

St Michael's Church Shotwick

April Newsletter 2010

Coming up this quarter:

The Quinquennial Inspection; Spring Clean; Annual Church Meeting – please come and lend your support; Burton Fête DOUBLE stall; Shotwick Community BBQ.



Easter Decorations - spring at last!





News from the Vicar

I saw a slogan today '***Make the cross count***'.

It was an election slogan. It was encouraging people to use the cross on the voting slip to make an informed decision on May 6th. We hear that many people feel dis-empowered and disillusioned with politics and politicians and are tempted not to bother.

The history making first televised election debate has attempted to raise enthusiasm and popular interest in making that vote. Whatever your opinion of the debate it was interesting that the predominant question the following day from most reporters was 'who was the most popular leader?' and any mention of policies or substance had been pushed to the background.

Whilst confidence, clarity and composure are very important, do we not need to guard against popularity alone becoming more important than policies?

As I read those words '***make the cross count***' it also made me think of a different kind a cross. A wooden cross. A wooden system of barbaric execution, which so often is now only understood as a piece of jewellery.

Do we make the cross count as a church, as Christians?

As we have just celebrated the joy of Easter Sunday, that Jesus is risen, let us not forget the cost of that joy and the pain of Good Friday which came via the cross.

Jesus did not go for the popular vote. He went for the substance and the reality of life and death issues. He showed through his words, actions and way of life that God's way would give us freedom from fear, sin and hopelessness and freedom to enjoy a new beginning.

Jesus paid a great personal price to give us the freedom to choose to follow him.... or not;

the freedom to receive forgiveness from the Father.....or not;

the freedom to enjoy a life eternal, a life of purpose and meaning and to be loved by Him.....or not;

the freedom to love him in return and to serve him and others....or not.

Jesus came not just to make the Father's love possible, but to make it visible.

Does it not depend though on how we understand freedom? Is it freedom to

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receive all the privileges and not the responsibilities? Is it freedom to do or say what we want whether or not it infringes on the freedom of others?

Winston Churchill once said 'some people's idea of free speech is that they are free to say what they like, but if anyone says anything back, there is outrage.'

William Wallace at the end of the film 'Braveheart' shouts 'You can take my body, but you cannot take my freedom'.



So is it true then that our freedom comes at a price? For Jesus, it was the cross. For voters in our nation, it was the hard fought battles for democracy throughout the last century.

We are fortunate in our country not to have to have armed guards to protect voters at polling stations. We are allowed to make our own choice as to which box gets our cross on the voting slip. We also have the choice to decide whether the cross of Jesus Christ can count for us and how we will respond to him.

What will you decide? Will 'the cross' count for you?

Revd. Cathy Helm

Thank you to all our volunteers
especially to Mr Mills who has been doing sterling work with cutting grass in the grave yard for 18 years and has now retired. We are delighted to announce that he nephew will be carrying on where he has so ably left off.

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Dates to note in 2010



Saturday 17th April

Our usual Spring Clean please come between 10 am – 12 noon **armed with cleaning apparatus** or **graveyard tidying apparatus** so that we can give the Church and graveyard a tidy up.

Thursday 27th April Shotwick Annual Church Meeting in Church 7h30pm. PCC to be elected.

Thursday 4th May Archdeacon's visitation at Burton The occasion when Churchwardens elected at the Annual Church Meeting are sworn in.

Saturday 5th June

Double stall at Burton Village Fête. Any contributions – **especially home produce** are most welcome.

Thursday June 10th

We are hosting our Patrons from Lichfield and visitors from St John's Hospice Lichfield. Visits to Ness Gardens and each Church are planned.



Saturday 3rd July

Shotwick BBQ at 1 Hall Lane. Shotwick. Details to follow.

Saturday 18th September Prom Praise

Bridgewater Hall Manchester
Tickets from John Church 0151 336 2228

Sunday 10th October.

Harvest Festival 3 pm. No 11h30 am Service. Afterwards, there will be the **Harvest Supper** at Shotwick Hall Farm. Information on tickets to follow.

Sunday 14th November

Remembrance Day. Congregate in Church at **10.50 am** prior to a short ceremony by the Cenotaph. Normal service follows.

