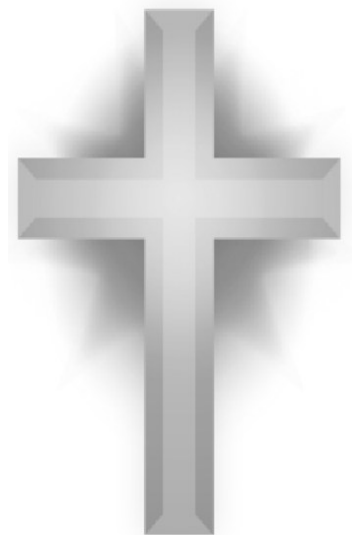
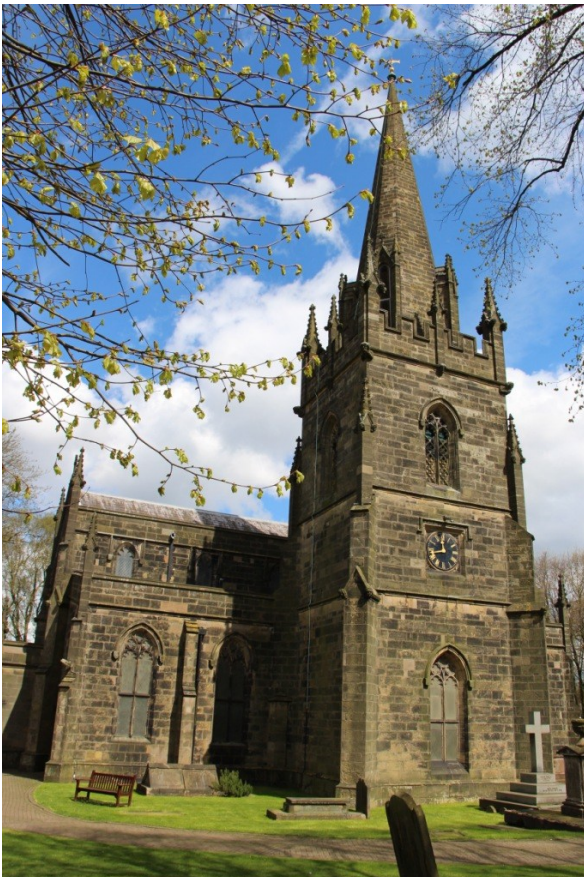


# THE BEACON

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF ALL SAINTS, SEDGLEY  
ST. ANDREW'S THE STRAITS & ST. PETERS UPPER GORNAL

Registered Charity Number 1179471



Worshipping God  
Welcoming All  
Serving our Community

**50p**

**July/August 2025**

## PARISH WIDE WHO'S WHO

Team Rector and Renewal Leader	Revd Canon Diane Cooksey	07894 666505
Licensed Lay Minister	Canon Jan Humphries	01902 661275
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Barbara Baker	01902 882847
Pastoral ALM	Tracey Bate	01902 880727
	Kath Apperley	01902 663253
	Joan Sullivan	01902 661094
Worship ALM	Suzanne Bradley	01902 880055
Youth ALM	Laura Robinson	01902 678572
PCC Secretary	Stuart Hutchinson	07772 497688
PCC Treasurer	Sheila Moss	01902 893570
Parish Office	Gail Griffiths	01902 540289

### St Peters

### Who's Who

Parish Warden	VACANT	
Treasurer	Sheila Moss	01902 893570
Children's Advocate	Suzanne Bradley	01902 880055
DCC Secretary	John Powell	

### St Andrew's

### Who's Who

Warden	Canon Jan Humphries	01902 661275
Treasurer	Alan Turner	01902 670938
DCC Secretary	Rosemary Reed	01902 679007

## **All Saints Who's Who**

Parish Wardens	Keith Tomlinson	01902 673366
	Steve Castle	07971 899072
Treasurer	John Anderson	01902 677666
DCC Secretary	John Anderson	01902 677666
Bell Ringer	Mary Zielonka	01902 672541
Youth Leader	Laura Robinson	01902 678572
Ladies' Society	Geraldine Baker	01902 674608
Mothers' Union	Liz Williams	01902 672880
Server/Verger	Steve Castle	07971 899072
Noah's Ark		
Parent & Toddler Group	Linda Edwards	01902 672556

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## **SAFEGUARDING**

The Parish of Gornal and Sedgley is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults. We follow the House of Bishops guidance. If you or someone you know feels unsafe, please contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer:

Barbara Baker, Tel 01902 882847, [safeguarding@allsaintssedgley.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@allsaintssedgley.co.uk)

or Acting Team Rector Rev Catherine Mitchell

Tel 01902 677 897, [vicargornalandsedgley@allsaintssedgley.co.uk](mailto:vicargornalandsedgley@allsaintssedgley.co.uk)

