Group in its embryo years, and whilst Nora acted, David played a major role behind the scenes. They were also actively involved with the many Christleton Players productions at Chester Castle, Eaton Hall and at Chester Cathedral. They were members of Chester Round Table and Ladies Circle respectively. Nora and David were founder members of the Christleton Local History Group in 1976, and contributed a great deal to the research for their publications, especially "Christleton" the History of a Cheshire Village, and Christleton 2000 years of history.

Nora was an excellent cook, and together with Margaret Croston travelled to France on a cookery course. She with David often hosted special events at their home in Skips Lane.

Nora was a delightful lady, a mum and grandma, who was a vital part of the Wain family team which contributed so much, not only to the community in Christleton, but also to the whole of the UK through their work on the canal system. She will be sadly missed by her family, and her many friends in the Village.

*Alf Croston/David Cummings*

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## **CHICKEN TÈNAJ:**

At the last Luncheon Club meal on 17th June Chicken Tènaj was served. A lot of people were impressed by the topping/sauce especially, so here's the recipe below with thanks to Janet:

### **Ingredients – for 1**

1 Chicken breast – uncooked  
1 tablespoon full fat mayonnaise  
1 tablespoon full fat crème fraîche  
1 tablespoon horseradish sauce  
Approx 2 oz (50 grams) grated Cheddar cheese

### **Method**

Put chicken breast in bottom of dish.  
Mix together in separate dish the equal quantities of mayonnaise, crème fraîche & horseradish sauce.  
Spread this over the chicken breast to cover.  
Sprinkle enough grated cheese over the top to cover.  
Cover with tin foil for half of the cooking time, then remove to brown the cheese on top.  
Put in pre-heated oven at 180/190 (fan oven), 200 C, gas 6 for approx 40 mins.

Bon Appétit  
*('Tenaj' is Janet backwards!)*

# Music in the Bishop's Garden

(by kind permission of the Bishop of Chester)

## RESCHEDULED:

for: **Tuesday 16th July 2019**  
time: 6.30pm

Where: Bishop's House,  
Abbey Square, Chester  
Tickets: £2 per person

Stalls, raffle, refreshments  
and entertainment. For  
tickets or more information  
contact: 01244 544159

For: The Children's Society

## *Luncheon Club*

The next lunch is at  
**12noon (for 12.30) in the Parish Hall on  
Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

No charge but donations welcome.

A tasty hot meal. All welcome, but please  
book a place if you haven't already by  
calling: Liz: 409414; Janet: 325529;  
or Christine: 335562

Future dates: 19th August; 16th Sept.

# Barbeque

at: East Garth,  
66 Tarvin Road,  
Littleton, CH3 7DF

**Friday 19th July 2019**

from 5pm 'til late.

- come when you can.

Food,  
Welcome drinks,  
Soft drinks,  
Games on the lawn,  
Raffle.

(Please bring your own  
wine, beer, etc.  
Glasses provided.)



**Tickets £12.50 each**

Children (under 14) £6 each

**Family Tickets £30**

from Christine Abrams. Tel: 01244 335562

*Sharing*  *God's Love*  
ST JAMES' CHURCH, CHRISTLETON

# ANNUAL FLOWER SERVICE



This year it will be on

**Sunday 14th July**  
at **10.45 am**

As usual it will be held outside if  
weather permits. The Rose Queen and  
her Retinue will attend and help with  
distribution of flowers.

A picnic will follow afterwards.





CHURCHES TOGETHER  
IN CHRISTLETON

**CHRISTLETON SUMMER TEAS  
IN THE METHODIST CHURCH  
SCHOOLROOM**

**EVERY SUNDAY AFTERNOON  
now until 29th SEPT 2019**

**2.30 pm to 4.30 pm  
EVERYONE WELCOME**



*PROCEEDS TO THE HOSPICE OF THE  
GOOD SHEPHERD*



**Messy Church**

Please note there will be no meeting in July or August.

Messy Church re-starts on  
15th September  
at 4pm in the Parish Hall.



**Churchyard Maintenance.**

**Next:  
Saturday 13th July  
& 10th August**

Once a month at 10.30am we hold a working party to help maintain our church yard. If you would like to join us just come along in old clothes with gloves and basic gardening tools (not essential). For further information please contact:

**Mike Lightfoot - Tel: 07787 421357**

**CHRISTLETON  
PARISH HALL**

Available for

Meetings, Parties, Functions, etc.  
The Hall has wheelchair access and specially adapted facilities.

