

## A thought-provoking 'Vicious Circle'



*The Revd Magdalen Smith with her sculpture 'Vicious Circle'*

Art has long been used as an aid to spiritual reflection - and a priest from Wilmslow created a piece of sculpture for display in church as an aid to spiritual reflection.

The sculpture Vicious Circle was made by the Revd Magdalen Smith using concrete, mostly painted white, and shards of glass, some tinted with colours reminiscent of bruising and blood.

Magdalen was helped in the creation by Peter Johnson, the organist from St Bartholomew's Church, and his wife Barbara. (St Bartholomew's is one of two churches in Wilmslow parish, where Magdalene is Associate Priest). The glass was donated by a local business, Wilmslow Glass.

The sculpture was, says Magdalen, intended as a "creative attempt to help people reflect on issues of common humanity and theology". It was displayed in St Bartholomew's.

Magdalen has a degree in art from Warwick University and has always been interested in how visual art can help people reflect on

issues of common humanity and theology. She said: "Visual and tactile art can help us see things from a different perspective."

With its jagged use of jagged glass, the piece symbolises the image of a contemporary crown of thorns. There is also one circle containing water - evoking the basin Pilate used to wash his hands of Jesus.

'Vicious Circle' is available to borrow free-of-charge. Please phone Magdalen Smith on 01625 524 717 or email [revmagssmith@btinternet.com](mailto:revmagssmith@btinternet.com)

## Join the great pilgrimage to the Holy Land

Led by Bishops Peter, Robert and Keith, this spectacular diocesan pilgrimage will take place from **5 to 14 April, 2011**.

Bishop Peter said: "The hotels will be excellent - 4-star deluxe or better - and exclusive use of a dining room will enable us to have evening fellowship and talks.

"The fundamental purpose of the pilgrimage is to deepen our faith, and our awareness of the Bible. It's amazing how familiar passages come alive as we read them in their cultural and geographical context."

There are still places available, but you are advised to book without delay.

For details and to book, please phone the Revd Canon Diane Cookson on 0161 4832633 or email her at [st.saviours@virgin.net](mailto:st.saviours@virgin.net)

NB Would people who have received brochures for the pilgrimage, please respond without delay, as Diane needs to process the necessary administration.

# Ministry

## Foundations for Ministry

Elspeth McPherson from St Bridget's, West Kirby, attended the Foundations for Ministry course last year. She said of it: "The course offered a wonderful balance of theology and practical application. It was set in the context of prayerful support in which meaningful relationships were fostered.

"I found it an immense privilege to explore faith issues with people from different church backgrounds, to recognise different gifting and to receive so constantly from others. New vistas were opened up for me, allowing me not only to read in much greater depth (a real luxury!) but also to visit several other churches and to experience what God is doing through 'Fresh Expressions of Church'.

If you are interested in joining the course in September, phone Gerri Tetzlaff at Church House for more information or an application form on 01244 681973 ext 229, or email [gerri.tetzlaff@chester.anglican.org](mailto:gerri.tetzlaff@chester.anglican.org)

The deadline for applications is 31 July 2010.

## Ember List – Priests and Deacons 2010

Please remember those being ordained priest and deacon this year in your prayers. The following people will be ordained priest in Chester Cathedral on **Saturday 19 June 2010** by Bishop Peter:

**John Allister:** Hurdsfield

**Peter Bourke:** Moreton

**Alan Dawson:** Hale and Ashley

**Gill Foster:** Frankby with Greasby

**Karen Freeman:** New Brighton, St James with Emmanuel

**James Halstead:** Gee Cross

**Gillian Hibbert:** Hospice of the Good Shepherd, Backford and Countess of Chester Hospital

**Lisa Hitchen:** Brinnington with Portwood, Stockport

**Ann Hyde:** Bramhall, St. Michael & All Angels

**David Labdon:** Bebington

**Glyn Lucas:** Cheadle, St Mary

**Robin Mosely:** Chester, St Mary-without-the-walls

**Bruce Perrin:** Marple, All Saints

**Joe Pienaar:** Romiley, Stockport

**Jon Prior:** Elworth

**Jane Proudfoot:** Stockton Heath

**Alex Sanders:** Tarporley

**Liz Shercliff:** Marple, All Saints

**Pamela Soult:** St Lawrence, Over Peover with St Oswald, Lower Peover

**Mark Watson:** Higher Bebington

Jacky Wise: Crewe, All Saints and St Paul with St Peter.

