



October Newsletter

God is good, all the time. All the time, God is good!

This was the opening acclamation for the school Harvest Service, but also an important truth and last month there was much to remind us of the goodness of God. In this newsletter we share some of the good things that have been happening, as well as looking forward to things ahead.

Throughout October we continue our Monday night series **Exploring Worship**. For those who haven't joined us yet, as for those who have, it's good to reflect on what we do and why, in our worship.

As we begin by thinking about worship, a question often asked in church by many is, 'when should we stand, sit or kneel?' For those for whom standing, or standing for long periods, is difficult, then being seated is good. It is our usual practice to stand for hymns, praise responses and the Creed (*there is no need to stare out the East window, God is dwelling in us by his Holy Spirit, and at this point we are sharing and affirming our faith with one another*). We sit for our readings and sermons and we also usually sit for

the Communion prayer but it is perfectly fine to kneel here, if you prefer. Similarly for the confession and for intercessions kneeling or sitting are both options. It's perfectly all right to raise hands in worship and to clap, or use shakers for the last hymn but it's also all right not to! St Paul wonderfully said we should always have concern for how others feel and that's good practice in worship.

In this context, it is also good to ask a second question. How might we best prepare to worship, and how do we transition from worship? Some people like to continue praising and worshipping beyond the final hymn, while others like to silently pray. There is no easy middle-ground so applying St Paul's principle to all our worship means we will sometimes do one and sometimes the other, but always with love and concern.

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Church Life News & Events

Autumn Churchyard Working Party

Saturday 18 October from 9.30am

Volunteers are needed for a morning of fun and honest toil in the service of God and our community (and a hot bap of something comforting). There is much to do to clear up our churchyard for the winter and the coming spring!! All ages are welcome from 9.30am onwards. See the website and sign-up sheet in Church. More details of tools to bring and work to do will appear on FaceBook or via email and church notices nearer the time.

Please come and have a chat!

Steve Hill





Celtic Evening Prayer

The first clue that our Celtic Evening Prayer in the Norman Chapel would be popular was the positive response to its advertisement on our social media. Optimistically, we laid out thirty chairs in a circle but were delighted that forty attended and even more delighted by the new and occasional worshippers who joined us.

The simple liturgy, drawing on ancient traditions in the wonderful space, created worship that was memorable and helped us engage with God.

If you are thinking of coming this month we will be prepared and there will be space and service sheets a plenty!

Annual Season of Creation Walk to Adlington

On Saturday 13 September a group of walkers anticipating sunshine (despite the weather forecast) met outside St Peter's for our annual Creationtide Walk to Adlington. Many wonderful psalms, conversations and much sunshine later the group arrived at The Coffee Shop at St John's, Adlington for well earned drinks and marvellous cake. This walk has become a joyful appreciation of the beauty of our local area and there is something very meaningful about hearing



Psalms read out loud and outside. Maybe we should repeat on a more regular basis?

Beverley Angier

Worshipping

Like a tide creeping in and the water level levels imperceptibly rising, new people and returners have been coming into worship and the numbers across our services are growing. This is really good news and highlights the advantage of having a range of services across times and styles. Following the success of *Celtic Evening Prayer* and the *Come and Sing Choir* (which made its first debut last on Sunday 28 September) we are aware that a major gap in our provision is for a monthly more contemporary service. We are prayerfully considering a number of options, particularly how this might connect with our response to the Quiet Revival. Watch this space!

A Service for those who Mourn

Sunday 2 November 4.30pm

At this annual All Souls Service we remember all those we have loved and lost and placed in God's hands over the years. Families who have held a funeral at any of our churches in the last two years receive a personal invitation, but everyone is very welcome to join us at the service, complete a memorial card and light a candle of remembrance if they wish.

It is a special evening and many people find they gain comfort from the words and music and from the actions of contributing their loved one's name and lighting a candle for them, even if their bereavement is from many years ago.

The service is followed by refreshments in St Peter's Rooms where there will be space and time to talk and reminisce.

Morning and Evening Prayer

After a couple of glitches with Zoom both in person and on line, Morning and Evening Prayer are now operating smoothly. Morning and Evening Prayer lasts 20-30 minutes: there are Bible readings, a Psalm and said Canticles as well as time for prayer. All are welcome to drop in either on a one-off basis or to make it part of their weekly pattern of prayer and devotion.



Monday	9.00am	Morning Prayer	St Peter's Rooms
	4.30pm	Evening Prayer	St Peter's, Legh Chapel

Tuesday	9.00am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
	4.30pm	Evening Prayer	St Peter's, Legh Chapel

Wednesday	9.00am	Morning Prayer	St Peter's, Legh Chapel
	4.30pm	Evening Prayer	Zoom

Thursday	9.30pm	Morning Prayer	St John's
	4.30pm	Evening Prayer	St Peter's, Legh Chapel

Growing Monday Fellowship Group

Our first meeting was a great success! Bev helped us fall in love with Ghana and its people. We enjoyed seeing their worship (a much shortened version of their usual 4 hours!), admired their energy and persistence, and had our hearts melted by their little children.

