



KNIGHTON



Benefice Magazine

Easter eggs-travaganza

The congregation at St Mary's donated 118 Easter eggs to the Goldhill Adventure Playground and Foodbank, to be enjoyed by the children who attend the playground in Windley Road, just to the east of the Benefice.



Age UK Bookshop in Oadby donated reading books for all ages for those children who, for whatever reason, could not eat chocolate or have allergies.

St Mary's Social Committee, who co-ordinated the arrangement, and the Goldhill Association were very grateful for the great generosity.

The Goldhill Adventure Playground, located in Windley Road, was established in 1976

And another successful coffee morning

The latest in the series of St Mary's coffee mornings organised by the Social Committee was held on 13 April, and raised a magnificent £545 (and 1p!) for parish funds (pictures inside). The Committee thanks all those who helped, without whom these events could not happen.

New members are welcome to join and contribute their ideas on future fundraising activities. Contact Beryl Bonfield or any other committee member for information.

The next coffee morning is on Saturday 8 June.

Vicar's Letter



Friends,

"The best time to plant trees is twenty years ago. The second-best time is today."

You'll have heard this from me before, as it's one of my favourite sayings! Planting a tree is an action of hope, of faith in the future (especially as one gets older!) since we are unlikely to see the full results of our vision and labour. We plant now for the benefit of generations to come - not for ourselves. If there is a payback for us then it is the knowledge that we have used our own time, money and gifts wisely and well, and that those who follow will thank and bless us.

Trees are also a repeated and powerful symbol in the Bible, where they often represent the life of the Kingdom of God, and the benefits that flow to us when we line our lives up with God's purposes. Today, we're also very aware

of the critical place that trees have in our planet's ecosystems – and therefore in sustaining all life.

All of which leads me to believe that tree planting is the best way to understand the current conversation between the Anglican churches of the City and suburbs about the formation of new partnerships called **Minster Communities**.

Our churches need to change if we are to stay alive and healthy as worshipping families of faith offering Christian hope to new generations. Without change, the churches we see today look certain to wither. Every forest needs a re-planting programme, and although we may not see the flourishing mature churches that will grow from the seeds and saplings we plant now, we must have the vision to do what is necessary on behalf of those who will follow us.

The creation of Minster Communities will enable us to step up our replanting, as each will have a fresh emphasis on connecting with schools and reaching children, families and young people, with one paid minister taking this specific role. Our administrative and support functions will be streamlined and shared between churches, releasing more time for the essentials of local ministry and mission. Lay leaders will be encouraged, nurtured and trained in every church, so that they can form a strong team with those who are ordained, covering all aspects of church

life across our neighbourhoods. Some pruning may be needed, but this will stimulate new growth in different ways.

In the midst of trouble and sorrow, the writer of the Old Testament Book of Lamentations can say *“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”* However dismayed we may feel by our shrinking churches and changing society, we too can be certain that God has only good purposes for us, if we seek to follow his way.

Minster Communities will not provide all the answers we seek, but we can trust that God remains faithful and continues to be at work in the world and in individual lives – and there will be healthy growth and good fruit in the future if we play our part in new planting today.

At the Vicarage we have so far planted 19 new trees since we arrived in 2017 – we enjoy our garden now, but the new trees are a symbol of our hope and our faith in a good future for the church in Knighton.

Please continue to pray for wise discernment and courageous, faithful action from all of us who are part of the conversations about how to form Minster Communities for the future in our City.

Yours in friendship and Christ’s service,
Adrian

Growing faith

The first time I met my husband, I gave him the brush off. It wasn’t really him; it was the fact the fact that I wanted to know what his intentions were. He is an amazing man – just that I didn’t know it then.

A few months later, we began what grew into what we have today. However, the steps we took to build this secure, comfortable, trusting love and best friend relationship came over time, through sharing our lives. That’s what we must do to build any strong relationship, including that of faith. This begins by setting aside the time. The two anchors of spending time with God are reading His word (the Bible) and through prayer.

As my relationship with my husband grew, the next step was meeting his relatives. As in any family, they were an extensive bunch. The first time I went to Delta State to meet them, I could not figure out a word they said while they spoke to one another. Between their dialect, their kinship through their car repair and amazing pets, along with the strength of their relationships, they totally understood one another; I, on the other hand, was clueless. As I got to know them, I figured it out and loved each Deltan, wise, salt-of-the-earth word that was spoken. Even better, I was welcomed by them and loved well.

Deepening my faith in God comes through my quest to know Him more clearly, love Him more dearly and follow Him more nearly day by day. I

realised that until I come closer to God through His son Jesus Christ by loving my family, neighbour, community, and the society at large, I might be distant from God. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them (1 John 4:8). I transitioned from the role as an ordinand to that of curate in summer last year. While continuing at the same charge, I experienced some of the emotions and realities of leaving a role to begin a new one. I had developed significant relationships, and wondered what that will be like in a different role. I experienced an emotional transition time that extended a few weeks before and after the start date of my new role. Since that time of change, I have felt the emotional beginning in my new role. This transition helped me to understand that I serve as a steward on behalf of the entire church in a particular capacity.

