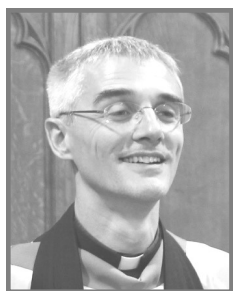


## PARISH MAGAZINE ~ FEBRUARY 2020

**Happy New Year to you all.** 2019 was a busy year at St James and, with less than perfect 2020 vision, this year is likely to be just as busy. Proclaiming the Gospel, sharing God's love and continuing to adapt the church to the needs of today and tomorrow without damaging our precious heritage. Help and support is very welcome to enable us to achieve even more.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS?

I was interested to learn the United Nations, back in 2007, have adopted the 20<sup>th</sup> February as the World Day of Social Justice.



As an irreverent aside to start, it seems there is a day for everything these days. I boldly strode into my kitchen to announce to my lovely wife: Good news! The, *cough and some muttering*, have adopted the 13 January (when I was writing this) as the World Day of Stefan. It

involves..... but before I could finish I was told to go away in no uncertain terms. Clearly, it's harder than I thought to adopt a day of the year. Where was I?

World Day of Social Justice. A recognition of its critical importance to creating communities of peace and development. It's something church communities have, of course, been interested in for thousands of years, and for me speaks to their veracity. Arguably it is the reality of social justice that is one of the central charisms of any church. We might recall the prophet Micah, from the time between the accession of Kings Jothan (740BC) and the death of King Hezekiah (686BC), saying "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Mic 6.8)

It is our listening to Micah today that lies behind our church's sustained commitment to our local foodbank and the wonderful community lunches it offers to all

without regard to who they are or whether they can afford it or not. And we sense, with excitement, Micah's words providing us with new direction for this coming year as a church community.

To increasingly be a church with an outward looking focus. A church which is deeply rooted in the local community, working in partnership with other denominations, faiths, secular groups and networks. A church passionate and prophetic about justice and peace, locally and globally. A church which makes connections between faith and daily living, and a church which responds to human need by loving service.

It's an exciting journey for us to travel, hopefully with many others. But it is not without a key danger. For the temptation to not walk humbly with your God on this journey is strong, and this I believe would be a huge mistake for us or indeed any other church. For the former reduces our Christian faith to simple morality – which it is not, while the latter points to a Christian faith which truly transforms lives, transforms the communities we live among, and will create communities of peace. This is why while noticing an impulse to be a church with an outward looking focus we also notice an increasing desire to be a church which is a 'House of Prayer', for we can't be one without the other.

If any of this sounds exciting to you, we would love to hear from you and welcome your partnership in the months and years ahead.

With love and prayers, Stefan

## PARISH CONTACTS:

### RECTOR:

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Tel: 01244 335663

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

(The Rector's day off is normally Saturday)

### 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)

### CHURCHWARDENS:

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**Tina Lightfoot** Tel: 07557 352592

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[churchwardens@stjameschristleton.org.uk](mailto:churchwardens@stjameschristleton.org.uk)

### MUSICAL DIRECTOR:

**Hannah Williams**

Tel: 01244 675578 or 07399 147664

[stjamesmusicmatters@gmail.com](mailto:stjamesmusicmatters@gmail.com)

### PCC SECRETARY:

**Janet Milton** Tel: 01244 325529

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### PARISH ADMINISTRATOR:

(including the Weekly Notices)

**Marj Keech** Tel: 07487 642912

[office@stjameschristleton.org.uk](mailto:office@stjameschristleton.org.uk)

### PARISH HALL BOOKINGS:

**Maria Norbury** Tel: 01244 335499

[maria\\_norbury@btinternet.com](mailto:maria_norbury@btinternet.com)

Also: enquiries & bookings online via website.

### WEDDINGS, FUNERALS AND BAPTISMS:

Via website, or the Administrator or the Rector.

### VERGER:

**John Milton** Tel: 01244 325529

## MAGAZINE:

### EDITOR:

The editor is: **Brian Inall**

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

*Deadline for submissions for the March magazine will be: **Tuesday 11th February.***

### COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING:

**John Eccles**

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### DISTRIBUTION & SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Joce Platel**

Tel: 01244 332466 [chrisandjoce@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chrisandjoce@hotmail.co.uk)

The Magazine subscription is currently £6 per year and runs from April to March. Subscribers have a copy delivered, or they may collect from church, and electronic delivery is also an option. If you don't subscribe then 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. Contributions are welcome and more details about this are available from the editor.