We collected a good amount of cash for the project that St Peter's is helping to support, and we will continue to make collections for the Ghana project at future meetings.

Monday Fellowship upcoming meetings:

No meeting in October

Monday 10 November: Jean Harter - Christmas paper craft

Monday 12 January: tbc

Monday 9 March: John Powell – Church Candle Challenge

Monday 11 May: Faith Lunch at Prestbury Methodist Chapel

New Families Newsletter



This term we launched a new Families Newsletter, enabling our Church families to have all the information they need in one place. If you haven't received it please let Judith in the Church Office know and she will add you to the distribution list or you can pick it up on the Website under News.

Young Church

This month we will be having two Young Church Sundays where the children will be continuing their exploration of Jesus' parables in the usual mixture of fun and enjoyable activities.

There will be Young Church on Sunday 5 October and on Sunday 19 October.

Young Church takes place during 10.30am morning worship, the children go through to St Peter's Rooms early in the service and return during Communion in time to go up for a blessing

Date for the diary: this year's Young Church Nativity is on 14 December, all welcome!

Breakfast Church

After our summer break, Breakfast Church was back with a bang in September as nearly forty of us gathered for the first Breakfast Church of the academic year.

Breakfast Church is a great opportunity for families to worship and explore faith together and the breakfast is always good too.

This month's Breakfast Church is on 26 October - let's see if we can really raise the roof with seven tables full!

Belonging

The gifts that keep on giving

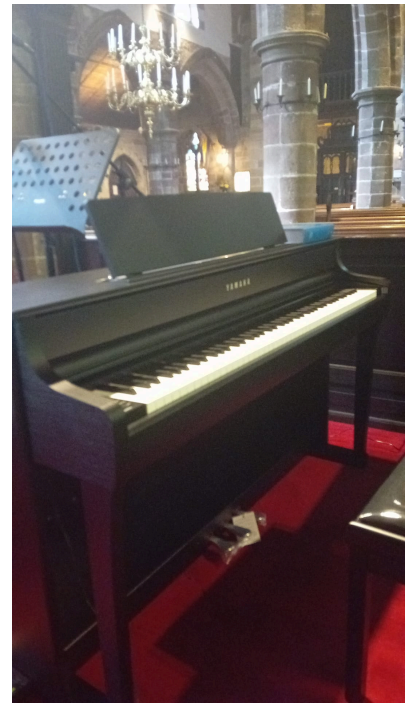
We sometimes forget, or are not aware, that some of the most beautiful things we see, hear or use in church are gifts that have been generously funded by the legacies of beloved church family members, or given in remembrance of those people.

Amongst the wonderful things most recently given to us are the two matching silver

communion chalices, the flower arrangers' cupboard, the notice board, the church carpet, the dove window in St Peter's Rooms, the blue hymn books and the monastic garden benches. We have been truly blessed with all these gifts, which will continue to enhance our church life and worship in the decades to come.

The latest amongst these is a magnificent piano given by David Bithell to lead us in worship and song in the years ahead. This brand new piano from Forsyths in Manchester was selected by Andrew Burr and we will look forward to hearing how he will be able to make it sing, and what glorious music it will bring to us in worship. David - so loving, loyal and faithful. We hope he rejoices in heaven at its sound.

In turn, the piano which has given us many years of good service in church has relocated to the Norman Chapel, where we are worshipping again once a month. This piano was given to us by David and Elizabeth Briggs, both faithful lay ministers at St Peter's in years gone by. It seems fitting that this piano should continue its active life in the chapel they loved, and where they ministered for many years.



Steve Murphy – an update

Steve continues his intensive therapy at Stepping Hill Stroke Unit and we are delighted to report he is beginning to make some good progress with his mobility. The Murphy family are hoping he will be discharged home sometime in November to continue his recovery. Please keep up your prayers for Steve - for his mobility to continue to improve and for him to know God's reassuring presence with him in hospital. Ask Anne Stirling if you would like to know more, or if you would like to send a message to Steve or to his family.

The Receiving Team

Following the briefing last month our Receiving Team are now in operation. Looking to identify new worshippers so they can engage them in conversation after the service and where appropriate signpost them to those who can help or give out one of the new welcome packs. That doesn't mean everyone shouldn't continue to be the wonderful friendly warm welcoming people we are. Our warmth and friendliness is the thing most commented on by visitors, newcomers, wedding couples and baptism families.