For bookings please contact the  
Booking Secretary

**Janet Milton**

Tel: 325529 (before 8.00pm)  
email: christletonhall@gmail.com

# St James' Church Calendar

## July & August 2019

Every **Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday** and **Friday**: 9am: Morning Prayer

### JULY:

Tues 2nd:	7.30pm:	Home Discussion Group - at Sandheys, Plough Lane.
Wed 3rd:	10.45am:	United Holy Communion (Churches Together). Refreshments.
<b><u>Sunday 7th:</u></b>	8.15am:	Breakfast in the Parish Hall.
<i>(Trinity 3)</i>	9.00am:	Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall.
	10.45am:	Morning Worship.
	4.00pm:	Young Person's Service.
Tuesday 9th:	7.30pm:	Home Discussion Group - at Sandheys, Plough Lane.
Wed 10th:	10.45am:	Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments.
Saturday 13th:	10.30am:	Churchyard Working Party.
	2.00pm:	Christleton Village Show in the Parish Hall.
<b><u>Sunday 14th:</u></b>	9.00am:	Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall.
<i>(Trinity 4)</i>	10.45am:	Annual Flower Service. Outside if possible, followed by picnic.
	4.00pm:	Evening Prayer (BCP).
Monday 15th:	12.30pm:	Luncheon Club in the Parish Hall.
Tuesday 16th:	6.30pm:	Home Discussion Group Social with food, at Sandheys, Plough Lane. Note earlier time. Further details TBC. Last before summer break.
Wed 17th:	10.45am:	Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments.
Friday 19th:	5.00pm:	Bettie's Barbeque at East Garth, Tarvin Road, Littleton. See ad p8.
<b><u>Sunday 21st:</u></b>	9.00am:	Holy Communion. Refreshments and Produce Sale.
<i>(Trinity 5)</i>	10.45am:	Morning Worship with Communion.
	4.00pm:	(no service - Messy Church on holiday).
Wed 24th:	10.45am:	Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments.
	7.30pm:	PCC Meeting.
<b><u>Sunday 28th:</u></b>	9.00am:	Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall.
<i>(Trinity 6)</i>	10.45am:	Morning Worship.
	4.00pm:	Contemplative Communion Service.
Wed 31st:	10.45am:	Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments.

BCP means: A service following the Book of Common Prayer. (Traditional older style language.)

*All Calendar entries subject to correction or change. Check also the "What's On" calendar on the church website as this may show more up-to-date information.*

*Until the end of September there will be Summer Teas at the Methodist Church every Sunday at 2.30pm - see ad in this magazine.*

## **AUGUST:**

<b>Sunday 4th:</b> (Trinity 7)	8.15am: 9.00am: 10.45am: 4.00pm:	Breakfast in the Parish Hall. Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall. Morning Worship. Young Person's Service.
Wed 7th:	10.45am:	United Holy Communion (Churches Together). Refreshments.
Saturday 10th:	10.30am:	Churchyard Working Party.
<b>Sunday 11th:</b> (Trinity 8)	9.00am: 10.45am: 4.00pm:	Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall. Morning Worship. Evening Prayer (BCP).
Wed 14th:	10.45am:	Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments.
<b>Sunday 18th:</b> (Trinity 9)	9.00am: 10.45am: 4.00pm:	Holy Communion. Refreshments and Produce Sale. Morning Worship with Communion. (no service - Messy Church on holiday).
Monday 19th:	12.30pm:	Luncheon Club in the Parish Hall.
Wed 21st:	10.45am: 7.30pm:	Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments. PCC Meeting.
<b>Sunday 25th:</b> (Trinity 10)	9.00am: 10.45am: 4.00pm:	Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall. Morning Worship. Contemplative Communion Service.
Wed 28th:	10.45am:	Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments.

