



A newsletter brought to you during Covid-19

Church Together Apart



@stmikesmacclesfield



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It's not a question of remembering your birthday ... it's about knowing you're alive!

This past week I've been thinking a lot about birthdays, and people who inspire me.

With the release of the **Queen's birthday honours list**, I was delighted to hear that a friend of mine, one of my former colleagues in Stoke on Trent, has been awarded an MBE 'for services to the community particularly during Covid-19'. Well done Corrine!

In just over a month's time, it's **my mum's 90th birthday**. By then all 14 of us, of 3 generations, will have had at least one vaccination, with the majority having been 'jabbed' twice. Thankfully the issue is less about how we can gather safely and legally; now it's about planning **what** we do, and how we can celebrate this landmark occasion without mum & dad getting so tired - overwhelmed by so many visitors.

And it's been the **birthday** of a previous vicar of ours. Gerald (from the church that welcomed, nurtured and inspired Catherine and me as we started married life together) quietly turned 89. Thirty-four years on from when we first met him, Gerald continues to inspire me. I hope he does you too:

During the past week I have quietly slipped by my 89th birthday. A question which could only be asked by a mathematician like me, might be, "How many times has my heart beaten during those years?" Say 70 times a minute, that would amount to 3,276,806,400 beats in 89 years, including Leap Years! What a dull, uninspiring business, doing all those little bumps inside there! And all of them much the same as each other! What drudgery, just like any machine.

But then, there is an enormous amount of repetitive action in the world, in my life, in my home or garden, in my work, in almost everything. Anyone who wants to become competent in anything, to be an athlete, a husband or wife, a preacher, or almost anything else, will have to do a lot of repetitive practising to become good at it, maybe even brilliant. Some people do have a skill at doing something which makes them better at doing it than anyone else could ever be. But even that takes practice!

All this applies to being a Christian too. I have heard it asked, why does God not take people straight to Heaven the moment they believe, rather than leaving them here in earth with all its difficulties for years on end?

Well, when a person first accepts Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, it is rather like being born to a new start in life. Just as you would not expect a new-born baby to suddenly be a mature person the moment after it is born, so you could not expect a new Christian to suddenly become mature the minute after conversion. There is a lot of spiritual growth to go through, and a lot of developing and exploring the relationship. Not only that, there is the work of telling others about Christ, and inviting them on board as well.

Just as a new-born baby needs help with everything at first, so a new Christian needs help. Again, each step of growth can only take place when previous lessons have been learned. Each step can only happen once the person concerned is ready for it. Babies can only learn to walk once they realize that those objects on their bodies are legs and there must be some use for them. A Christian needs to do a lot of learning about new things too. What is the Bible all about? Is it possible to talk to God? What is right and what is wrong for a Christian? And so much more. God won't push you into what you cannot yet do, but once you start the process, He is there to support and guide you. The process goes on all the way through life. As long as you try to keep reaching out in His Name.

As a church we've agreed that helping people **Encounter God through St Michael's** is 'a must'. Another is **Exploring and Nurturing Faith**.

If, to use Gerald's imagery of the Christian life, you are like a new-born baby and need help, please do speak to me or another person at St Michael's. It's not a failure to ask for help.

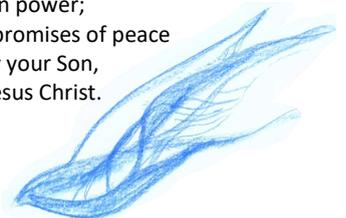
And if, to continue the imagery, you've achieved the basics of walking, to whom can you offer the wisdom and experience of your Christian life? Whom can you inspire?

With every blessing,

Mark

The Collect for the 3rd Sunday after Trinity

God our saviour,
look on this wounded world
in pity and in power;
hold us fast to your promises of peace
won for us by your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.



20th June 2021

Third Sunday after Trinity

Sunday Morning Worship

Leader : Rachel Mayers

Speaker: Mike Strutt

Bible Reading: Mark 4:35-41



New Opportunity to Serve God



Are you:

- enthusiastic
- outgoing
- fun-loving

St Michael's **Toddler Group** has new vacancies ready to be filled!

You will be part of a friendly, dynamic and dedicated team that meets on a Thursday morning (term time only). We look forward to meeting you very soon!

Please contact
 Ruth Parker 01625 613068 or 07732 215290
 Alexa Stenhouse 01625 429727

Midweek Service

Thursday morning worship has re-started, alternating between Holy Communion and Morning Prayer.

