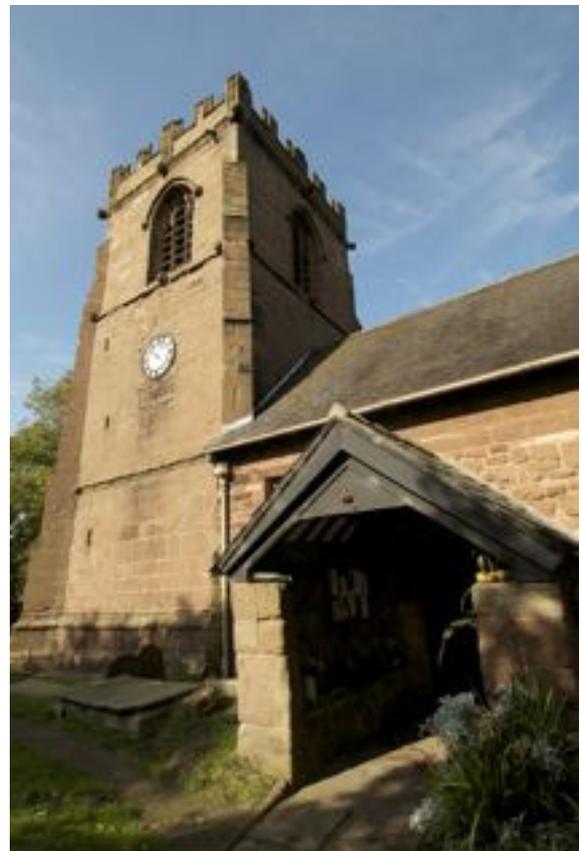
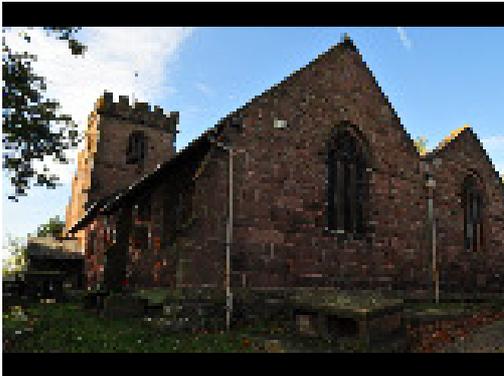


St Michael's Church Shotwick

March Newsletter 2009

Plans for the year & dates to note





News from the Vicar

Revd Cathy Helm I'd like to begin my first article by thanking you all for the wonderful welcome you have given to us as a family since we moved into the vicarage in January.

After the flurry of activity of Christmas, packing, leaving Heswall, moving house and unpacking again it was so lovely to receive such a warm welcome. We are looking forward to getting to know you all and being involved in village life.

After all this business I must admit I am grateful that as we see the first signs of Spring and move into Lent, that this is a time to slow down and to reflect on our priorities in life.

What does Lent mean to you?

Is it all, about fasting? Does it bring up images of grumpy faces, rumbling stomachs and detox diets! Does it have a bit of an image problem?

Is it all about giving things up, or is there a more positive side to Lent which can help us to focus upon something more beneficial?

Is it that in deciding purposefully to set aside time, to give something up, we discover what we have really become dependent upon?

Will 40 days without caffeine make us unbearable to live with?

Would 40 days of not watching a specific programme make us any less fulfilled?

It's difficult to really assess what we have unconsciously become dependent upon, unless we step back and take stock.

Lent *is* more than just about fasting. Traditionally it's a time to take stock, to confess our faults and seek the forgiveness of our loving God. God calls us to use the time to take a long hard look at our lives and the choices before us as individuals and as his church.

That's why this Lent I'd like us to spend some time quietly focussing on God.

It says in Psalm 46 '*Be still and know that I am God.*'

So for an hour on Wednesday nights during Lent, in St. Nicholas' church, I invite you to join us, to be still, to take some quality time with God and together to learn how we can know more about God and his purposes for our lives.

Is the real challenge this Lent to '*be still*' more often? To spend more time on the relationships which are important to us, including our relationship with God?

There is no biblical law that we must fast, there's the freedom to do it or not. Yet to positively give something up, to intentionally and purposefully take time to '*be still*' will bring its own freedom.

Through this we can then discover the height, breadth and depth of God's love for us as we make ready to celebrate the joy of Easter.