### **THE NEW REGULAR SERVICE PATTERN:**

	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday</b>
<b>9:00am</b>	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Holy Communion
<b>10:45am</b>	Morning Worship	Morning Worship with Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship
<b>4:00pm</b>	Young Person's Service	Evening Prayer (BCP)	Messy Church in Parish Hall. (Term time only)	Contemplative Communion	Taizé Service

**Advance Notice - Double Issue:** It is planned that the August issue of this magazine will be a double issue covering August and September, with a cover price of £1 instead of 50p. Once again we aim to include colour on the cover and make it rather more than 16 pages, but that all depends upon the content submitted to the editor for that edition. Copy date: 15th July. (*Editor*)

## **75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY** **NORMANDY D DAY LANDINGS.**

On the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> June 2019 we commemorated the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of an event which probably changed the course of world history, the D Day landings in Normandy. Most of the men taking part never revealed their story, and I've had the great privilege of researching the story of two former Christleton residents, Joe Bowers and Arthur Wright who both took part in the landings. The evidence comes from snippets the men told their families, books and papers of the period and actual evidence.

### **Sgt. Joe Bowers. 6 Commando**



Joe described the events of the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1944, the day that saw tens of thousands of British, Allied and American forces land on the beaches of Normandy. The aim was to take the war to the enemy who had entrenched themselves on the French Coast, with only the channel between them and England. Joe was in a group of commandos that reached Sword Beach at 5.30am, after a very rough crossing of the channel. He jumped into the sea from his landing craft up to his neck in water weighed down by his rucksack weighing 80lbs (36kg)

which contained extra ammunition for the guns they were carrying. This was on top of their personal weapon and ammunition. Joe told how some of the men around him went down, and were drowned due to the weight of their rucksacks.

Brigadier Lord Lovatt in command of 1<sup>st</sup> Special Service Brigade issued the order for the brigades role in the landings. The intention was that the 6<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division and 1<sup>st</sup> Special Service Brigade would be responsible for holding the left flank of the Allied bridgehead onto the beaches. The Commando Brigade consisted of No3, No4 and 6 Commando (Joe's unit) and 45 Royal Marine Commando were to land on the extreme flank of the Allied forces on Sword Beach, and to cut inland to join forces with two brigades dropped inland by glider & parachute. No 4 Commando were to destroy a battery and the garrison at Ouistreham and then join the brigade. The rest of the brigade, landing 30 minutes after No 4 Commando, were to fight through the enemy defences to reach and re-inforce brigades of the 6<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division meeting astride the bridges spanning the River Orne and the Caen Canal, now known as Pegasus Bridge.

Glider regiments of the Airborne Landing brigade would arrive later the same day, descending into the countryside cleared of the enemy.

We can only guess what Joe went through as he landed on the beach, but he described going across Pegasus Bridge after the airborne troops had taken it, and then across crater strewn roads towards Caen. He spoke about this part of the battle taking three days. They met German resistance in front and to the side of them. He recalled that there were about 100 commandos in his troop and they destroyed German defences as they went. We learn that having captured their objectives No4 Commando dug in on a ridge of high ground to the east of the River Orne. Not long after they arrived and started digging-in, the gliders of 6<sup>th</sup> Airborne Brigade began landing to their rear. Expecting a German counter

attack, protective trenches were completed by nightfall. For two days no attack came, but late in the night of the 8<sup>th</sup> June German infantry were spotted advancing through the nearby woods. Holding their fire until the last minute the Germans were driven back, but this was just the beginning of the fight back and on the 9<sup>th</sup> June the Germans were seen on the road behind No4 Commando.

After a short battle when D Troop led by Captain Porteous engaged the enemy, and even though they were outnumbered two to one, they charged, killing some and forcing the rest to withdraw. On the 10<sup>th</sup> June, 4 Commandos position was under heavy artillery & mortar bombardment. Earlier 6 Commando had been heavily bombed, which was followed up by a ground assault that lasted until mid day. Fighting continued most of that day and was taking the toll of the commandos. E Troop only had 20 men left from a compliment of 65. Heavy attacks from the Germans continued for the rest of the day, and there was much hand to hand combat. In those few days since landing on the beaches No4 Commando had also lost 50% of its men. Before the landings 1<sup>st</sup> Special Service Brigade had been told that they would be withdrawn in a few days after the Allies had broken out from the beachhead. Problems whilst capturing Caen meant that the commandos and airborne division had to remain to secure the left flank along the River Orne, They did not get relieved for 82 days, during which they not only held the left flank, but on 18<sup>th</sup> August started their own break out, with No4 Commando leading, they liberated Bavent followed by Beaumont en Auge, Breuzville & Bonilleville. Here they stayed until 6<sup>th</sup> September when the brigade was withdrawn back to the UK for 14 days leave.