Both services are at 10.30 and use traditional form of words. Last week these three young ladies were spotted relaxing after Morning Prayer.




Music@Mike's: Change of Performer

Friday 18th June

Please note that, owing to the need to self-isolate, the Innsaei String Quartet will NOT be able to perform for us on **Friday 18th June**.

Instead the classical guitarist and RNCM graduate **Mark Andrew Leighton** has kindly agreed to appear.

Start time: 1.15pm
Length: approximately 45 minutes
Admission: free

Unfortunately refreshments are not possible at the moment owing to Covid restrictions. Donations may be made to the East Cheshire Hospice and St Michael's.




Cricket

St Michael's CC next game is on Tuesday 22nd June, 6.30pm start at Kerridge CC on Clarke Lane against Ash Tree CC.

Spectators welcome

Future Music@Mikes Concerts

Friday 25th June

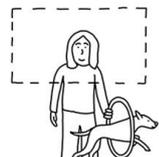
We welcome the Drums and Rhythms of the local ensemble the Freaked Out Foresters; playing tunes from the West African djembe tradition



On Thursday 1st July our artists will be local baritone Sam Jackson accompanied by Kelvin Leslie.

And finally, in a change to the programme, Adam Parrish will be giving a piano recital on **Thursday 15th July** (NOT Friday 9th)

THE ONLINE MEETING

APPEARANCE	REALITY
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  FOLLOWING TWITTER AND/OR THE FOOTBALL </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  HOUSEHOLD CHORES </div> </div>
	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  TRAINING ANIMALS </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  CIRCUS SKILLS (BASIC) </div> </div>

Karen's Induction as Vicar of St Michael and All Angels' Church, Runcorn

A motley crew of 26 members of St Mike's gathered last Sunday morning at St Michael and All Angels', Runcorn to witness the long-awaited induction of our former Curate, Karen, in her church. You will recall that Karen started her first incumbency back in June 2020 but, due to Covid, her licensing service took place on Zoom, meaning the Archdeacon was unable to do the induction part of the service. A year on and Karen is now legally the owner of the church and the vicarage after ringing the church bell quite a few times!!

It was lovely to see so many people in church supporting Karen and we enjoyed a wonderful service led by Karen's Associate Vicar, Helen, with Mike Gilbertson, the Archdeacon, preaching. The church had a really special feeling to it and everything looked spotless and beautiful, including the churchyard which was full of colourful, fragrant roses lining the path to the front door of the church. A real team effort was made to get the church ready for this special occasion. Team Macclesfield were given a wonderful welcome and after the service we were treated to a delicious spread of sandwiches, savouries and cakes.

Rachel Mayers made a presentation to Karen and we were at last able to give her a gift from us all at St Mike's in Macclesfield. We gave her a comfortable lounge chair for the garden, a cheque for her to purchase something of her own choosing and something for her to enjoy with a brew while lounging in her new chair: her much loved – yes you've guessed it – curly wurly!



The St Mike's Macc contingent with Karen outside St Mike's Runcorn



Still giving it some welly!

Thank you from Karen

Thanks everyone for all your prayers, cards and good wishes for my Induction and Installation as Vicar at St Michael's, Runcorn last Sunday.

It was wonderful to see everyone who'd made the journey to join me on such a special day. It lifted my heart to see so many much-missed friends. I hope you enjoyed the service (and all the food afterwards). It was a joyous day and I know all the church family here enjoyed meeting you and they look forward to seeing you again sometime.

Thank you too for your kind and generous gifts and I'm already making good use of my garden chair in this good weather. Thank you all again and God Bless.



Karen with her celebratory cake (which featured a picture of herself)



Karen delights in her curly-wurly cross



Karen outside her church

And now she takes her ease in her gift from us: a lovely garden chair





For the Beauty of the Earth... Such diversity!

Have you noticed how beautiful the wild flowers are this year – and how plentiful? I take a walk along the canal and into the fields on most days. There are millions of buttercups, thousands of hawthorn trees in bloom. The bluebells are fading now but they have provided carpets of cloudy blue in the woodlands.

I went for a walk up to Kerridge Ridge and couldn't help but notice the flowers and plants growing by the wayside. I used to know their names. I will re-awaken my memory. Children and teenagers don't know the names of wild things anymore. Happily, there is a growing movement to remedy this – Forest Schools, Forest Church, wildlife programmes. It is possible to download an App which will help you identify plants but, for me, I was quite excited to get home and dig out my Collins *Wild Flowers* book to revive my memory.