Do also look at our church website for back copies of this magazine and more information including a 'live' calendar.

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### ST JAMES' CHURCH WEBSITE:

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

### ST JAMES ON TWITTER:



**@StJChristleton**

### CHRISTLETON VILLAGE WEBSITE:

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

Do you wish to support St James' Church with a donation?

**No cash?**  
No Problem



**CARD IT!**  
£5, £10 or £15

You'll find the Contactless Card Terminal at the back of the church. Please ask if you need help using it.

## **FROM THE TREASURER:**



Dear me, Christmas has gone already! My most wonderful Christmas present this year was an extremely generous donation to fund the full work of Bells Restoration. The bells are such a fantastic heritage for our church. What a fabulous gift!

Last year, I was given a contactless terminal – a great innovation, a step into the unknown. Despite a slow start, you'll be pleased to know it has received £417 in this last year, well in excess of its rental charge.

The extra gift of a legacy in October was again a great bonus.

The legacy and bells (restricted) donation have ensured that our balance at the end of the year remains in credit, a figure of £22,228. You ask, therefore – should I be worried, or indeed should we? Should I be even considering the launching a stewardship campaign? Why am I constantly going on like a gramophone record about the benefits of the envelope scheme, gift aid and standing orders?!

We cannot expect regular legacies although there are leaflets available on this point! We cannot expect such generous one off donations, albeit restricted in use to a particular project.

Without these, our overall balance is in deficit of £10,101.

To explain this, the figures do include expenditure on the Parish hall blinds and repair and protection of a stained glass window from fund-raised designated monies, also the VDUs from restricted monies and the hymn books from designated monies.

Taking this into account, our general income is only exceeded by our general expenditure by £917.

That is the reason we need more income on a regular basis. There is absolutely no slack in the system for unexpected eventualities.

Wonderful, responsible stewards of our church – next year it will take £245 per day to keep the church open. This includes utilities, vergers salary and parish share. It does not include our fabulous new organist, nor any church running expenses.

While you are considering your diets and New Year resolutions – this is surely Food for Thought! I thank you so very much for all your support which allows me to enjoy counting and playing with the figures. Especially for your pastoral care in my post op recovery which could not have been surpassed.

Happy New Year!

*Liz McClure*

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## **NOW WE ARE EIGHT:**

I have always been aware that London is a big place and that in common with cities throughout the world, it continues to grow, absorbing places formerly on the outskirts into the larger conurbation. Some areas reflect something of their earlier identity in the place name. Thus we have Highgate "Village" and Dulwich "Village". Through judicious planning and conservation schemes such areas have managed to preserve some aspects of their origin, making them interesting places to live and to visit. Along with the sheer size of London goes a population that is counted in millions, benefiting not only from those born there but also from those from all over the world who have come to make a home. As a regular visitor, I do not need to be reminded of such facts. As I step off the train in Euston, I am immediately aware of a way of life that moves to a different beat of the drum. Fortunately I am quite comfortable with that.

As part of London's millions, there are of course children but I was not aware that there are at least 76,000 who are around eight years old and in Year 3 of primary education. I know this because they are looking at me from their 3,128 class photographs mounted on the walls of the Tate Museum of Art, commonly known as Tate Britain. Each class photograph is identical in size and framing, showing the children seated around their class teacher.

The exhibition is the work of the Turner prize winning artist and Oscar winning film maker Steve McQueen. His film "12 years a slave" is something that will be remembered beyond his lifetime. The promotional literature describes the exhibition as "Epic portrait of London's Year 3 pupils. One of the most ambitious portraits of children ever undertaken in the UK". Looking at the banks of photographs rising some six metres up the walls of adjoining halls of the Tate, it is not possible to argue with that. Here are the pupils

from state primaries, independent schools, faith schools, pupil referral units and the home educated photographed in a milestone year of their development. Over the months ahead, pupils featured will be visiting the Tate with their schools. They will see the photographs close up and take part in activities that explore the exhibition's themes.

