

St. Michael's Church Shotwick



Newsletter February 2012

Welcoming and active at the heart of the Parish

Church Officials

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Church Wardens:

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Mr. Frank Parry
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Visit our website:-

www.shotwick.org.uk



A Message from Our Vicar



If this was an advert, I wonder what you would think?

Great for Ray Mears or Bear Grylls!

That it sounds like the last thing on earth you'd be interested in?

Too dangerous, desolate and lonely..... or exciting, challenging and a chance to explore a place of great beauty and mystery?

Both Jesus and the people of Israel had their own kind of 'wilderness experiences'.

Jesus for 40 days immediately after the joy and excitement of his baptism and the people of Israel for 40 years after their escape from Egypt. For both, their 'wilderness experience' was a time of reflection, waiting, trusting and learning. For the first few days, maybe even weeks, it could have been a very uplifting and enriching experience spending time quietly with God.

However, after 40 days, Jesus must have been right at the end of his strength without food and yet still clung onto to the truths he knew about his Father, he did not choose the easy route when it

was offered out but the one of commitment and obedience. He trusted his Father would provide what he needed and his Father did not let him down.

Some people choose to put themselves in a 'wilderness' and others may have it thrust upon them by circumstances.

Lent gives us the opportunity to reflect how we respond to those 'wilderness times' but also it gives us the knowledge that there is an end.

John the Baptist's role was the '*voice of one calling in the desert, prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.*' Mark 1: 3

Again, hope comes out of the wilderness that God has not forgotten his people.

We don't need to be stuck there..... there is the hope and joy of the good news of Easter. Jesus not only came through the wilderness..... he made it into a strengthening and growing experience, as my dad used to say 'Character building'!

But also the joy of his resurrection reminds us that Jesus opened the way...'*a straight path*'.... to the Father for all who want to find him.

During Lent, some may choose to abstain or give something up as an act of self denial, others may choose to use the time to reflect on their faith and spent time in prayer and fasting. These are well tried and tested ways of growing a deeper faith but perhaps at times we may face the danger of slipping into a faith of negatives. Making the wilderness experience a test of endurance and challenge which is all about what we *can't* do.

Rather the challenge and test of endurance could be something more positive and embracing the opportunity to do something which helps us to learn that God is there for us too.

I hope you find Lent to be a time of great blessing and joy!

Cathy Helm

Ideas for Lent:

Join the Lent Course

Choose a book of the Bible to read through.

Choose to spend time in quiet reflection rather than watch your favourite TV programme.

Give the money you've saved from giving up chocolate/wine/coffee to a charity.

Go for a walk every day to enjoy the beauty of God's creation.

Hold a fundraising tea break.

Walk or cycle a route you would normally drive.

Limit checking emails to once a day!

Use a 'buy one, get one free' and give it away.

Buy a Fair Trade Easter egg.

Give a homemade gift to someone.

Read the international section of the paper/news for a week and pray for the issues raised.

Church Services

All at 11.30am

1st Sunday (in the month)	All age Worship (Family Service)
2nd Sunday	Holy Communion (Book of Common Worship)
3rd Sunday	Morning Prayer (1662 Prayer Book)
4th Sunday	Holy Communion (1662 Prayer Book)
5th Sunday	Holy Communion (1662 Prayer Book)

Matins services:

In the light of last year's celebrations of the 400th Anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible we will be using this version for 6 months at Matins services.

What's Happening In 2012?

Church Festivals And Special Services

Wed 21st February	Lent starts. Monday meetings commencing 27th February at Jenny Sneddon's 8 pm 1 Hall Lane. All welcome
Sunday 1st April	Palm Sunday
Sunday 8 th April	Easter Day. Receiving of Water Aid jars
Tuesday April 17 th	Annual Church Meeting 7:30pm
Sunday 14 th October	Harvest Festival 3 pm. No 1130 am service. Service will be followed by Harvest Supper at Shotwick Hall. £8.00 adults £4.00 Children, under 4's free.
Sunday 11 th November	Remembrance Sunday. Gather in Church at 10h50am to prepare for short ceremony by Memorial.
Sunday 2 nd December	Thanksgiving Sunday
Sunday 23 rd December.	Carol Service at 4 pm. No 11.30 am service on that day. Please note the earlier time this year
Tuesday 25th December.	Christmas Day. 11.30 am service.
Sunday 6th January 2013.	Today is Plough Sunday. Celebrate the beginning of the agricultural year with prayers for the blessing of the land, followed by a ploughman's lunch in Church

What's Happening In 2012?