Nestling in the shorter grass is the White Clover, alongside its sibling the Red Clover and its friend the Purple Vetch. Who could ignore the beautiful tiny blue Forget-Me-Nots? Then we have the variety of yellow plants that look like Dandelions - the Yellow Hawksbeard which doesn't have a Dandelion clock but it does produce a fuzzy beard instead. Taller plants like the Red Campion, so easily confused with Ragged Robin or the smaller Herb Robert seem to grow closer to the walls or hedgerows. Ox-Eye Daisy peeps over the wall from the field beyond. Thistles just beginning to flower but prickly and defensive. And be very careful of the big patches of White Dead Nettle just waiting to sting you!

Another favourite from childhood is the whole family of white Umbellifers which includes Cow Parsley and its giant neighbour Hogweed. The smaller Cow Parsley or Queen Anne's Lace was present in abundance where I lived as a child but for some reason we called it 'Mother Die' which always scared me a little. But now I think it is because its gigantic neighbour the Hogweed is poisonous and we children were confused. Apparently, there are many in this family which are toxic so it is best to avoid eating any of them.



And then the variety of grasses and the lovely feeling of holding your hand out as you walk along, enjoying the fluttering of their heads and the gentle touch on your hands.

What an amazingly diverse world we live in – and that's just from a short walk away from my house. I hope you can take some time to enjoy the breath of God in all creation wherever you live and roam.

Tricia Atherton

PS I have just discovered a Podcast called 'The Stubborn Light of Things' by Melissa Harrison. Melissa is a novelist and nature writer. She has written several books and writes a regular nature column for the Times newspaper. In the Podcast you can join her on a nature walk.

<https://melissaharrison.co.uk/podcast/>

Dorothy's Poem

Dorothy Bentley-Smith has undergone surgery recently and is now back at home, recuperating - and feeling good physically and in spirits. Her course of chemotherapy prevents her from attending the midweek service for a few weeks, but she is enjoying her walks in South Park, appreciating all that summer has to offer.

She has written a poem for us to share.



MY SOUTH PARK



The park is mine once more,
The crowds are gone, the paths are free.
In solitude I feel again the gifts which Nature offers me.
Those gifts, which others foolishly jog by,
Or busy on their mobiles do not see,
Are treasures that are there to be bestowed,
Why do they waste such opportunity?

Dorothy Bentley Smith



"I'm going to begin with a joke
so we can get the humour
out of the way"

Funny?

You can be the judge of that!

David Smith occasionally sends me humorous anecdotes for inclusion in the newsletter. Here are a few to be going on with!

I bought a train ticket to France and the ticket seller said "Eurostar?" I said, "Well I've been on the tele, but I'm no Dean Martin!"

I phoned the local Ramblers association yesterday and the man who answered just went on and on and on!

Latest news: The Isle of Dogs bank has collapsed. They've called in the retrievers.

(There are lots more where these came from! Ed.)

Reunion with an old friend at 'Belong' Macclesfield.

Many of us remember with great affection Peter and Janet Venables. They were long-standing members of our church family until, a few years ago, they relocated to be near to their daughter, as Peter had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

Among many other contributions to our church life, Peter and Janet were part of the team which set up the 9.30 Storytelling Service and for many years they were linchpins of this service, ensuring the church was ready, welcoming families and managing the recorded music.

And I'm sure we all remember the laughter Peter generated when performing one of his monologues at church socials. Many of us were the butt of his humour: his appreciation of our foibles and the translation of them into unusual settings was legendary.

David Black was recently able (at last!) to visit Peter - he now lives at Belong, Macclesfield. Here is David's account of his visit:

Having experienced the relatively minor trauma of a self-administered, thankfully negative, Lateral Flow Test, (with a modicum of gagging and retching), I reported to Belong at the appointed time. I was swathed at the door in a blue plastic apron, blue vinyl gloves and a matching face mask and duly ushered in to visit my old and dear friend, Peter Venables.

It had been almost 18 months since we had last met, though I'd been in regular touch with Janet to follow the sad story of what had led him to be there on this fine June day. When I arrived, he had apparently just woken up, and was being offered pieces of pizza, which he didn't seem to relish. Though tempted, I resisted the urge to offer to help out. It was a different story when the sandwich and homemade biscuits with dollops of jam arrived, and both of us partook of the latter with relish.