By studying Christ in the Scriptures, I am looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of my faith, and so my faith grows. One sweet way to increase faith is fellowship with the saints. The world will sap our faith and Satan will assault it, diverting us from Christ, distracting us from truth, and demanding our attention for other things. One delightful way to counteract this is to spend time with God's people, speaking of what belongs to the kingdom (Mal. 3: 16-18). That is exactly my experienced as I serve at St. Mary Magdalen and St. Guthlac's. Each time spent together with the amazing people in Knighton benefice,

encourages me to love and serve God more. I am grateful for the support system that I have in Knighton benefice.

Being disabled, a sister, a wife, and a mother are all part of my life story which identified me without any choice on my part. These are all different facets of my identity as a person where I had some input into the decision. I embrace each aspect of my ministry with joy knowing that He who is leading me is able. I deeply appreciate the anchor that I have received from Knighton benefice in helping me to pursue my ministry.

The process of the journey is the most important part. I used to think that if God would just illuminate my path like a runway to show me which way He wanted me to go in life, then I would be happy to follow Him. But I believe that He makes life the way it is because He wants us to seek a relationship with Him. Relationship with God is not just part of the process, it is integral to it. I am a work in progress.

I have learnt that ministry really isn't about me! At the start, it felt like a teapot that was constantly running out of tea and forever needed to be refilled. Despite being prepared, the journey through curacy has been a steep learning curve as I walked with people in some of the joy but also the most tragic times of their lives. If I were advising someone who felt a call like mine, it would be to expect the unexpected: "You can study at college, read books, and have life experience

and ministry experience, but that cannot and does not prepare you for the changes that you will go through on this journey. Entirely pursue God's agenda for your life.

Revd Cecilia

People

Tributes to long-serving GP on his retirement

Dr John Astles, a regular member of the St Mary's congregation for many years, has recently retired as one of Leicester's longest-serving GPs. He joined Willowbrook Medical Practice, which is now part of Willows Health, in Thurncourt in 1982.



John Astles (centre) with colleagues at Willows Health

John, who read medicine at Liverpool, has been described a "cornerstone of support and guidance" for the local community. NHS colleagues have praised his significant contributions to healthcare as well as his steadfast commitment to the job.

Professor Rishabh Prasad, Chairman of Willows Health, added: "Dr Astles'

dedication to improving the lives of patients, averaging one every 10 minutes for over four decades, is a remarkable achievement in itself. But what truly sets him apart is his unique approach and demeanour with patients - a kind of empathy that cannot be taught but is innate to his character."

Report based on coverage in Leicester Mercury, 5 April 2024

Doreen Macafee, 1940 – 2024

Sian Howard pays tribute to Doreen, whose funeral took place at St Mary's on 10 May.

Our friend Doreen was born on Valentine's Day, 1940, in Ulster, to Billie and Jimmy Hunter. As a schoolgirl, she was friendly with Anne (Panny) Macafee (later Anne Mahood) – sister of Jeremy Macafee – who was known to many at St Mary's and St Guthlac's.

In 1963, Doreen achieved an Honours degree in History from Queen's University, Belfast, and then started teacher training, including working in Basingstoke initially. She made a positive impression on students from that time onwards. In 1965, Doreen returned to Ulster and secured a post at Princess Gardens School, and effectively remained with the School until her retirement. Doreen became Headmistress of Princess Gardens in 1982 and then first Principal of Hunterhouse College when Princess

Gardens and Ashleigh House School merged.

Doreen was also a Director of Northern Ireland Railways; and helped to establish the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme in the North of Ireland. She retired in about 1998 and supported her parents – who both lived well into their 90s – with her Mum Billie passing away here in Aigburth Residential Home, Oadby, at the age of 99.

Doreen and Jeremy Macafee, by dint of 1950s+ family friendships, knew each other 'of old'. Many of you will remember Jeremy's first wife, Elizabeth Anne, who passed away in 1998. Several years later, and it is suspected aided by Jeremy's sister's matchmaking, Doreen and Jeremy were back in contact. Her stepson Ian remembers in 2001 when Jeremy asked his support to marry Doreen. He says it was a most wonderful and amusing moment.

As we all know, Doreen and Jeremy made a tremendous success of the last 20 years together until Jeremy's death in September 2021. It's impossible to encompass all their activities and contributions to our community but, just to mention a few of the organisations in which they were involved: Rotary and Inner Wheel were a great focus for their enthusiasm and attention; and Probus involved and supported Jeremy when he was alive and maintained contact and interest in Doreen even during the last challenging couple of years. And of

course, we at St Mary's and St Guthlac's will be forever thankful that Doreen and Jeremy came to live among us and worship with us and for their innumerable contributions to church life and events.

I'd like to turn to my own memories of Doreen. I knew her for only the six years that I have been living in Leicester and worshipping at St Mary's. For much of this time, Doreen had to contend with crippling illness. The lady I came to know faced all these hardships with the most admirable courage. In our chats, she was always reluctant to talk about her own health and was much more concerned to hear about the health and wellbeing of others at church. She had a fierce intellect which was completely undimmed by the passing years, and I learned a great deal by listening to her. There seemed to be nothing that she wasn't interested in, and our chats were wide-ranging. We mostly steered clear of Irish politics, perhaps because delving there might have ended a lovely friendship; but I will mention that Doreen had equally low opinions of both Ian Paisley and Michelle O'Neill, so in that sense she was very even handed.