Confronted by this awesome display of smiling children, reactions tumble one over the other. Do I, as McQueen suggests, concentrate on every detail? "That child in the front row, the teacher with a particular haircut they had freshly done that day, the fire extinguisher - what ever it is, it's part of the narrative of the piece". Well if I do that I notice that some classes are small, some big, some are in a school uniform, some not, some seem to be all Caucasian, others a multitude of ethnicities, and that the majority of the teachers are female. Some photographs are so high up that is not possible to see who is in them. Others are so low down that they can only be viewed by stooping down. And what about the overwhelming number of them? Already these simple basic observations take me off into the world of sociology with all the complex consequences of the presence of these children for the UK and indeed the world. So many metaphors for life and existence. Along with children everywhere they demand care and opportunity. Indeed all that my life has given me.

As I leave the Tate, I am confronted by an audio visual tableau cascading down the flight of steps leading up to the entrance. The glaciers and snow are melting with a loud crack and water trickles downwards. Yes, the consequences of global warming may well feature in the future lives of these eight year old children but, for the moment, I simply thank God for the creation of these wonderful young humans and pray that they will be allowed to flourish.

*Jim Hawkes*

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## **LET'S EAT GRANDMA!**

It is with profound regret that we learned just last December of the closure of the Apostrophe Protection Society (APS).

## **"AP'S CLOSED"**

APS was started in 2001 by John Richards with the specific aim of preserving the correct use of this

currently much abused punctuation mark in all forms of text written in the English Language. At the age of 96 he wishes to cut back on his commitments but also because fewer organisations and individuals are now caring about the correct use of the apostrophe in the English Language. He says: "that ignorance and laziness present in modern times have won!"

This should also be extended to punctuation in general. In the humorous title at the top ambiguity is intended and demonstrates that the comma is vital if lives are worth saving: Let's eat, Grandma! You may also recall the violent Panda in the café who 'Eats, shoots and leaves'. However, although most punctuation is in decline we note that the exclamation mark is used more than ever to express surprise, emphasis and textual shouting, to the point where only one is seldom sufficient!!!

We at St James have an interesting apostrophe issue. We are the church of St James. Therefore we write it as St James' Church, denoting belonging. Most churches do this: St Mary's, St Peter's, All Saints'. However, if we say "we go to St James in Christleton", omitting the word church but nevertheless implying it, should we use an apostrophe or not? I think the jury may be out on that one.

But do we say St James or St James-es? That park in London near Buck House is "St James's Park" with an extra "s" just to add further confusion. Maybe technically we should do that here to emphasise that there's only one Saint James to which we belong and not multiple saints called James. Oh dear - this is getting rather complex!

In the light of the demise of the APS and knowing that English is a constantly developing language should we strive to correctly use punctuation according to established rules? I think so as clear communication is important and punctuation aids clarity. However, as we all know, social media has made punctuation more difficult and too slow to key in, being replaced by abbreviations and the emojis.....



I've heard about people who are tempted to carry a marker pen around so that they can correct punctuation

errors, especially apostrophes, on signs they encounter in the high street. I've resisted that so far.

*All Carrot's Half Price!*  
*Gentlemen's Hairdresser*  
*Ladies fashions*  
*Open Sunday's 11am - 4pm*  
*Childrens' Toys*  
*Gent's Outfitters*

and of course the confusion of its and it's.

*It's colour is red.*  
*Any colour as long as its red.*

If you spot any signs like this that can raise a wry smile, then please take a photo either before or after correction and send the picture to me. I may print some in a future edition.

H&S Warning: Beware, you correct other people's signs at your own risk of course - perhaps I should say:

'Dont blame me !!'



Good spotting.

Editor.

*Luncheon Club*

## 2014—2019

The splendid Christmas Lunch held on 16th December last year concluded the sixth year of our continuous monthly community lunches under the 'Luncheon Club' banner.

Around 70 people sat down to eat a tasty traditional festive meal which was supplemented with carol singing courtesy of Hannah and led by David & Beryl. Crackers were pulled, silly hats worn, bad jokes exchanged and a chocolate gift given out to each person.

The kitchen team do a great job despite not really knowing how many people will come, although we do run a booking system.

Good fun and fellowship is had, but over the years we remember those who used to come, but have now died or fallen too ill to travel.

By the time you read this we will have started our 7th year with a Scottish themed lunch.