(other contacts available on our website [www.gornalandsedgley.org.uk](http://www.gornalandsedgley.org.uk))

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## **Funerals in June**

WEDNESDAY 4TH JUNE MARGARET ANNE BURROWS ALL SAINTS

THURSDAY 19TH JUNE ROBERT JOSEPH HODGE GORNAL WOOD

# **THE BEACON**

If you are interested in having the magazine delivered to your home on a regular basis please contact:

**Karen Evans: 01902 678056**

**The Beacon** is published ten times a year and the cost for the year is £5. A larger typeface version of The Beacon can be provided on request.

Articles for the magazine need to be sent to:

admin@allsaintssedgley.co.uk

by

**Friday 29th August**

and needs to be in Arial typeface, size 18.

Do not send files in pdf format

WEBSITE: [www.gornalandsedgley.org.uk](http://www.gornalandsedgley.org.uk)

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## **CHURCH OPENING**

**Friday mornings from  
10.30am to 12.30pm**

The church is open for quiet prayer & coffee and a chat.

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## **St Peter's District Church magazine**

St Peter's also publishes a magazine which is more particular to Upper Gornal. If you would like to receive that magazine (which is not available electronically), in the first instance please contact a St Peter's Church warden details on page 2 of this magazine.

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**If you wish to enquire about a wedding or baptism  
please contact**

**Gail Griffiths**

**At the Parish Office - tel 01902 540289**

email admin@allsaintssedgley.co.uk

## **The Rector Writes...**

The phrase 'time and tide wait for no man (or woman)' is often attributed to Geoffrey Chaucer and alludes to the fact that human events or concerns cannot stop the passage of time or the movement of the tides. It is a phrase that reminds us of how quickly life moves on. We have now passed the summer solstice and entered the seventh month of the year, with daylight shortening by a few minutes each day. I have been living in the vicarage for two months now and at the time of writing have completed six weeks in post. Where has the time gone!

It has been an enjoyable six weeks during which I have tried to learn as much about the parish as I can by visiting various groups and activities and speaking with many people. I have received a very warm welcome from people both inside and outside of the church community as well as encouraging invitations to engage with three of our local schools.

The opportunities we have to engage with our local communities are exciting and I'm sure there is much more to discover! But I have to keep reminding myself that Rome wasn't built in a day and it is early days for me...there is plenty of time!

The phrase 'Time and Tide wait for no-one' could be seen as an invitation to get on with filling our time as much as possible because we never know how much we have left. While there is some truth to this, time is one of the most precious gifts we've been given. Scripture reminds us that time is not something we control but something we are entrusted with. 'To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven.' (Ecclesiastes 3) In these words we are invited to see time not as a race but as a sacred rhythm and a space in which God is present and working.

At the heart of the rhythm is the Sabbath. God didn't just suggest rest, he commanded it. Not as a rule to restrict us but as a gift to restore us. The Sabbath reminds us that we are not defined by productivity but by our relationship with God and finding the balance in how we spend our time is an act of faithful living.

God doesn't rush us, nor are we asked to sprint. We are invited to walk with him one day at a time and when we learn to live in step with his rhythm time becomes not a pressure, but a blessing.

I shall be taking some time out for rest and coastal walking in July and from then on will need to establish a more sustainable pattern of ministry that enables work and rest. I trust that you will all have time to rest over the summer and enjoy any holidays or trips you have planned. God Bless.

**Rev'd Diane**

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## **Renewal Update...**

To many people I guess the word Renewal feels like a buzz word at the moment that is mentioned in conversations and prayers but with very little explanation of what it means for All Saints and the wider parish. At the Annual Parochial Church meeting in May I gave a brief outline, that I offer now in the hope of bringing some clarity as well as excitement as we see what God has in store for our parish in the coming years.

### **The Vision**

Over the next 5 years the vision is to see many more people of all ages come to faith in Jesus and worshipping God, initially in All Saints but eventually across the whole parish. Along with our renewed vision of Worshipping God, Welcoming All and Serving our Community some of the Renewal aims include:

Being intentional in connecting with and welcoming children, young people and families and finding ways to disciple them.

Establishing New Worshipping Communities to enable people to worship God in different ways and at different times.

Developing work with the wider community through Noah's Ark, Bereavement Hub, the Coffee morning, Reeling in the years and anything new that may arise.