Community & Social Events

Saturday 17 th March	Easter/Mothering Sunday craft making session in Church 2-4 pm. Refreshments served
Thursday 22 nd March	7:30pm Alexander Clement the Sale-room Director of Bonhams Auctioneers in Chester will talk on The World of Antique Auctions.
Saturday 7 th April.	Church decorating for Easter. 10am-12 noon
Tuesday April 17 th	Annual Church Meeting 7h30pm in Church
Saturday 5 th May	Church & graveyard spring clean – 10 am onwards. Please bring utensils
Thursday 24 th May	Local Historian Gavin Hunter will give a talk on the role of Shotwick and the church in the 1600's. 7h30 pm in Church. Refreshments will be served. £5 per ticket.
Saturday 26 th May	Parish Outing to Lichfield and Arboretum with Burton Church members
Monday 4 th June	Royal Weekend Celebration at Shotwick Hall Farm. Ticketed charity BBQ. Beacon lighting
Tuesday 5 th June	Service in Shotwick Church at 2 pm followed by walk to Burton and Picnic at the Gladstone Village Hall

What's Happening In 2012?

Community & Social Events

Saturday 16 th June	1.00pm onwards Burton Village Fete – as usual donations of jams, cakes and saleable items are welcome
Saturday 30 th June	The Oriel Singers will be giving us an evening of music in Church. Ticketed event to raise funds for maintaining and improving the central heating.
Saturday 14 th July	Shotwick Family BBQ 1 Hall Lane 12 noon. Bring your own meat. Straw bale pool for those who want to swim.
Saturday 13 th October	Harvest Festival Decorating. 10-12 noon
Saturday 17 th November	Christmas craft making in Church. 2-4 pm Refreshments provided.

Many thanks to those who have given us an email address as a means of communicating with you. The saving in printing and postage is significant..

If you want to subscribe to the newsletter delivery and event reminder service just send an email to newsletters@shotwick.org.uk with the subject line of "Subscribe", or visit our website and click on the link there. Or just write your name and email address on a piece of paper and push under the vestry door

We promise not to send your email address to any other organisation.

Bell Matters

Bell ringing practice takes place every Friday evening. Contact Frank Parry for more details.



Friends of St. Michael's.

The Annual Church Meeting (our AGM) will be held in church on Tuesday 17th April at 7.30 pm. There will be reports given covering the year ended 31st December 2011 and a copy of the Annual Report and full financial accounts will be distributed. Friends are especially welcome and we are always pleased to receive any feedback.

Last year was very busy in maintenance and general care, the main item being the re-leading of the tower roof and the bonus of the conservation of the Commandment Boards. We are pressing ahead and plans are in progress for a toilet facility to be available in the near future and the updating of the heating of the church.

The contributions of the Friends are of great value in all this and we do thank everyone for the support given year on year.

History of the Commandment Boards

On Sunday the 4th of December, a service of thanksgiving and dedication was held to commemorate the conservation and unveiling of the Commandment boards.

In 1604, the Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical of the Church of England was published which laid down the relationship between the Church and the State. It also had detailed instructions of how each Church and Parish was expected to be run. Within this long document was the instruction which stated:

....and that the Ten Commandments be set upon the East end of every Church and Chapel where the people may best see and read the same, and other chosen sentences written upon the walls of the said Churches and Chapels, in places convenient. All these to be done at the charge of the parish.....