Although we don't charge for the lunch, we invite donations and those who are able have been most generous over the years. In every year we have made a surplus which has previously gone to St James' Church to help refurbish the Parish Hall, but this past year has gone to general church funds to give the church more flexibility about where to spend it.

For 2019 the Luncheon Club financial summary is as follows:

Opening balance:	£ 87
Food costs:	£1441
Non-food costs:	£ 130
Donations received:	£2525
Paid to the church:	£ 910
Closing balance:	£ 131

So you can see how well we are doing!

Thank you to all who buy the food and cook, who set tables, who serve, who clear up afterwards, who give lifts to friends who can't travel very easily, who welcome guests, and especially to you who come and tell us you've had a great time with great food.

See you soon,

*Brian Inall*



Christmas Lunch

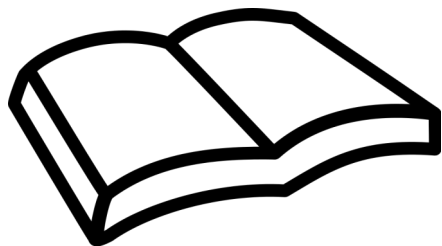
## CONGRATULATIONS:



To: **Ben & Jean Williams.**

Ben was 90 in January, and Jean is 90 in February. All their friends send love and congratulations on their birthdays and wish them well.

## FROM THE REGISTERS:



With thanks to Ann White who is gathering this information:

**Weddings:** None

**Baptisms:** None

**Funerals:** 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019: William King  
(At St James' Church)

## *Luncheon Club*

The next lunch is at  
12noon (for 12.30) in the Parish Hall on  
**Monday 17th February 2020**

No charge but donations welcome.

A tasty hot 2 course meal plus tea/coffee. All are welcome. It is helpful for catering if you book a place, if you haven't already, by calling:  
Liz: 409414; Janet: 325529; or Christine: 335562

**Future dates: 16th March; 20th April**

## Fundraising Events:

You will recall a coffee morning 'with extra ingredients' held last September. The Christmas produce made from those donated ingredients and sold 7th December along with crafts, and the proceeds of a Wreath Making Workshop that same day, all totalled a magnificent **£1,000** for church funds. Thank you to everyone involved in organising, making, and to those who attended the workshop and bought the crafts and produce.

## What's coming up in 2020?

Bettie Gilliatt will be having her usual 'Pancake' event for a local charity at her house in Littleton on Shrove Tuesday (25th February).

The Supper & Ceilidh (music organised by Hannah) will be on Saturday 29th February. Tickets now on sale—see ad on Page 13. Any proceeds to the church.

Philip Chidell (violinist) will be the star spot for our Spring Supper Concert on Sat 25th April. Ticket details nearer the time. Proceeds to the church.

Jig Saw Jazz will be playing for us again at our Jazz Night on Saturday 20th June. Ticket details nearer the time. Proceeds to the church.



## **CHRISTLETON WI**

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

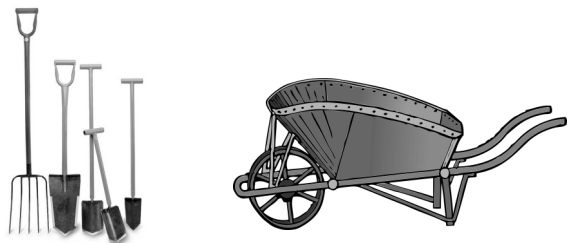
New members welcome.

Details from Elizabeth Inall (Tel: 336500)

### **Next meetings:**

**12th Feb:** "Experiences of an Evacuee"  
(Jean Williams & Pat Hawkes)

**11th Mar:** "Storyhouse—our newest theatre"  
(Alex Clifton)



## **Churchyard Maintenance**

**Next:**

**Saturday 22nd February**

**also: 21st March; 18th April**

Once a month at 10.30am we hold a working party to help maintain our churchyard. If you would like to join us just come along in old clothes with gloves and basic gardening tools (not essential). Soup & bread lunch generally provided. 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.

Our Parish Hall Bookings Secretary is

Maria Norbury: Tel: 01244 335499.

*maria\_norbury@btinternet.com*

You can also make initial enquiries and bookings via the church website.