## **Funding**

To help achieve our aims the wonderful news is that we have access to nearly £600,000 of funding from the National Church until 2029. It is restricted to staffing and operational costs and includes funding for:

A full time Renewal Leader

A full time Children, Youth & Family Worker (CYF) to engage with schools, worship and outreach

A part-time, fixed term operations manager with a brief that will focus on I.T and further developing communications and our online presence as well as data collection, finance, monitoring and reporting related to the Renewal.

## **How can you be involved?**

Prayer for the renewal, especially for the successful recruitment of the CYF worker and the Operations manager as this will increase our capacity for mission and outreach. Pray also that volunteers will come forward where needed to support the various activities.

Do you have the desire to see the church grow? Could you be part of a small Steering Group to discuss and help implement the necessary actions and activities to support growth?

It is my intention to keep you updated as the Renewal progresses, but should you have any questions then please get in touch. I would also love to hear from anyone from across the churches who would be interested in being part of the Steering Group to discuss ideas and begin to plan and action next steps. Having been in post for just over a month I'm excited at the possibilities for outreach and growth and look forward to working alongside you as we seek to discern God's desires for us over the coming months and years.

**Rev'd Diane**

## **Dear friends**

I want to say a BIG thank you for your love and support yesterday at my final service with you, it was a joyous occasion and I felt so blessed.

Thank you for all the lovely cards, flowers, messages, gifts, and the incredible collection!! I will have to have a think on what i will put it towards... maybe a holiday!!!!

I feel that we have been on quite a journey together, and that there is so much more to come for the parish.

I look forward to hearing all the news of how God is working in you and the parish in the months and years to come in this next part of your journey. with Diane and the new team.

Remember... keep your eyes fixed on Jesus!!

with love and blessings

**Catherine**

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## **It's cool**

I was at summer scout camp where the final service was to be taken by a bishop. It was a very hot, humid day and the clergy from local churches were slowly melting in their various heavy robes. Finally, one snapped:

“When is that flipping bishop going to turn up?”

Whereupon a man close by, dressed in Scouts shirt, tie and short trousers, said mildly: “I’m already here.”



## **Mothers' Union**

It was lovely to welcome our Diocesan President, Jill Crofton, to our June meeting, with her talk entitled 'Cowpats, Corals and the Climate Crisis.' We only have to listen to the news to be aware of the multiple climate emergencies that face the world, our oceans, forests, wetlands and deserts are all being affected. Jill told us of several encouraging projects like the Knepp re-wilding project in West Sussex, that has restored important wetland habitat by removing four weirs from the river, and reintroduced endangered nightingales, turtle doves and purple emperor butterflies, which are now thriving and multiplying. You are probably wondering where the 'cowpats' come in - well...! Remember Prince William and David Attenborough setting up the 'Earthshot' competition? One of the Earthshot prizes was awarded to an enterprise called Seaforest, who have designed a new feed supplement made from Tasmanian Red Seaweed. By including a small amount into the diet of cows and sheep the methane which they emit is greatly reduced. Jill mentioned our coral reefs that are being affected by the warm waters. Scientists have found a way of growing coral in a laboratory that will withstand the warmer waters and can be planted out in the ocean. How fortunate we are to have people with the vision and knowledge to preserve God's creation.

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### **Calling Knitters**

Mothers' Union has had a request from the Fire Service for knitted Trauma Teddies. As well as the normal teddy pattern there is a pattern for a little knitted teddy, which are given to children affected by a fire incident. They are also given to prisoners for their newborn children. There are some patterns on the Mothers' Union table in All Saints' Church, or I can let you have one.

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### **Mary Sumner Day Service**

Holy Trinity, Amblecote, are holding their Mary Sumner Day service on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August, at 11.00am, followed by a buffet lunch. It would be good if some members were able to attend and support Amblecote Mothers' Union. **Please let me know if you need a lift.**