I'd chosen to wear our original white Arrhythmics T shirts, which Peter and I both sported for the early performances of our little band. I hadn't allowed for the fact that this would be largely hidden from view by the clinical blue garb I was now wearing. No matter, I started to reminisce about those early days when we got together to try and strum our guitars, later abetted by Grant Whitten, (who still tries his best to make something musical out of our band's efforts). At this point, I played a recent recording of Grant and myself playing 'Apache', which used to be Pete's 'big number', and it was quite clear that he was responding to the music. He began spontaneously to hum another of the tunes we'd attempted to play, 'Atlantis', also by the Shadows.

I then talked of former friends from Church (no.... names weren't changed to protect the innocent) before he reminded me that he was a Pharmacist, again something we have in common, together with our wives. This led to more name-dropping concerning mutual colleagues from our ICI days, with what seemed like clear recognition as several were mentioned.

At this point I must mention with great admiration the care which he received, and the attention given to me, whilst I was there. He was smartly turned out, and the two young staff who popped in regularly to check all was well clearly 'cared' in the very best sense of the word. They were friendly and positive and Pete obviously knew them, and responded to this. I felt this was a real example of 'love' in action, from two young people, who gave the lie to the jaundiced view of care homes often portrayed by the media.

An hour had gone by, and it was time to leave. Pete was supported by two carers as we walked along the corridor to see me off the premises. He had apparently become very animated by this time, and the staff reported later that he had been a bit 'overwhelmed' by the visit, as has apparently happened previously. Here was a lesson for me to learn, about being more sensitive to signals which might have alerted me to this.

Can I say that Pete truly recognised me? No, I can't. What I can say is that we spent a good time together which I certainly valued, which did not stall or fall flat and which was only marred perhaps by my over-enthusiastic engagement. I also felt that, based on that experience, he seemed settled and contented; it's to be hoped that this will continue.

David



Peter (left) in happier days, playing alongside Grant (middle) and David (right) - founder members of that famous local group: the Arrhythmics



Chris Wilcock: Sponsored Challenge

On Saturday 3rd July I will be taking part in a 50km challenge through the beautiful Peak District.

I will be raising funds for the East Cheshire Hospice and will be doing this once again in memory of my mother (Lesley) who used their services in the latter stages of her life.

I have a fundraising page set up and you can donate here - <https://www.justgiving.com/Chris-Wilcock6>

There is also a sponsorship form in the welcome area at church if anyone would like to use that instead.

Thank you for your support, Chris Wilcock.



Join us for
Sunday Worship



St Michael's Worship 20th June 2021

Third Sunday after Trinity
Merged service this week at 10.00am:
live in church / from home on Zoom

To join by Zoom click on the image or use
Meeting ID: 939 7279 7379
Password: 01625

Service Leader: Rachel Mayers
Talk: Mike Strutt
Reading: Mark 4:35-41



Can't join us live? Watch the recording of our morning worship service on Zoom at a time to suit you after Sunday lunchtime [here](#)

Wednesday Morning Discussion
11.00am to 12 noon

Join Zoom meeting [here](#)
Meeting ID: 971 3599 5784
Passcode: 01625




Monday HomeGroup

When? 7.30pm - 9pm Monday evenings

Join Zoom Meeting [here](#)
Meeting ID: 910 4838 5228
Password: Monday

For more information contact Martin [by email](#) or 01625 426110.

No Computer? No problem!
You can still join any of these Zoom meetings and services with your landline phone

If phoning:
Dial **0330 088 5830**.
When prompted, enter the **Meeting ID** from any of these boxes **followed by #**
[For Sunday's service: 939 7279 7379]

When prompted, enter #



Thursday Homegroup 

We meet via Zoom at 7.30pm using same Here is the link to the Zoom meeting; <https://zoom.us/j/96162804573?pwd=V3Z2dWpMZIR6Mjg1eUVVQjBWbzQ4dz09>

Meeting ID: 961 6280 4573
Passcode: 838197

All are welcome to join for Bible Study, prayer and fellowship, including by phone. Please contact David Mayers by [email](#) or phone 01625 420716 or 07963 802659. We are studying **The Prayer Course** at the moment.

 Email any [prayer requests](#) here

Compline/Night Prayer

Every Friday

Topic: Night Prayer
Time: 8.30pm every Friday (join from 8.25pm)
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75676947476?pwd=R2twT2pQbTFzUGR5bk1reDZoVXdaZz09>
Meeting ID: 756 7694 7476
Passcode: compline



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Giving to the work and worship of St Michael's
Click here to donate towards our church's ministry 