**<https://www.stjameschristleton.org.uk>**



## **Messy Church**

Next Messy Church is:

**16th February**

**at 4pm in the Parish Hall.**

**Then: 15th March.**

## **Weekly Home Discussion Group**

(Dates & Venues)

Tuesdays 7.30pm

Feb 4th: Grange House, Village Road

Feb 11th: Sandheys, Plough Lane

Feb 18th: Grange House, Village Road

Feb 25th: Sandheys, Plough Lane

Mar 3rd: Grange House, Village Road

Mar 10th: Sandheys, Plough Lane

Mar 17th: Grange House, Village Road

Mar 24th: Sandheys, Plough Lane

Mar 31st: Grange House, Village Road

Apr 7th: Easter—no meeting

Apr 14th: Easter—no meeting

Apr 21st: Sandheys, Plough Lane

More info: Chris Platel or Elizabeth Inall

# St James' Church Calendar

## FEBRUARY 2020:

Every weekday **Monday to Friday:** 9am: Morning Prayer

Every **Thursday:** **4pm-5pm:** Church Band rehearsal; **5pm-6pm:** Church Choir rehearsal.

**Sunday 2nd:** from 8am: Parish Breakfast in the Parish Hall.  
(Candlemas) 9.00am: —NO SERVICE — PLEASE COME TO 10.45am.  
(Presentation of 10.45am: Holy Communion with Bishop Keith. Refreshments.  
Christ in Temple) 4.00pm: (No service in church)

Tuesday 4th: 7.30pm: Weekly Home Discussion Group at Grange House, Village Road.  
Wednesday 5th: 10.45am: United Holy Communion (Churches Together). Refreshments.

**Sunday 9th:** 9.00am: Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall.  
(3rd before Lent) 10.45am: Morning Worship. Refreshments.  
4.00pm: Evening Prayer / Evensong (BCP).

Tuesday 11th: 7.30pm: Weekly Home Discussion Group at Sandheys, Plough Lane.  
Wednesday 12th: 10.45am: Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments.

**Sunday 16th:** 9.00am: Holy Communion. Refreshments and Produce Sale.  
(2nd before Lent) 10.45am: Morning Worship with Communion. Refreshments.  
4.00pm: Messy Church in the Parish Hall.

Monday 17th: 12.30pm: Luncheon Club in the Parish Hall.  
Tuesday 18th: 7.30pm: Weekly Home Discussion Group at Grange House, Village Road.  
Wednesday 19th: 10.45am: Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments.

**Sunday 23rd:** 9.00am: Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall.  
(Next before Lent) 10.45am: Morning Worship. Refreshments.  
4.00pm: Contemplative Communion Service.

Tuesday 25th: 7.30pm: Weekly Home Discussion Group at Sandheys, Plough Lane.  
Wednesday 26th: 10.45am: Holy Communion (BCP). Imposition of Ashes. Refreshments.  
(Ash Wednesday) 7.30pm: Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes .

Saturday 29th: 7.00pm: Supper & Ceilidh with the band 'Leap of Faith'. Parish Hall.  
Ticket only. Tickets from Joce Platel & PCC members. See publicity.

Bell ringing practice is every **Tuesday** evening. (Contact: Nikki Dromgoole)

Church cleaning is every **Thursday** morning. (Contact: John Milton)

Every **Thursday:** **4pm-5pm:** Church Band rehearsal; **5pm-6pm:** Church Choir rehearsal.

BCP means: A service following THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER. (Traditional older style language.)

Other services generally follow COMMON WORSHIP with modern 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.*

## **MARCH 2020:**

Every weekday **Monday to Friday:** 9am: Morning Prayer

Every **Thursday:** 4pm-5pm: Church Band rehearsal; 5pm-6pm: Church Choir rehearsal.

**Sunday 1st:** from 8am: Parish Breakfast in the Parish Hall.  
(1st of Lent) 9.00am: Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall.  
10.45am: Morning Worship. Refreshments.  
4.00pm: (No service in church)

Tuesday 3rd: 7.30pm: Weekly Home Discussion Group at Grange House, Village Road.

Wednesday 4th: 10.45am: United Holy Communion (Churches Together). Refreshments.

**Sunday 8th:** 9.00am: Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall.  
(2nd of Lent) 10.45am: Morning Worship. Refreshments.  
4.00pm: Evening Prayer / Evensong (BCP).

Tuesday 10th: 7.30pm: Weekly Home Discussion Group at Sandheys, Plough Lane.