There didn't seem to be anything Doreen didn't know about gardening, and I collected countless tips. On the occasions when we were able to get out into her garden you could see how Doreen's spirits lifted; and I spend some happy afternoons at 10 Guilford Rod being ordered around by Doreen to pick up those weeds or move these

things from one place to another. (You will recall that Doreen was an ex-headmistress – she spoke quietly but with authority and when she told you to do something, you did it!)

But for me, the most extraordinary thing about Doreen was her ability as a raconteur. I could happily let her yarns wash over me for a very pleasant hour and was always thoroughly entertained. They were often about the most innocuous topics: 'Ma' and 'Pa' having little discourses with the presbyterian preacher; or going to buy a coat; or the car breaking down on the road to Hollywood ... but she infused them with so much wit and excitement that, in her hands, they became wild adventures. In short, for me Doreen was a cross between Monty Don and Stephen Fry. I would like to add one more comparison. Her 'best-of-British' tenacity and spirit in the face of great personal adversity, together with being a keen student of history, were positively Churchillian.

Doreen, I will miss your patient advice, wit and wisdom terribly.

For a lady who had such an ability telling stories, I thought it might be appropriate to end by paraphrasing the words with which the great comedian Dave Allen closed all his shows:

Doreen: goodnight, thank you - and may our God go with you.

Sian Howard

April coffee morning at St Mary's



St. Guthlac's Church May Fayre

Saturday 18th May

11:00am-2:00pm

Holbrook Road

LE2 3LF



Summer Bedding Plants

Vegetable and Herbs

Annuals and Perennials



Coffee, tea and refreshments

Ploughmans Lunches and Hot Dogs

Popcorn Soft drinks

Cakes and Preserves



Jumpers and knitted goods

Games Jewellery Tombola

Free Admission

From the Editor

The July/August edition of the Magazine will be issued in mid-July. The closing date for copy will be **Monday 1 July, but you can send your contributions at any time.** **Don't wait!** Please send your contributions, preferably in Word, to the usual address, stmaryknighton.magazine@gmail.com.

Articles do not represent the opinions of the Parochial Church Council of either church. Typographical and other errors (and the occasional omission) are the Editor's responsibility.

MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION

Polite Reminder

Your Magazine subscription is now due. The cost remains the same at £5 per annum for those whose magazine is delivered (Published 6 times a year – January, March, May, July, September and November).

Those who receive an e-mail copy are not charged but all donations are gratefully received!

As the bank now charges £1-50p per cheque to process these, may I ask if you could pay your subscriptions by cash. I do apologise for any inconvenience caused.

With my continued thanks.

Bernard Stone

66, Aberdale Road,
Leicester,
LE2 6GA

Wit and wisdom ...

- How does Moses make tea?
 - *Hebrews it*
- Venison for dinner again?
 - *Oh deer.*
- I used to be a banker -
 - *But then I lost interest.*

PLANNED GIVING

Regular giving is an integral part of our church life supporting our day-to-day costs, ministry and mission. A good way to achieve this is through a monthly bank standing order as part of our Planned Giving Scheme. Scheme details can be obtained from Planned Giving Scheme contacts for each church, listed below. If you are a taxpayer and gift aid your giving, the church can claim an additional 25%.

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Oadby and Wigston
Fundraising Group

Invite you to a very special Halloween

Marie Curie Autumn Lunch

Thursday 31st October 2024
12.30 am for a 1 pm start

The Leicester College
Freemens Park Campus,
Aylestone Road
Leicester
LE2 7LW

Best costume will win a prize
£23 per person

Call Shirley for tickets on 01162811401

 REGULATOR



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EVENTS

Wednesday 11th September

Josh Smalley of Great British Bake-Off fame (and Leicester University's Chemistry Department) will give a talk on baking and his many other interests.

St Mary's, 7pm.

This is a fundraising event organised by the Christmas Tree Festival team and will support the Place of Peace project at St Mary's and the Wishes for Kids charity.

Look out for details of ticket prices and how to book, to be announced soon.

Saturday 30th November and Sunday 1st December

The Knighton Christmas Tree Festival 2024

St Mary's.

Saturday 10:00am-5:00pm.

Sunday 12:30pm-5:00pm.

Admission £2.50 (children free).

This year's local external charity is the Laura Centre.



COFFEE MORNING

ON SATURDAY 8TH JUNE 2024

10 AM – 12 NOON

ST MARY MAGDALEN CHURCH

BRINSMEAD ROAD, KNIGHTON

STALLS TO INCLUDE

PLANTS, CAKES, BOOKS,

JIGSAWS, GIFTS

RAFFLE

JUST COME ALONG

EVERYONE WELCOME

Travellers' tales quiz

Where and what is this?

Clue: it's near the beehive.

Answers to the editor please. There are no prizes, but a full explanation in the next issue.