#### **Quarter Master Sergeant Arthur Wright. Royal Scots Grey's**

Arthur Wright was a professional soldier initially enlisting in the Royal Armoured Corps in 1941, and served with distinction in the Middle East, North Africa, North West Europe and the British Army of the Rhine. During that

time he became a close confidant of Bernard Montgomery, and was one of his close protection officers serving with him throughout the many campaigns from El Alemein to Berlin and who was present at the signing of the Armistice on Luneborg Heath in 1945.



Arthur  
Wright

It is rather ironic that whilst serving with Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery in one of the first beach tank landings on the night of 6<sup>th</sup> June in Normandy, Arthur was injured when a German grenade thrown from behind a hedge from cliffs on Sword Beach hit his tank. The tank exploded and several of his men were killed, but Arthur was rescued and repatriated on a small boat back across the channel to a hospital in England, to recuperate. On his recovery, he gained command of a new tank on 27<sup>th</sup> July and re entered the campaign through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany, where he remained until well after hostilities to March 1952.

In 1957 he married Gertrude Shroeder, an attractive young German lady who had been a translator/interpreter serving the British Army in Magdeburg, a city in east Berlin, in 1945. She had been one of the backroom staff at Luneborg Heath when the armistice was signed. Towards the end of his military service, they moved to Christleton to Home Close, by co-incidence just around the corner from Joe Bowers former home in Sandrock Road.

Gertrude had a very much loved younger brother Peter and was really upset when at the age of 17yrs he was made to train for war with the Hitler Youth movement. At 18 he was conscripted into the German Navy and after 6 months training was sent to join a destroyer. His first view of the sea was when he joined his ship. After less than a year's service and only one break at home, Peter then aged 19, was killed off the coast of Normandy on D Day when the destroyer he was travelling in was sunk as it was travelling back to its home port in Germany, not aware that the D Day landings were taking place.

On a personal note my father Trevor, serving with the South Wales Borders, a landing craft driver, also landed in France on Sword Beach on D Day +1. He survived the battles through France, Belgium and Holland, including the battle of Arnhem, and from 17<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> September 1944 for Njimegen Bridge, and remained in Holland to help repatriate the country until September 1946.

*David Cummings*

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### **NATURE NOTES - JUNE 2019:**

The recent wet weather has created havoc to the wildlife scene in the village. After an excellent early show of butterflies including holly blues, peacock, brimstone, small tortoiseshell, and red admiral, I haven't seen any for several weeks. Many bird species have had young, but they often look bedraggled when seen around the area. There have been some good breeding successes with a family of swans at Walk Mill producing 5 cygnets, and young oystercatchers, and lapwing seen on the lake and land at Hockenhull. The emergence of many young buzzards can be seen in the skies above us, and I've heard of several young woodpeckers being seen in gardens, together with juvenile jays. Pied wagtails, with their delightful flicking tail movements, have also been quite numerous in and around the village. House martins are doing well at Walk Mill, but are relatively

scarce in the village, and there are fewer swallows and swifts than usual.

The Legion meadow has seen more wild flowers appear this year as the area becomes established, and I'm delighted that several common spotted orchids have emerged again this year. The main flowering plants to be



Common spotted orchid. (Violet in colour)

seen are a blue cranesbill, a member of the geranium family, yellow rattle, and red clover. The bird song from the trees surrounding the meadow has been superb, with blackbirds, song thrushes and black caps vying to be the top singer.

Damsel and dragonflies are now very active, and a new species for me has emerged at Walk Mill pond, a red eyed blue damselfly. Hundreds of common blue and blue tailed damselflies are flying at present, many mating on the wing, and seen laying eggs in the reeds at the pond margins. A 4 spotted chaser, broad bodied chaser and a southern hawkler were the first of the dragon flies to be seen, whilst the most attractive banded agrion damselflies are flying over the river Gowy, often landing on the flowering water crowfoot which is the most common reed to flower there. The otters on our stretch of the Gowy have clearly got young, and regular spraints are to be found under the middle bridge,

although rather worryingly again this year there are few signs of water vole to be seen.

The one significant fact about our meadows at Hockenhull this year is that the vegetation is getting taller and thicker each year. Some people say there is no such thing as "global warming" but I have seen emergent vegetation getting taller and taller each year.