## **Diocesan Festival**

This year's Diocesan Festival is at St Leonard's, Beoley on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September.

~~~~~

Dates:

1<sup>st</sup> July 2.30pm Cream Tea, in the church hall

3<sup>rd</sup> July 2.00pm Diocesan AGM St Saviours, Hagley

9<sup>th</sup> Aug 11.00am Mary Sumner Day Service, Holy Trinity, Amblecote

2<sup>nd</sup> Sept 2.00pm Maundy Money, Gwen Taylor

Hoping that you all enjoy the Summer whatever you may be doing.

**Liz Williams**

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## **Preaching hazards**

Showing your new parish that you are a forceful preacher may not always be a good idea, as the Revd Sydney Smith found out when he first arrived at All Saints Church in Foston in 1806. "When I began to thump the pulpit cushion on my first coming to Foston, the accumulated dust of 150 years made such a cloud that for some minutes I lost sight of the congregation."

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## **Life choice**

A small boy returned from Sunday School in tears. When questioned by his mother for the reason of his distress, he gulped: "Jesus wants me for a sunbeam, but I want to be an engine driver."

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## **Getting ready**

Two children watched their grandmother reading her Bible. "Why does she do that?" whispered one. "I expect she's studying for her final exams," came the reply.

# MESSAGE FROM CANON JAN

I have always loved. animals and believe we have a lot to learn from them , they can be really badly treated an yet still trust , and forgive. Giving unconditional love, just like our Heavenly Father.

I came across this poem , I believe my Dog Ned does know exactly what I'm saying, and I'm sure others will agree.  
But it speaks about love, the kind of love that doesn't need words.

## A Lesson in Love

My dog and I do not speak the same language, yet every day, he tells me,  
I trust you to know when I need to go for a walk,  
I will let you hold me when you need to,  
And I will ask you for love when I need it.  
On the days you are sick, I will lie beside you, I will look for you in rooms  
when you're not here,  
And I will greet you with so much joy, when you come home.  
I will guard you when you sleep  
I will wag my tail and let you know, that everything is okay,  
On your bad days,  
And I know that you will do the same on mine.

And from this I learn that my dog and I actually do speak the same language.

After all , the universe is a kindly ancient thing.

It gave love as a Mother Tongue to every being.

**Written by Nikita Gill**

# Finding Sabbath Rest

Thursday evening Fellowship Group have been following a course 'The Rest is Worship' in which we are exploring the importance of rest not only as a beautiful invitation from Jesus, but also as a way of worshipping God. How our rest can not only restore and refocus us, but also be a way we can bring glory to God.

The course offers a mix of bible reading, reflection, discussion and carefully selected music and readings. Arvo Pärt's *Spiegel im Spiegel*

Lord may our resting be worship to you,  
to lay down our labour and give you your due,  
to walk by still waters where souls are restored,  
to turn from our striving and trust you are Lord.

Give us the strength to switch off and unplug,  
releasing distractions that grip like a drug,  
embracing the fullness of life beyond screens;  
to be in the moment, to breathe and to dream.

We may be anxious of what we will find,  
the fears that the silence may bring to our minds,  
but there in the stillness we hear your true voice:  
we're loved and accepted, your treasure, your joy.

May our inaction bring freedom and praise,  
resisting the powers that keep us enslaved;  
we're precious, not measured by work we have done,  
not human resources but daughters and sons.

May this, your Sabbath, be worship divine,  
a temple of peace, a cathedral of time;  
for whether a minute, an hour or a day  
you hallow the moments we rest in your name.

**Sam Hargreaves**

# Living with sight loss?

The Beacon Centre is here to support you with the advice and guidance you need. We'll connect you to services that will enable you to navigate your sight loss journey



- TALK THROUGH YOUR CONDITION
- LEARN ABOUT SUPPORT SERVICES
- ADVICE FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS
- SOCIAL CARE PROGRAMME

- SIGHT LOSS ASSESSMENT
- HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACTIVITIES
- EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS SUPPORT
- DIGITAL ASSISTANCE



- TALKING NEWS
- BEFRIENDING SERVICE
- TRANSPORT PROVISION

Leaflet  
audio



**BEACON CENTRE**  
**WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD EAST**  
**WOLVERHAMPTON**  
**WV46AZ**

**01902 880 111**

**[enquiries@beaconvision.org](mailto:enquiries@beaconvision.org)**

**Registered charity number: 216092**

## **Ladies Society – June 2025**

At our meeting on 2nd June we were pleased to welcome Zelpher Ferguson, who is a Volunteer Speaker and Community Ambassador for The Children's Society. Zelpher has been a volunteer for 15 years, having started as a mentor to a young girl who was coming out of the care system. She now supports children and young people with behavioural issues.

The Children's Society was established in 1881 by Edward Rudolf, a Sunday School teacher. One Sunday two children did not come to Sunday School and he found them begging for food. Their father had died and seven children had been left to fend for themselves. Backed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, he set up the Church of England Children's Society and some children's homes. The society aimed to help young people to be resilient and looked for innovative strategies to help the children and to train and support staff. Its goals were to reduce child poverty and to protect children from harm.