Wednesday 11th: 10.45am: Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments.

**Sunday 15th:** 9.00am: Holy Communion. Refreshments and Produce Sale in Parish Hall.  
(3rd of Lent) 10.45am: Morning Worship with Communion. Refreshments.  
4.00pm: Messy Church in the Parish Hall.

Monday 16th: 12.30pm: Luncheon Club in the Parish Hall.

Tuesday 17th: 7.30pm: Weekly Home Discussion Group at Grange House, Village Road.

Wednesday 19th: 10.45am: Holy Communion (BCP). Refreshments.

**Sunday 22nd:** 9.00am: Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall.  
(Mothering 10.45am: Morning Worship. Refreshments.  
Sunday) 4.00pm: Contemplative Communion Service.

Tuesday 24th: 7.30pm: Weekly Home Discussion Group at Sandheys, Plough Lane.

Wednesday 25th: 10.45am: Holy Communion (BCP).

7.30pm: PCC Meeting.

**Sunday 29th:** **Summer Time Begins—Clocks go forward 1 hour**  
(5th of Lent) 9.00am: Holy Communion. Refreshments after in Parish Hall.  
(Passiontide) 10.45am: Morning Worship. Refreshments.  
4.00pm: Taizé Style Service.

Tuesday 31st: 7.30pm: Weekly Home Discussion Group at Grange House, Village Road.

BCP means: A service following THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER. (Traditional older style language.)

Other services generally follow COMMON WORSHIP with modern language, except where indicated otherwise.

*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.*

### **CHURCH ANNUAL MEETINGS**

The annual meetings, including the main APCM, will take place on Sunday 26th April.

Time & venue TBC.

## THE REGULAR PATTERN OF SERVICES IS SHOWN BELOW:

Please note that actual services may differ from this pattern because of special events and festivals, so please check calendars and notices, including the on-line calendar on the website.

	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday
9:00am	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Holy Communion
10:45am	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship with Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Morning Worship
4:00pm	(No Service)	Evening Prayer (BCP)	Messy Church in Parish Hall. (Term time only)	Contemplative Communion	Taizé Service

**SERVICE STYLES:** *9am* is in a traditional style with sermon, organ, and often a small robed choir. *10.45am* is in a more contemporary style with a sermon/talk, using a wider range of traditional and modern hymns and songs, with the words on a display screen, and music mostly played on a piano keyboard or by a small music group.

## SPECIAL SERVICES COMING UP IN WHICH YOU MAY BE INTERESTED

Sun 2nd Feb: A combined Holy Communion at 10.45am with **Bishop Keith** (Bishop of Birkenhead and acting Bishop of Chester). (Note: no 9am service)

Wed 26th Feb: 7.30pm—a service for **Ash Wednesday** with the **Imposition of Ashes**.

Sun 22nd Mar: 10.45am —celebrating **Mothering Sunday**.

Sun 5th April: 10.45am —combined service for **Palm Sunday**.

### Holy week:

9th April: 7.30pm **Maundy Thursday** - meal in the Parish Hall then continuing with a watch in church.

10th April: 2pm **Good Friday**—the Last Hour.

### Easter Day:

12th April: 9am and 10.45am services celebrating the risen Christ. (Note: no 4pm service)

## THE HISTORY FILE

### BRICKMAKING IN CHRISTLETON.

A month or so ago I wrote a short article about brick making in Christleton as part of a revised publication about Christleton Pit. Several people have asked me since where the bricks were made, so I'll try to expand the story, helped by the fact that a pit from a former brick yard site on Grosvenor Estate Land at Cotton Edmunds has recently been found full of water (pictured). In the 1970's evidence was found of the

remains of a brick kiln at the back of Christleton Pit, indicated perhaps by the name "Bricky Lane" that runs alongside it. The hand made bricks produced were made out of the local clay, probably dug close by.

The technique for making bricks started with clay being dug in the Autumn and left to weather and break up. In Spring it was mixed together using spades, and trodden down & sieved to remove stones and impurities. It was then moulded in wooden sided moulds, dried in open shelved sheds, and fired in wood or coal fired kilns. The local bricks were more variable in size than present day ones, and often contained tiny pockets of lime and

small stones. These bricks can be seen in older houses and cottages around the village, e.g The Manor House. They were also used in many of our older walls, with the best examples being seen around the Old Hall in Little Heath Road or on top of a stone base alongside Christleton Hall in Pepper Street.