The present boards, comprising not only the Commandments, but also the Creed and Lord's Prayer, were purchased by the Church in 1752. William Maddox and Thomas Pritchard were the Churchwardens at the time and their accounts show they paid a bill to a Mr. Dutton for

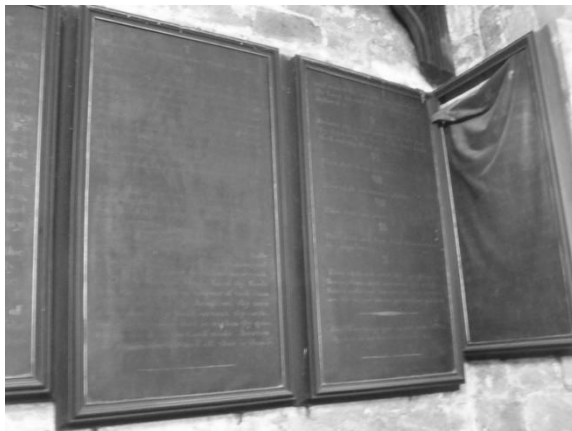
"Painting and Lettering y^e Commandments, Spent w^h we agreed with y^e painters and Spent w^h ffetch^d y^e Commandments".

Unfortunately the amount they paid is unreadable, although the total expenditure for the year was £27 11s 6½d.



This photograph, taken around 1900, shows the boards in place on the East wall of the Church. Note the plaster-work and interior decoration. At some time (probably when the organ was purchased in 1909) they were moved to the rear of the Church on the West and North walls.

The boards had become damaged by water, accumulation of dirt (remember the lighting in the Church was by oil lamps and candles) and the mounts had rusted and failed. The boards were only supported by leaning on each other!



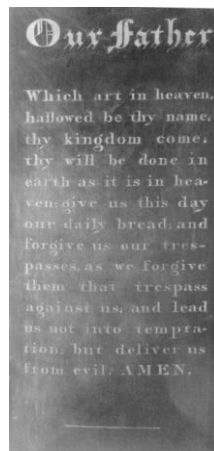
The Parochial Church Council (PCC) took the decision to investigate their conservation. Contact was made with the National Conservation Centre and they recommended Fine Art Conservator Vanessa Andrew, who had done conservation work at a number of North West Churches. .



Front before treatment

Restoration of the very badly damaged boards involved a number of processes. In order for the canvas to be flattened enough to pre-stretch the painting, heat and moisture were used over the surface.

Once the canvas was sufficiently relaxed, the painting was placed face up on the table and wet brown paper strips, approximately 20cms wide, were laid around each edge and stuck to the painting with gum paper tape.



Front after treatment

The outer edges of the brown paper were stuck to the table with similar brown gum paper tape. As the paper dried out it contracted and put the paint-

ing under an even tension from all sides and this treatment pulled out the worst of the distortions. The canvas was cleaned of a thick layer of surface dirt, damage to the fabric repaired and retouched and regilded with gold leaf where necessary.

A new stretcher that holds the canvas in place was needed on one of the boards



The boards were unveiled by Robert McConnell, and Lavinia Whitfield MBE, who are the longest serving members of the Church and by Mathew and James Allen who are the youngest .

Thursday 29th March 7.30pm
A talk from the Alexander
Clement Sales Director of
Bonhams in Chester
£5 per ticket.
Refreshments provided

Saturday 3rd March - Men's Breakfast!

And every other month



Enjoy a cooked breakfast and listen to a keynote speaker at the Leverhulme hotel in Port Sunlight.

From 8am to 10am. A contingent from Shotwick is already booked on this event. Come and join us! Further details from

www.wirralbreakfast.co.uk

Visitor's Comments For The Last Quarter

- Thank you for letting us visit your Church. A rare thing these days. Very peaceful.
- What a little gem. An unexpected delight while we were out walking!
- Great to see the Church open. A brilliant welcoming Church.
- Happy!
- Thank you for keeping the Church open. Part of a lovely walk.
- A wonderful place! (Montreal Canada).
- Très belle petite église en pierre rouge. C'est très calme ici. C'est apaisant. Felicitation pour les personnes qui gardent-ce lieu aussi propre. (France).



Shotwick in Winter

Thanks to Alison Allen