30 years ago I could take children and adults from the village to see orchids on the wet meadow and the grasses were then knee high. Now the same area has vegetation that is growing well over my head height, and I cannot get into the area to check on flowers without extreme difficulty.

*David Cummings*

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## **WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**

Members of the St James' Church Choir Boys football team, circa 1964. (*Alf Croston*)

Mike Metcalf and Barry Ashworth present the captain of St. James, Christleton, Nevil Croston, with the championship trophy. Members of the team and reserves looking on are: Peter Thomas, Stuart Broom, Roger Croston, Geoffrey Matthias, Tommy Jones, Graham Dodd, Michael Smith, John Whalley, Neil Carline, Roger Langmead, Philip Morris, Ian Ankers and Robin Sprot.



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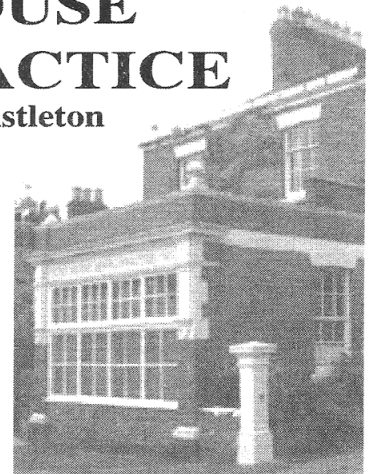
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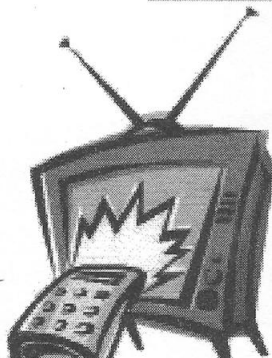
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## **CHRISTLETON HIGH SCHOOL:**

Now that we are approaching the end of the Summer term, I do hope that you can read your copy of the Christleton Parish Magazine, in the sunshine! (see cover - ed.)

Every year at Christleton High School seems to be getting busier as more opportunities are being made available to our students to broaden their educational experience. A large number of trips have taken place over the year, both in the UK and overseas including those to Sicily, New York and Washington, Belgium, Normandy, CERN in Switzerland. I am always grateful to staff who give up their time to lead the trips, in particular, our Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions with large cohorts of students taking part.

In Sport, I am pleased to report that the U16 Boys' football 8-a-side, the U16 netball, the U14 Boys' football, the U14 netball, the U12 netball, the Year 9 Boys' football 11-a-side and the Year 7 Boys' football 7-a-side teams are all Chester & District Champions. The U16 Boys' football and the U12 netball teams are Cheshire Champions and the U16 Girls' Football team are Cheshire Runners up.

This summer's performance of 'Annie!' by lower school students was a big hit! The cast of more than 100 played to packed houses and our pupils in our feeder primary schools. Members of the community also came in to watch the performance with refreshments served by Year 10 students on the Food Nutrition and Preparation course. We are always pleased to showcase the talents of our wonderful students. (*Indeed, wonderful - Ed.*)



As mentioned in my last report, I am pleased that the work on the school's fire safety systems is now complete and the school looks forward to improving its site security over the year, the result of another successful bid.

I have also been working closely with the Highways department, on plans to create a safer route for students and other pedestrians who cross the A41 to Pearl Lane, leading to the village of Christleton. It is hoped that plans will be passed in time for work to take place during the summer vacation.

I am sure that many of you will know that after Christmas, I made the decision to retire from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 having served thirty five years in the teaching profession. During my fifteen years at Christleton High School, as Deputy Headteacher and for the last four as Headteacher, I have seen and worked through many changes. I have also enjoyed working with colleagues in the Science department, sharing my love of Physics, at GCSE level.

In this, the school's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, I am delighted that Mr Darran Jones will take the role as Headteacher when the new academic year begins in September. I know that he will have support from everyone at the school and wish him success and happiness in the years to come.

Finally, I wish students every success in their A Level and GCSE examination results due out in August. They have worked so hard and deserve the very best.

*A D Stenhouse, Headteacher  
Christleton High School*



## **CHRISTLETON WI**

Meets on the 2nd Wednesday each month.  
7.15pm in the Parish Hall

New members welcome.  
Details from Elizabeth Inall (Tel: 336500)

**Next meeting: Wed 10th July  
'Chutney and Cheer' (Melanie Latham)**

(No meeting in August, restarts Sept.)