Houses and buildings can often be dated from the bricks used in their construction, a good example being



Christleton bricks

those built with the shiny red Ruabon Bricks which date from c1885. The Parish Hall is the best example of this in the village. The Old Hall is also an interesting case as this original timber framed building dating from 1603, was encased in this new fashionable red brick in the 1890's.

For some reason that is not immediately obvious, Christleton bricks were very expensive, and a document found in the Cheshire Archive Office showed an order for 73,000 bricks from Christleton at 9s 2d per 1000. This was more than twice the amount being charged from other local sources notable at Pulford.

There were several other areas of the parish that were exploited for the clay, the best example being the Pit at Cotton Edmunds belonging to the Grosvenor Estate mentioned above.

A man from Tarvin is recorded as being a brickmaker in Christleton in 1700, whilst Thomas Johnson, born in Oscroft, but living in Birch Heath Lane, is described as a brickmaker in the 1851 Census. The quality of the clay varied, and many of the pits dug were probably a source of marl rather than pure brick making clay. Marl Pits are still found all over the fields in the area, and Christleton was once called the pond capital of Cheshire, with over 450 being found. Such pits or

ponds were also used to allow cattle easy access to water, and one was recently excavated at Cotton Edmunds by Farmer Nigel Hill. This has a unique mix of layered red sandstone blocks and a few erratic boulders to provide grip for the cattle as they stooped to drink. The Parish also has many pockets of underlying boulder clay which was brought here in glacial times together with many erratic boulders and stones. As a result some of our footpaths are extremely difficult to use in wet and wintery conditions.

*David Cummings*



The Pit at Cotton Edmunds

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## **NATURE NOTES**

### **THE YEAR OF THE OTTER:**

2019 is going to be described by me and many others who keep an eye on the wildlife of the area, as the 'Year of the Otter'.

Not only were there more sightings, but in one magical period between November and mid December almost daily sightings in daylight, both along the river Gowy at Hockenhull and at Walk Mill. I suppose, looking back, that these sightings occurred when the river was really very flooded. This flooding occurred more times this year than any of us can remember, with water being seen even under all three arches at the Roman Bridges on several occasions.

We have previously captured the presence of the otters on the river with night vision cameras, and there

have always been daily signs of spraints, and lumps of jelly on stonework around the bridges, but we have never experienced anything like the joy of so many live sightings. Sometimes the dog otter would be present on his own, the female with cubs/pups, and on one magic occasion for me three cubs/pups swimming towards the camera oblivious of my presence on the river bank. I am grateful to Joe O'Hanlon for allowing me to use some of his pictures to illustrate this article, but we also know that other photographers have captured the excitement of otters at Walk Mill, again in the daylight, on the river bank and in the Mill Pond.

We have also found otter-slides where they access the river through vegetation and these occur in several places along the river bank. We are almost sure that they are still using the artificial otter holt built in the 1990's on the big meadow as they have been captured on camera nearby, with regular footprints being seen in mud leading to the holt. They have also been seen coming from the new Hockenhull Lake back onto the river at this point.

Otters are becoming very common on English rivers again after many years absence, and are probably driving out the vicious American mink that were illegally released and which escaped from mink farms in the 1980's. Otters have their young in this area in May - June and the cubs usually stay with the females for at least a year. The male is often seen singly and probably operates across a wider area. Otters can live between 15 -20 years and tend to stay in the same locality, although they are known to wander good distances in search of food. For several years we found that it was in March that provided us with the best evidence of the otters being present, and this coincided with the arrival of the eels going up river to spawn. These eels make an annual migration from the sea, along the Mersey to Stanlow Marshes and then follow the Gowry to their traditional breeding grounds at Peckforton.

The colourful shoveler ducks are back on Littleheath Pit again this winter, with sometimes up to twelve being seen. The males are the most obvious duck to identify with bright colours and large shovel like beak, but pairs can regularly be seen swimming in circles around each other. This extraordinary behaviour is something not seen in any other species of duck. Another interesting sighting for me was the appearance of a great crested grebe on the river at the Groves on Boxing Day. I don't remember ever seeing one there before.