In 2019 Mark Russell became CEO of the Children's Society. He feels that the society needs to empower young people to have hope and to thrive, not just strive. He has highlighted the issues created by screen use and the loss of communication skills. The Children's Society now has 560 staff and 9000 volunteers. Its retail shops are invaluable as a source of income but volunteers are in short supply.

The Children's Society has set up a number of campaigns in order to support young people:

“Breathing Space” - £1.4bn spent on helping 530,000 families to cope with the cost-of-living crisis.

“Protecting Families” – practical support for families including food banks and redistributing surplus food from supermarkets.

“Find the Hubs” – providing mental health support.

“Unaccompanied Child Refugee Guardians” – to keep them safe.

The Children's Society helps any child who is vulnerable – they may be in houses of multiple occupancy, hotels or flats with no facilities.

Sometimes single men live in the same building and so there are safeguarding issues. They have supported 5 million young people so far. Shockingly, most harm comes from within the household or from people who the child knows.

In addition to the above, The Children's Society is working with over 40 local authorities to make runaways safe. It has supported the "Fair and Square" strategy to provide free school meals for all children living in poverty. They campaigned successfully for changes in the Warmer homes Discount as 2 million children were living in cold homes. They also have encouraged suppliers to provide affordable school uniforms for families in crisis – Asda and Tesco have been very helpful here.

Support has also been provided for young carers, who care for parents or siblings, and whose schooling is disrupted as a result. Advocacy services are provided for children and support is given to children in families where substance misuse is an issue.

In more recent times new challenges have developed for young people and the society has become involved in working in these areas. These challenges include the impact of social media on attitudes and communications and mental health; exploitation of children e.g. county lines drug dealing, sexual exploitation and grooming; and the growth of gang cultures. The Children's Society has a number of prevention programmes in these areas and was consulted by the TV producers of "Hollyoaks" when it ran a story about county lines.

Zelpher then explained to us how children are drawn into being exploited:

They meet someone online or in a park/outside school/ at the shopping centre.

They are groomed by being given gifts/drugs/affection.

Exploitation starts – the children are drawn into committing fraud, receiving more drugs, sexual abuse, helping with money laundering, shoplifting to order etc.

Sustaining – once involved they are trapped in a life of debt and isolation and extortion which is very difficult to escape from.

The “Look Closer” campaign is encouraging local authorities to be more aware of this.

The Good Childhood Report was published in 2024 and included some disturbing results:

Children are less happy than 10 years ago.

14.3% are unhappy with school.

41% are worried about prices rising.

23% of parents and carers are struggling with the cost of living, either a little or a lot.

There is also a very strong link between school exclusion and exploitation. 63% of men in prison were excluded from school at some point.

Thank you, Zelpher, for a very informative presentation. If anyone would like to volunteer or support The Children’s Society, its website can be found here: [www.childrenssociety.org.uk](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk)

Our group continues to grow and we would love to see anyone who is interested in joining us. We usually meet on the first Monday of each month at 11.30am in the Community Room. Our July meeting, however, takes place on 10th July at 2pm when we will be enjoying an afternoon tea at Himley Hall.

**Karen Evans**

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## **Day trip?**

A north country choirmaster was rehearsing the hymns for Sunday, telling the choir the hymns they were to sing, and the tunes to which they were to sing them. He concluded the list and said, “Now then, ‘Come ye that love the Lord’, to Southport!”

A moment later a voice called out, “Where are you tekking t’reast of us then?”



# **Cocoa Farmers and Fair Trade**

Earlier this year we shared stories of cocoa farmers in Tanzania.

You'll remember the dual threat they were facing:

They were losing huge portions of their crops because of higher-than-expected temperatures.

They were excluded from the benefits of a global price increase in cocoa because of middlemen and other actors taking an unfair share of the profits.

But here's the update:

We just heard that through Mababu Cocoa - a producer-led business we work with - farmers have grouped together and sold their crops at auction for excellent prices. They've got the fair deal their hard work deserves.

Your support has been instrumental in securing this victory.

The global surge in cocoa prices has made this kind of rise possible.

Cocoa Beans: previous price £1.60 now £9.65

Cocoa Powder: previous price £9.65 now £17.65