Sunday 19th December

Carol Service 8 pm (mince pies afterwards).
No 11h30 am Service on that day

Saturday 25th December Christmas Day

11h30 am Communion
(no 8 am Service on Christmas day)

Sunday 9th January 2011

Plough Sunday

Look out for a lecture on Archery later in the year. To be held in Church at 7h30 pm with refreshments afterwards.

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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)

Bell Matters!

BELL NEWS APRIL 2010

Thank goodness the winter with its bitterly cold weather is just a memory. Shotwick bell ringers must be a very hardy bunch every Friday evening through the winter they would turn up for practice wrapped up like Eskimos ,one in particular reminded me of Paddington Bear!

In February the P.C.C had the lightning conductor repositioned on the tower with a loop put through to the metal bell frame so at least our precious bells should be safe from a lightning strike. It was amazing watching Colin Brookes (of Skyline) abseiling down the outside of the tower to do the job.

We rang a quarter peal for Easter Sunday service which I am pleased to say was well supported .It has struck me that most people do not know what a quarter peal is and think on hearing it that it is normal ringing which goes on a bit longer I suppose that is right in one way but to a bell ringer it is more of a challenge than that. He or she has to guide their bell through a complicated pattern making sure that the sound of their bell does not clash with any other bells. Doing that for 45 minutes calls for a lot of concentration by all the ringers and is a real team effort and the feeling at the end is one of real achievement.

The weather on Easter Monday held fine which was good as this was the day the Wirral Branch of bell ringers have their outing.This year we rang at churches around south Cheshire ringing at Waverton,Tushingam,

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Marbury, with lunch at The SWAN in Marbury then Wrenbury, Acton and finally Bunbury it was a good day with good company in beautiful country side.

F.P.



Bell ringing practice every Friday evening: contact Frank Parry on 01244 881731. The bell ringers ring for Sunday services and special Church occasions.



Deanery Synod

Our Deanery Banner contribution is making excellent progress. The next meeting to discuss the overall project is on 20th April. Thirteen Parishes in the South Wirral Deanery are now involved.

Planned Giving

There is a popular misconception that the Church of England has vast inherited wealth and some even think that it is subsidised by the State. Neither of these is correct and the cost of running St. Michael's is met entirely from the contributions of parishioners. We recently issued a leaflet showing where our money goes and where it comes from and asked you to reflect on your giving.

The best and most efficient way you can help is by joining our **Planned Giving Scheme** and contributing regularly by making a Standing Order payment monthly, quarterly or annually. Planned

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giving is much more than a mechanism for our gift; it is the key to generous and committed giving.

If you decide to give by Standing Order then there is no need to put anything on the collection plate. You and God know your planned giving and that is what matters. However, when we thank God for the gifts in church you will want to feel that your gift is included. The offering of our money is an important part of the service. It is more than money; it is a sign of the offering of our lives. We will offer you a simple card to put on the plate as a symbol of your planned giving to God's work in this Church.

Your Parish Giving Officer, John Carsley (john.carsley@btinternet.com), will be pleased to make the necessary arrangements and answer any questions that you may have.

Recent activities

Friday 12th March

A popular lecture 'you the juror' given by Stephen Fletcher (JP). A fascinating insight into the magisterial system. One really appreciated' how the other half live'.

Saturday 27th March

Easter Craft & Card making in Church
A productive afternoon enjoyed by all. A big thank are due to June our organist

who supplied the materials and to the Catering Committee who laid on the usual home made baking.

Our Quinquennial Inspection

Our long-standing Church Architect Mr Holland came and performed the Quinquennial Inspection on Friday 9th April. The Building Sub Committee and Church Wardens were in attendance and the Tower Roof and installation of a chemical toilet in the Boiler House were main items of discussion. We await Mr Hoiland's detailed report.



Water Aid

Our **Lent Appeal** raised **£174** for Water Aid 'Turn buckets of pennies into buckets of . As the Archbishop of York says "Water Aid helps the very poorest get their first essential step out of poverty by giving them access to clean water and sanitation." More information can be found on the Water Aid web site at www.wateraid.org

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