*David Cummings*



Otter at Hockenhull



Shoveler Ducks

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## **WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**

In a recent issue of the Parish Magazine (*ed: July 2019*) I provided a photograph of St James' Church Choirboys' football team from the 60s with the caption "Where are they now?"

So it was a great pleasure to meet one of those boys at our Carol Service. Peter Thomas, now living in Newbury in Berkshire, was visiting relations in Christleton. His late father, Len Thomas, was a fellow churchwarden with myself from 1971 to 1980, and also a family friend.

Sadly, another of our choirboys' football team, Ian Matthais, died on 5th April this year, aged 58, and was laid to rest in our churchyard.

*Alf Croston*

## FOR YOUR DIARY:

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

7.00pm Parish Hall  
David & Beryl Cummings present:  
Sicily "The Jewel of the Mediterranean".  
Tickets £7.50 from David 332410 or Church  
Coffee/Tea/Special Cake.  
Proceeds to Christian Aid

**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

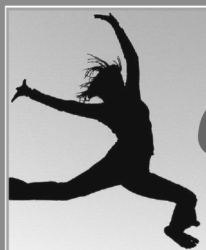
7.30pm Parish Hall  
**Christleton Local History Group**  
Speaker Alan Robinson  
Talk: The Air Offensive against Britain in WWII  
The Blitz 1940-41. Second Blitz 1944-45

Alan a favourite speaker of the History group will give his new talk on the air offensive against Britain in the Second World War – it covers both the Blitz of 1940/41 and the Second Blitz of 1944/45 when the Germans used V1 flying bombs and V2 rockets against Britain.

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

Rogation Sunday  
Beating of the Bounds. Full details shortly.

David Cummings



# CEILIDH

**A SUPPER and CEILIDH on  
Sat 29th Feb 2020 (leap day)  
7 - 11pm Christleton Parish Hall**

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From: Joce Platel (Tel: 332466) or via other PCC members



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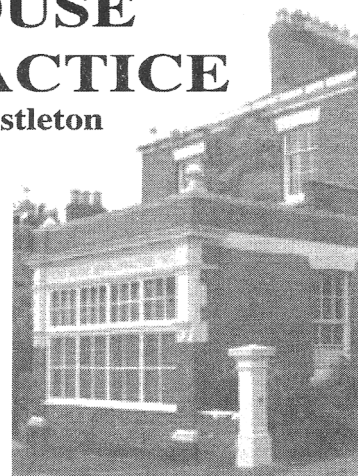
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**STOP THE PLASTIC !** Each Diocese in the Church of England sets its own Churchyard Regulations, although they are somewhat similar around the country. The words below are a summary from Chester Diocese that Mike Lightfoot has put together with our Rector. Mike of course is very involved with churchyard maintenance and knows the problem of plastic flowers and other non environmentally friendly items there. Please read below.

## **CHURCHYARD RULES AND REGULATIONS 2007 - REVISED 2017**

**A consecrated burial ground of a Church of the Church of England is subject to legal control, of which adherence to various Churchyard regulations is a key part. To this end, may we respectfully clarify a number of regulations regarding the treatment of grave spaces and their maintenance at St James'.**

**If you have any queries relating to these regulations please contact the Churchwardens.**

- 1. Fresh flowers and good quality silk flowers may be placed on graves. Spring and autumn bulbs may be planted in the soil adjacent to the headstone, but not trees, shrubs or other plants. Plastic flowers are not permitted.**
- 2. The Parochial Church Council has the responsibility for maintaining the Churchyard. Grass cutting and weeding is done on a regular basis by a community payback team and volunteers. It is much easier to mow the Churchyard if flowers and containers are placed below the headstone and the rest of the grave allowed to grass over.**
- 3. Please remove wreaths and cut flowers when they have withered - we will remove any withered flowers which have not been removed. Wreaths will be removed by the end of January.**
- 4. No fencing, kerbs, edging or other artificial closure of any kind is allowed.**
- 5. Glass, ceramic and plastic containers are not permitted.**
- 6. Please note this is a Christian Churchyard and that the graves are to be treated as memorials and not shrines: no pictures, photographs, sentimental or personal items are to be placed on graves.**

**Full details of the Diocese of Chester Churchyard regulations can be found at: [www.chester.anglican.org](http://www.chester.anglican.org)**