So often, when crisis hits, producers suffer the most and are excluded from the benefits of any opportunities that come up.

But through Mababu Cocoa, farmers have been able to process raw cocoa into products like cocoa powder and cocoa jelly - which fetch a higher price. They've sold them together at the right time for maximum return. As a group of producers, they're standing up to an exploitative system - this news today is just one step on that journey.

Your support has helped them secure the kind of deal that feeds families, educates children and supports a whole community.

This kind of work would not be possible without your donations.

**Thank you, Kate and the Transform Trade team**

# Mary Magdalene

Six Marys are mentioned in the New Testament, including Mary Magdalene, who is remembered this month in the church's calendar (22<sup>nd</sup> July). What can we learn from Mary's story?

## **We don't have to be defined by our past:**

When Jesus encountered Mary, He cast seven demons out of her (Luke 8:2). As a result, her life was transformed, and she became a follower of Jesus. Her life as a disciple was no longer defined by the person she had been before. Like Mary, we don't have to let our past without Christ dictate how we see ourselves today.

## **Make Jesus the centre of our world:**

Along with some of the women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases (Luke 8:1-3), Mary followed Jesus and His disciples and supported them in ministry. She was there at the cross (Matthew 27:55-56) and one of the first to the tomb on the Sunday (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1 and John 20:1-18). Like Mary, we are called to serve Jesus as dedicated disciples.

## **Jesus uses the weakest people for His purposes:**

Mary is a great example of Paul's words: *'But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.'* (1 Corinthians 1:27). At a time when women were regarded as second-class citizens with no real autonomy, Jesus had a special compassion and care for women. Alongside Mary, the women's witness to the resurrection was taken seriously. We shouldn't be quick to dismiss the things that don't agree with our expectations, as Jesus doesn't always do what we expect! He delights in working out His plans through unlikely people and in surprising ways. He did this through Mary, and if we allow Him, He can do it through us!

## **Times Past**

**ARIS'S BIRMINGHAM GAZETTE, Monday, July 13 1789**

WHEREAS I George Smith, of the Parish of Sedgley, in the County of Stafford, Limeman, did on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March last, in the said Parish of Sedgley, without any Reason or Provocation whatsoever, assault, beat, maim and disfigure, Mr. Joseph Moss, Surgeon, of Dudley, and thereby endangered his Life; and he having agreed not to prosecute me for the same on my giving Securities for the Peace towards him, I do hereby publicly ask his Pardon, own myself much to blame, and return Thanks upon said Mr. Moss of his Lenity towards me; as Witness my Hand, this 1<sup>st</sup> Day of July, 1789.                      The x of George Smith.      Witness, Cornelius Tongue.

**LICHFIELD MERCURY, Friday, August 13, 1886**

### **SEDGLEY**

The GAMBLING NUISANCE. - At the Police Court on Monday, before Mr. Cartwright and Mr. Homer, ten young men and youths were charged with gambling on the highway in different parts of the Parish. – They were each fined 1s., and costs.

**EVENING DESPATCH BIRMINGHAM, Thursday, August 15, 1918**

### **SEDGLEY RICK FIRES**

The Dudley Fire Brigade returned this morning after having been engaged for 14 or 15 hours in quelling rick fires at Abbey Farm, Sedgley, occupied by Mr John Joseph Poulton. Three ricks were involved; one having set the others on fire. The value of the three ricks is estimated at £500, but with a plentiful supply of water the Brigade were able to save the major portion of the ricks. The damage, we understand, is not covered by insurance. The outbreak is attributed to spontaneous combustion.

RUGELEY TIMES, Saturday, July 13, 1940  
LORD BISHOP AT SEDGLEY  
REV.T KILBORN INSTITUTED VICAR

A church on a hill – physically and symbolically – was a description applied by the Bishop of Lichfield (Dr E.S.Woods) to All Saints' Church, Sedgley, when, on Monday night, he instituted to the living the Rev.T.H.H. Kilborn, vicar of St Mary Magdalene, Enfield, in succession to the Rev. Harold Marley, new Rector of Emmanuel Church, Loughborough. In his address, Dr Woods regarded as encouraging the large congregation, and welcomed the presence at the service of Free Church representatives. Remarking that though the actual Sedgley church building was only just over 100 years old, there was, he said a church on the site getting on for 1000 years ago.

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## **Walking is amazing – here's how to get started**

Walking is simply good for you. Even a casual stroll can give your overall physical and mental health a boost.

So says Britain's leading walking charity, Ramblers.

It also says that the current mantra of 'ten thousand steps a day' need not daunt you, as "you don't need to adhere to this to feel the benefits of getting outside and stretching your legs." Even walking for just 30 minutes five times a week can help ward off back pain, according to a recent study.

So – here's five ways to get going....

*Walk in the morning – you are more likely to fit it in before the day takes off.*

*Start gently, set an easy pace.*

*Keep it short, to start with. Build up your distances gradually.*

*Aim to build it up to last for at least half an hour.*