Diary Dates October

Wednesday 1st Bell Ringers 8.00pm
Thursday 2nd Holy Dusters 9.30am
Friday 3rd Choir Practice 7.30pm
Saturday 4th Wedding Surgery 10.30am, litter pickers refreshments 11.30am
 St John's coffee shop open

Sunday 5th Baptism 12.30pm
Monday 6th Exploring Worship 4 at 7.30pm
Tuesday 7th Replay 7.00pm
Wednesday 8th Bell ringers 8.00pm
Thursday 9th Pram Service 10.15am, Holy Dusters 11.15am
Friday 10th Choir practice 7.30pm
Saturday 11th James & Cara Wedding 11.00am, Coffee shop open

Sunday 12th
Monday 13th Exploring Worship 5 7.30pm
Tuesday 14th Replay 7.00pm
Wednesday 15th Bell ringers 8.00pm
Thursday 16th Holy Dusters 9.30am,
Friday 17th Choir Practice 7.30pm
Saturday 18th Churchyard working party, Coffee shop open

Sunday 19th
Monday 20th Exploring Worship 6 7.30pm
Tuesday 21st Replay 7.00pm
Wednesday 22nd Bell ringers 8.00pm
Thursday 23rd Pram service 10.15am, Holy Dusters 11.15am
Friday 24th Choir Practice 7.30pm
Saturday 25th Coffee shop

Sunday 26th
Monday 27th Exploring Worship 3
Tuesday 28th
Wednesday 29th Bell ringers 8.00pm
Thursday 30th Holy Dusters 11.15am
Friday 31st Choir Practice 7.30pm

PARISH Sunday Worship

We are one Church, with six congregations and four venues. To help see which service is where they are colour-coded by venue:

St Peter's Church, St John's Church, Norman Chapel, St Peter's Rooms

	8.30am St Peter's	10.30am St Peter's	11.00am St John's	4.30pm St Peter's
Oct 5 th	Holy Communion	Holy Communion <i>With Young Church</i>	Morning Worship	Cathedral Evensong
Oct 12 th	Holy Communion	Family Service with Baptism	Holy Communion	Parish Evensong
Oct 19 th	Holy Communion	Holy Communion <i>With Young Church</i>	Holy Communion	Cathedral Evensong
Oct 26 th	Holy Communion	9.15am Breakfast Church <i>for families</i> Holy Communion <i>Come and Sing Choir</i>	Morning Worship	Celtic Evening Prayer <i>Norman Chapel</i>

Every Wednesday 10.30am Holy Communion St Peter's

Followed by coffee and biscuits

Prayer Resources

The Litany of Reconciliation

This was written by Canon Joseph Poole in 1958 and continues to be prayed in the Cathedral every weekday at noon and throughout the world by partners in the Community of the Cross of Nails.

The phrase Father Forgive was inscribed on the wall of the ruined Cathedral by Provost Dick Howard after the Blitz where it can still be seen today.

The words echo the prayer of Jesus as He hung dying on the cross: 'Father, forgive

them, for they do not know what they are doing'.

This simple prayer, Father forgive, acknowledges our need to receive forgiveness from God for ourselves, as well as ask it for others.

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,
Father forgive.

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,
Father, forgive.

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,
Father, forgive.

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,
Father, forgive.

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,
Father, forgive.

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,
Father, forgive.

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,
Father, forgive.

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Prayer Diary

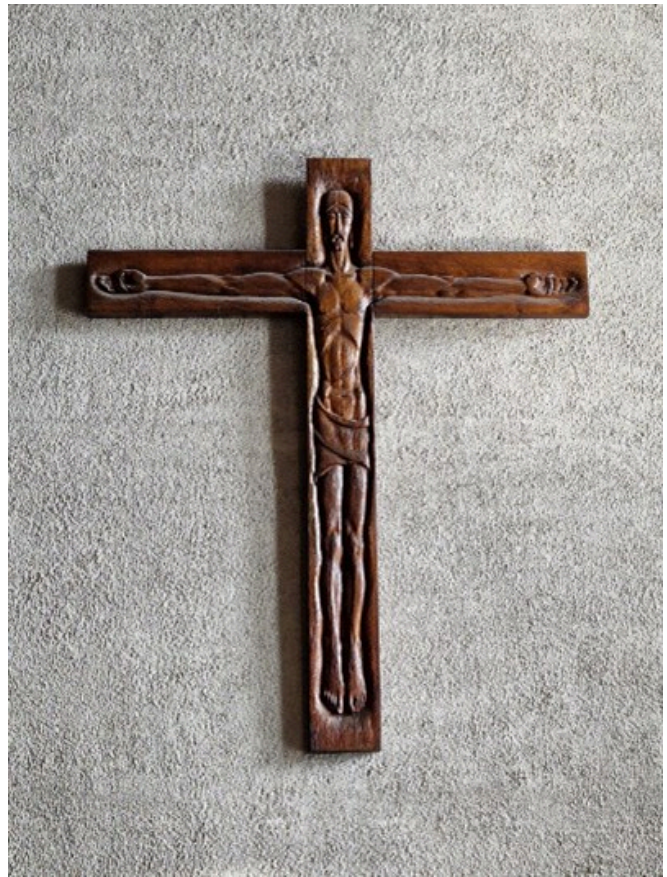
The new prayer diary for the year which begins each September is available at the back of Church. Do pick one up to use in your prayers.