Cathy Helm

Dates to note in 2009

Spring clean April 4th 10 – 12 noon

Good Friday Service 6 pm Friday 10th April

Easter Service 11h30 am Sunday 12th April

Annual Church Meeting April 22nd in Church 7h30 pm

Burton Summer Fete Saturday 6th June

Harvest Festival Sunday 11th October 3 pm. No 11h30am Service.

Carol Service Sunday 20th December 8 pm (mince pies afterwards) No 11h30 am Service on that day

Christmas Day Friday 25th December 11h30 am Communion (no 8 am Service)



Bell ringing practice every Friday evening: contact Frank Parry on 01244 881751. The bell ringers ring at the Matins Service as well as the All Age Service.

Service Rota

All services start at 11h30 am

First Sunday: All Age Worship (Followed by coffee)

Second Sunday: Holy Communion (Common Worship)

Third Sunday: Matins (1662 Book of Common Prayer)

Fourth Sunday: Holy Communion (1662 Book of Common Prayer)

Fifth Sunday: Holy Communion (1662 Book of Common Prayer)

Lent meetings are at 8 pm each Wednesday in St Nicholas Church: theme: 'Be still and know that I am God'.

Organist update & sound system news



June Pickard has kindly agreed to play for the Matins Service on the third Sunday of the month as well as at the All Age Service on the first Sunday. A new motor has been installed in the organ and it will be regularly tuned.

We have a replacement CD player for the interim services – a Sound System is now well on the cards and will hopefully be installed this year. We have raised £1700 and we need £2600.

Easter Egg rolling: a family event on Saturday 11th April. 2pm at the Vicarage in Burton. All families are welcome to join in with the Easter egg hunt, egg decorating and rolling competition. Please bring cakes.

Fund raising events for 2009.

A toilet facility is planned for the boiler house, the lead on the Tower roof needs attention & the roof in general. We are buying a new boiler for the central heating.

Stall at June Fete Gladstone Village Hall Burton on Saturday June 6th. Please bring anything that will sell – especially home produced food and flowers.

Garden Party at The Remote, Puddington. Date in June to be arranged.

Harvest Supper after the Harvest Festival Service in October when home produce will once more be on sale

We hope to encourage use of the Church building for exhibitions and concerts, film shows and lectures especially after the sound system and heating are in order. Temporary toilets can be hired until permanent facilities are in place.

START Programme

This is an introductory course for those absolutely new to Christianity. It will begin on 16th March 8 pm at the Vicarage. Other organised dates are

23rd & 30th March, 8 pm at the Vicarage. After the first three sessions candidates can decide whether to proceed. Please phone Cathy Helm if you require more details 0151 353 043

Thanks are due

Thank you to all our volunteers for general maintenance, Jane Robbison for opening & closing up, flowers....the list is long

Lent Appeal

Water Aid



Your continuous support helps WaterAid plan life-saving projects.

Credit: WaterAid / Caroline Irby

Clean water is essential for life, but one in eight people in the world do not have it. In combination with a lack of sanitation this results in over two million people dying from water-related diseases every year.

We are currently helping a million people a year gain access to water and 1.5 million to sanitation - but we need your ongoing support to help even more.

Friends of St. Michael's.

We cannot express our thanks too often to the Friends who this year have contributed just over £2000 which, together with our Fund Raising, is helping us to fulfil the plans outlined in the Newsletter.

Deanery Synod

Shotwick is in the Wirral South Deanery which consists of 13 Parishes. There are 4 Deaneries in the Wirral Wirral South, Wirral North, Birkenhead and Wallasey. Our Rural

Dean is the Revd. Gordon Welch. We meet three times a year in different Parishes usually in the Church. The vicar of the host church usually gives a brief history of the church and reports what they are doing to help keep their church active. It is an opportunity to meet the representatives of the other churches. The representatives to the Synod are elected at the Annual Church Meeting. The number varies with the size of the Electoral Roll. Shotwick having less than 50 only have one representative

Gift Aid

The need to support the Church is as vital as ever as people continue to give generously to the Church. The Church runs a Gift Aid scheme which enables St Michael's to benefit by 28p for every £1 gifted from all eligible donations. To achieve this it is important that all donations – individual and via service giving are placed in an identifiable Gift Aid envelope.

They also need to be accompanied by a signature – a Gift Aid mandate. Forms are available from the Church Wardens.

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helmcathy@yahoo.co.uk

Church Wardens: Mrs Joan Norman jopn5@yahoo.co.uk 0151 336 2954

Jenny Sneddon : jcsned@gmail.com 01244 881493

Photos by permission of Cathy Robertson. One of our bell ringers.