*Work out some simple local routes that suit you.*

Doctors tell us that 'movement is medicine', and this medicine is certainly cost-free.

## The danger of electric cars

Electric cars may be the 'future' of British motoring, but meanwhile, more of them are catching fire. From 131 blazes three years ago, there were 232 blazes needing a fire brigade last year – a 77 per cent increase in just two years.

Electric car fires are more dangerous than petrol or diesel car fires, because they are extremely hard to put out. This is because water, foam or fireproof blanket have little to no effect: lithium-ion battery fires are self-sustaining and continue to burn until the entire battery is consumed. Electric car fires are normally the result of 'thermal runaway', where batteries have got damaged or overheated, and then begin to irreversibly overheat.

There is to be a total ban on new petrol and diesel cars by 2030.



New business owner Tracy took over the salon almost two years ago.

We offer all colour services, perms, cutting, styling and hair for occasions. All the stylists have over 25 years + experience. We offer flexible working hours to suit everyone's busy lifestyles and are open

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**01902 882161** or pop in and see us.



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## **An appeal for blood donors!**

Current blood donation stocks in the UK are critically low, particularly for certain blood types like O negative. NHS Blood Donation is appealing for more donors to come forward and fill appointment slots to avoid a potential "red alert" which could impact patient treatment. NHS Blood Donation is urging people to book appointments at donor centers, especially in city centers and during daytime hours.

The upper age limit for new donors is 65 however if you are a long-term donor and otherwise fit and healthy you can continue donating well into your seventies, as long as you remain eligible.

The West Midlands also has one of only three plasma donation centres in the country (Birmingham donor centre, 61 New Street, Birmingham) for those who are able to donate more regularly. Plasma donations are vital for patients with chronic illnesses such as blood and immune disorders and can save many lives. Crucially, plasma can be donated every two weeks, giving more opportunity to help those in need. Plasma donation takes around 40 minutes and is a simple process whereby your blood is filtered, removing the plasma and returning your red blood cells to your circulation through the same vein.

Eligibility criteria apply for both whole blood and plasma donations depending on your health, travel status and sexual history. Further details are available on the NHS Blood website here <https://www.blood.co.uk/>. If you need more information you can call 0300 123 23 23 to speak to somebody about your individual circumstances.

I have donated whole blood since I was 17 and now donate plasma every month so am more than happy to answer any questions. The staff at Birmingham Donor Centre are unfailingly kind and supportive and provide excellent care, as well as plenty of drinks and snacks! It's a great opportunity to give back - every whole blood donation can be used to help up to three people, so every donation really does matter.

Thanks in advance and please do spread the message to friends and family, encouraging anyone who is eligible to consider donating if they can.

Thank you!

**Kathryn Banfield**

(Rosa and Robert's Mum)

Lead Physical Health Clinical Educator, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust

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## **Bananas could be lost to climate change, Christian Aid warns**

Bananas are in danger. Almost half of the world's banana-growing regions may be lost to climate change in the next 50 years, a new report has warned.

Bananas are the world's fourth most important food crop globally — but rising temperatures, droughts, and fungal infections are threatening where most of the world's crops grow, in Latin America and the Caribbean.

A recent study by Christian Aid found that 80 per cent of global banana exports come from this region, but that 60 per cent of the land currently used for the crop will be unsuitable, due to climate change, by 2080. The director of policy and campaigns at Christian Aid, Osai Ojigho, said: "Bananas are not just the world's favourite fruit, but they are also an essential food for millions of people. We need to wake up to the danger posed by climate change to this vital crop."

UK consumers eat more bananas than any other European country, eating on average about 85 bananas a year each.



## **Proposals to enhance pensions mark a major step in supporting clergy well-being**

A major step in a significant package of proposals for clergy well-being has been announced, which if implemented will increase future pension benefits for existing and future pensioners.

The improvements include restoring the target pension level to two-thirds of pensionable stipend, coupled with an increase to pensions that have come into payment since 2011.

General Synod will be asked to consider these proposals, which will require changes to the scheme rules, this July, with potential implementation after April 2026.

Further work is also underway to increase support and choice for clergy retirement housing, including measures to help clergy get on the housing ladder during stipendiary ministry.