Those who are sick

Steve Murphy
Les Manchester

Those who have died

John Christopher Rose
Margaret Robinson (funeral Friday 10 October 2pm at Peter's)



Community news

Vital Work to Trees in the Churchyard 13 - 25 October

The churchyard and its wonderful trees are a veritable jewel in Prestbury's crown and something in which we as the church community and the wider village take great pride. However, woodland areas do not look after themselves and periodically, require strategic management intervention to ensure their long-term sustainability and value. The churchyard is part of the Prestbury Conservation Area and it is both the PCC's statutory and, as part of His creation, our God-given responsibility to ensure that this takes place.

The PCC commissions a 5 yearly Report on the health and safety of the trees, with recommendations for management to ensure these responsibilities are met. Such a Report was issued in 2019 (by Cheshire Woodlands Ltd), which contained recommendations for such an intervention involving selected tree removal and general management. During Covid the work was shelved.

A subsequent report was commissioned in 2022 to look specifically at the level of safety and insurance risk posed by certain trees and to re-visit the 2019 Report recommendations. These recommendations were approved by Cheshire East in 2024 and in June 2024 the PCC approved the carrying out of the work in two Phases. Phase 1 was approved by Chester Diocese in March 2025. This involves the removal of nine mainly self-set trees on health and safety grounds or because of their condition, their siting in relation to other trees or damage being caused to memorials, or by the structural engineer having regard to the structural integrity of the Bridge Hotel/Abbey Mill drive retaining wall. Additional works involve thinning and hedge management works in the north-west corner of the churchyard and work to the major lime tree adjacent to the Monastic Garden.

Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of the public and to minimise disruption to pathway routes through the churchyard. Phase 2 will likely take place next year. So, do look out for, and keep away from, working areas denoted by taped barriers.

Contact numbers in the event of any issues are:

St Peter's PCC: Steve Hill 07768 757593 or The Parish Office (9.00-12.30 Monday-Thursday)

Contractor: John Culley, Harness Tree Care 07870 805589

Closing Thoughts

Prayer is the most important thing we do as Christians, it is at the same time so simple and so difficult. Keith's two poems below explore some of the challenges but also help us see that prayer is not about us, it's about God.

I Lord, I Don't Know What To Say

Hesitant, afflicted
Incoherent, un-redacted
Hardly uttered merely stuttered
That's all that I can say.

Petitions only muttered.
Like candles soon guttered
And helplessly blown away.

A prey to the yearning
The obsessive returning
To things I can't properly say.

Shamefaced even two-faced
My prayers a disgrace
Though these I may still dare to pray.

When truth could be burning
My soul could be turning
To God, not shrinking away.

Lord lend me your ears
Hear the voice through the tears
As I stumble and fail every day

And heed in your turning
My desperate yearning
For words I don't know how to say.

A Doorway Into Thanks

Lord, I don't know what to say
is how my pathetic prayers usually start.

If prayer is a contest
I've already lost.

But if our words are meant to be
no more than a creaking doorway
into God then I already
have his attention.

I imagine him listening patiently
wrapped in my failure to say
to pray what it is I would
have Him hear.

Observing my pointless pain
sweating to remind him of what
he has always known.

Who reads all things all people
like a child's book.

So why even try?
Why tie in knots what is not
to be said with any kind
of victory?

Why not simply approach
his silence in silence
imitate a small part of
his voiceless greatness?

Traduced by our words
locked in by our desperate
urge for fluency
we wound what we should only worship.

And yet it's hard to know
what else is left to us to do

Only a kind of defeated silence
Or at best a voice
that can simply stutter haltingly
of the love that seems impossible
to express or live?

Not much. But maybe a something that
at best is better than just nothing.

Though nothing like as good as simply listening.
Even if all we hear is silence

And God's silence is louder
than any words of ours.

On the far side of the doorway
there lives a speaking presence
beyond all knowing all description.

This voice will only truly speak to us
out of the surrounding silence

when we're content to let it overwhelm
those faltering words that we so fruitlessly
stumble to say.

Keith Ravenscroft