## PARISH CONTACTS:

### RECTOR:

**Rev'd Dr Stefan Collier**

Tel: 01244 335663

[rector.christleton@gmail.com](mailto:rector.christleton@gmail.com)

(Day off is normally Thursday)

### OTHER CLERGY IN THE PARISH:

**Rev'd Gill Hibbert**

Tel: 01244 336544

[gillianhibbert582@btinternet.com](mailto:gillianhibbert582@btinternet.com)

**Rev'd Elizabeth Inall**

Tel: 01244 336500

[elizabeth@inall.co.uk](mailto:elizabeth@inall.co.uk)

### PARISH ADMINISTRATOR, PCC SECRETARY & HALL BOOKINGS:

**Janet Milton**

Tel: 01244 325529

For the PCC, the weekly notices and initial enquiries for weddings, funerals, baptisms:  
[pa.saintjames@gmail.com](mailto:pa.saintjames@gmail.com)

For Parish Hall bookings:  
[christletonhall@gmail.com](mailto:christletonhall@gmail.com)

### CHURCHWARDENS:

**Bettie Gilliatt**

Tel: 01244 335645

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for either warden:  
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### ST JAMES' CHURCH WEBSITE:

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

## MAGAZINE:

### EDITOR:

The editor is: **Brian Inall**

Tel: 01244 336500 [brian@inall.co.uk](mailto:brian@inall.co.uk)

*We are building our Communications and Magazine team. If you think you can help in any way please contact Brian Inall.*

*Deadline for submissions for the August/Sept magazine will be: **Monday 15th July.***

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The Magazine subscription is currently £6 per year (renewal is in April) with copies delivered to your home, or pick up from church. Please check with us whether your home is on one of our delivery routes. If you don't subscribe you are invited to buy individual copies each month from the back of St James' Church. If all the spare copies have gone then please ask - we will be pleased to help.

Thank you for reading our magazine. We hope you enjoy it. Feedback is always welcome so please let the editor know what you think about the magazine.

Do also look at our church website for more information including a 'live' calendar.



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## PRAYER WALK - JUNE 8th:



As part of the global prayer movement "Thy Kingdom come", a small group of parishioners walked around the wonderful village of Christleton, stopping at significant points to pray and take stock of God's wonderful world and to help us to listen

to what God is planning for our community. The theme for this year was JOY.

We met at St James, then took the short cut to the Legion Meadow - listening to the wonderful songs of the birds and the sound of the traffic from our nearby major roads. We delighted in the beautiful flowers and grasses planted by volunteers in the meadow. We remembered in prayer the comradeship of the British Legion and the work it now does with those servicemen and women still involved in world conflicts.



The Children's Playground gave us time to pray for the children of our Parish and their carers. It allowed us to reflect on the part played by the Parish Council in the maintenance of the playground. We remembered the work of Save the Family in Cotton Edmunds.

We celebrated health and fitness at the Cricket/Football Pitch and the Bike track. We were encouraged in prayer not to neglect our spiritual health as part of our well being. The Pit gave us the opportunity to pray for God's gift of nature and to relish its diversity and the opportunity it gives to provide joy and solace. We were able to pray for the volunteers who help maintain this wonderful site.

At the Methodist Church, we were able to give thanks for the joy of the Churches Together movement. Our prayer focussed on our aspirations for the continued improvement and understanding of different faiths to bring together "one hope, one faith, one Lord".

The Churchyard allowed the group to remember those we have lost and to remember the joy they brought to our lives. Time was taken for private prayer.

On our return to St James, we gave thanks for the joy of our fellowship.

*Pat Powell and David Bull*

## WI BIRTHDAY:

Christleton WI celebrated its 95th birthday with a birthday party meal in the Parish Hall on June 12th. The birthday cake was cut by Brenda Roscoe who has been a member of Christleton WI the longest. The toast to the branch was made by the current president, Linda Rowe.



The next WI meeting will be on July 10th at 7.15 pm in the Parish Hall when the subject will be 'Chutney and Cheer' with Melanie Latham.

After the summer break we will resume again on September 11th. New members are always welcome to come along.

If you would like to know more then please call Elizabeth Inall, Tel: 336500.

### **STOP PRESS!**

*The Jazz Night fundraiser event 22nd June was a sell out and raised about £600. Thanks to Christine Abrams and her team, and to Jig Saw Jazz. A good evening was had!*