### **THE SEDGLEY EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

The Sedgley Educational Trust is established to advance education, including religious education, in accordance with the doctrines of the Church of England in the area of benefit: that being the ecclesiastical parishes of All Saints', Sedgley, St Mary the Virgin, Sedgley and St Chad's, Coseley.

Application for grants are invited from individuals or organisations resident in the area of benefit. Application forms are available from the incumbent of any of the parishes mentioned above, or alternatively from:

**The Secretary to the Trustees: 12 Larkswood Drive,  
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*Romans 1:20*

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From The Rectory  
St James the Least



My dear Nephew Darren

So, you have received your first letter of complaint. I am not wholly unsympathetic with your complainant, as attempting to marry the bride to the best man would have created havoc with the seating arrangements at the reception. However, you must learn that receiving letters of complaint is an integral part of the ordained ministry. After 50 years of parish life, the number of such letters I have received are now held in bound volumes.

The anonymous ones you will receive, invariably written in green ink on lined notepaper, can be safely consigned to your wastepaper basket, along with all mail, from whatever source, labelled 'Urgent'. You will receive letters complaining that you did not pray for someone who was in hospital, regardless of the fact that you knew nothing of it. Probably by the next post, you will receive a letter complaining that you did pray for someone in hospital – when they had wanted to keep their cosmetic surgery secret.

Those who regard themselves as guardians of doctrinal purity will write complaining of the heresies contained in the previous Sunday's sermon. These can be filed with those letters that complain that your sermons are too short, along with those who complain that they are too long.

The hourly striking of the church clock is a perennial favourite for complaints. I usually reply by saying that we are currently exploring the possibility of getting it to strike the quarters too.

Letters of complaint will arrive in November, complaining that the church is too cold, so making prayer impossible. Others will drop on the doormat in April saying that it is too hot, so making prayer impossible.



In Spring, some will write that the churchyard should be mown more often, while others will complain that it is mown too often and ruins it as a habitat for wildlife. The annual Summer 'Procession of Witness' generates complaints that the brass band ruined the slumbers of parishioners having a Sunday lie-in. Then come Harvest, there will be the letters complaining that they did not receive a Harvest gift, which was particularly unforgivable, as their grandmother had once sung in the choir. Thus, the annual round is accompanied by reams of notepaper.

The only letter of complaint I have really treasured came from the bishop, rebuking me for never having attended any meeting when he was present. I have had it framed and hung on the study wall.

Your loving uncle,

**Eustace**

---

### **From stained glass to medieval graffiti: annual conservation grants for churches revealed**

More than £260,000 was distributed by the Church of England last year to support conservation of historic items and works of art in parish churches.

They ranged from stained glass and organs to curtains, a carpet and an 18th century Bible famous for its misprints. In all, there were 124 projects in 33 dioceses, including wall paintings, monuments, church bells and even medieval graffiti.

The conservation grants programme is administered by the Church of England's Cathedral and church buildings department from funds provided by The Pilgrim Trust, the Radcliffe Trust, the Anglican Parish Churches Fund, The Oswald Allen Fund, the Gunnis Fund and the Church of England Net Zero Fund.

This year, the conservation grants scheme is being extended, thanks to the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

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**SUNDAY 3RD AUGUST ST ANDREWS 9.30AM  
HOLY COMMUNION  
ALL SAINTS 11AM HOLY COMMUNION  
ALL SAINTS 6.30PM EVENSONG**

**WEDNESDAY 6TH AUGUST ST PETERS 10AM  
HOLY COMMUNION**

**SUNDAY 10TH AUGUST ALL SAINTS 8AM  
HOLY COMMUNION  
ST ANDREWS 9.30AM WORSHIP FOR ALL  
ST PETERS 10AM WORSHIP FOR ALL  
ALL SAINTS 11AM HOLY COMMUNION**

**WEDNESDAY 13TH AUGUST ST PETERS 10AM  
HOLY COMMUNION**

**SUNDAY 17TH AUGUST ST ANDREWS 9.30AM WORSHIP  
FOR ALL  
ALL SAINTS 11AM FAMILY COMMUNION**

**WEDNESDAY 20TH AUGUST ST PETERS 10AM  
HOLY COMMUNION**

**SUNDAY 24TH AUGUST ALL SAINTS 8AM  
HOLY COMMUNION  
ST ANDREWS 9.30AM WORSHIP FOR ALL  
ST PETERS 10AM HOLY COMMUNION**

**WEDNESDAY 27TH AUGUST ST PETERS 10AM  
HOLY COMMUNION**

## **SERVICES FOR THE MONTH - JULY**

**6TH ST ANDREWS 9.30AM HOLY COMMUNION  
ALL SAINTS 11AM HOLY COMMUNION  
ALL SAINTS 6.30PM EVENSONG**

**WEDNESDAY 9TH JULY ST PETERS 10AM  
HOLY COMMUNION**

**SUNDAY 13TH ALL SAINTS 8AM HOLY COMMUNION  
ST ANDREWS 9.30AM WORSHIP FOR ALL  
ST PETERS 10AM WORSHIP FOR ALL  
ALL SAINTS 11AM HOLY COMMUNION**

**WEDNESDAY 16TH JULY ST PETERS 10AM  
HOLY COMMUNION**

**SUNDAY 20TH JULY ST ANDREWS 9.30AM WORSHIP FOR  
ALL  
ALL SAINTS 11AM FAMILY COMMUNION**

**WEDNESDAY 23RD JULY ST PETERS 10AM  
HOLY COMMUNION**

**SUNDAY 27TH JULY ALL SAINTS 8AM HOLY COMMUNION  
ST ANDREWS 9.30AM WORSHIP FOR ALL  
ST PETERS 10AM HOLY COMMUNION  
BLACK COUNTRY DAY 12-4PM TENSORE PLAYING  
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**WEDNESDAY 30TH JULY ST PETERS 10AM  
HOLY COMMUNION**