The following people will be ordained deacon in Chester Cathedral on 4 July 2010 by Bishop Peter:

**Jenny Bridgman:** Heswall

**Jim Bridgman:** Heswall

**Maureen Coats:** Eastham

**Jenny Gillies:** Bidston

**Dot Gosling:** Chester Cathedral

**John Harrison:** Hoylake

**Thia Hughes:** Middlewich with Byley-cum-Lees

**Andy Livingston:** Poynton

**Linda Lonsdale:** Alderley Edge

**Andrew Lythall:** Stockport St George

**Jenny Mayo Lythall:** Norbury

**Sue Mayo:** Edgeley and Cheadle Heath

**Mark Montgomery:** Diocesan Youth Officer and Hon. Curate at St Mary's Upton

**Elaine Ollman:** Frankby with Greasby

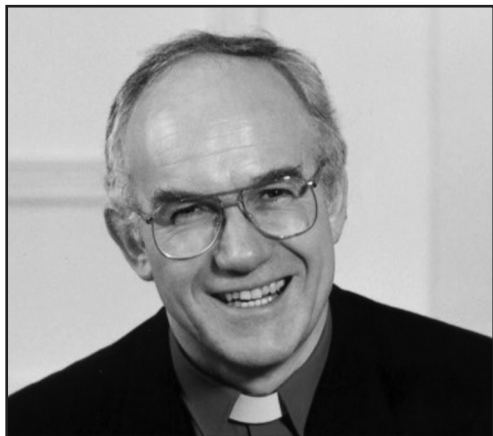
**Deborah Prest:** Timperley

**Gill Stanning:** Kingsley, Norley and Crowton

**Emma Watson:** Birkenhead Priory

**Annie Woodcock:** Newton in Mottram

## It is best to mark the death of a 'child of God' with proper solemnity, writes the Bishop of Chester



I have been thinking recently about funerals – not my own, particularly, although having just obtained my bus pass (and other welcome perks) in idle moments that has crossed my thoughts.

My mind has been concentrated by another experience, which is becoming more common: to go to a funeral, only to find that the cremation or burial has taken place earlier in the day, and the funeral has become a celebration of the deceased's life.

Why does this jar with me so much? There have always been occasions when of necessity a funeral has been held without a body, but that seems different from a deliberate decision to hold a small private 'funeral' before a larger 'celebration' or 'commemoration'. I think there are several reasons why I regret this new trend in our society, and especially when it invades the Church.

Firstly, it easily gives the impression that our bodies don't matter much, that the essential 'me' is a disembodied soul or spirit. It was precisely such a view, common in the ancient world, that (like Judaism) Christianity rejected. I believe in the resurrection of the body: that statement is not in the Creed for nothing. It emphasises that we are created, taken from the dust of the earth, and that it is *this* world which God has chosen to redeem and re-create.

We are not spiritual chips off some cosmic block longing to return home: we are sacred individuals, made in God's image, body, soul and spirit.

Secondly, these new funeral practices can seem to put death to one side, to ignore or even deny its reality. Some poems read at funerals give the same impression: 'I have only slipped into the next room', etc. Some music chosen at funerals likewise seems out of place, missing the proper solemnity which should mark the death of a child of God.

For Christians, death is an intrinsic part of life itself. We are baptised into the death of Christ, that we might live his risen life. The Christian life can be seen as a progressive embracing of death, or rather of the crucified and risen Christ progressively embracing us. Just as the crucifixion is presented in the New Testament as the crucial event in God's love for the world, so we should not evade the central place our death has in our journey to God.

When we organise a funeral we set out liturgically to accompany the deceased on his or her journey to God. That's why funerals are so important, and why the person, in the form of their body, should be part of the ritual itself. Only then will a funeral also become a witness to the resurrection.

**+Peter**

### **Chester Diocesan News**

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# Donald Allister's consecration

**Under the gilded dome of St Paul's Cathedral, the Archbishop of Canterbury and some 30 other bishops consecrated Donald Allister as a bishop back in March, then on 17 April he was installed as the Bishop of Peterborough. STEPHEN REGAN reports...**

Before being made a bishop, Donald was Archdeacon of Chester. He spent, in all, 29 years in Christian ministry in our diocese.

The son of a Mersey docks manager and a nursing sister, Donald grew up mainly in Birkenhead, where he was also a Vicar between 1983 and 1989. He also served as Rector of Cheadle, and Rural Dean of Cheadle, as well as being an admired teacher and leader in our diocese.

The Bishop of Chester's Chaplain, the Revd Canon Dr Christopher Burkett, preached on the theme of "waiting on the word of God" during the consecration service at St Paul's Cathedral in London. During the 90-minute service Bishop Donald made a series of declarations including commitments to lead his new diocese in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and

to promote peace and reconciliation in the church and the world.

The highlight of the service came when he knelt before the Archbishop of Canterbury who in an act of consecration laid hands on him and anointed him with oil, while the other bishops gathered round and also laid hands on and prayed over him.

Some 200 people from around the Peterborough Diocese, including some 40 robed clergy and Readers, attended the service, along with many who had travelled to be there from our diocese, including all three of our bishops.

Donald was presented to the Archbishop by two Peterborough representatives, Rt Revd Frank White, Suffragan Bishop of Brixworth, and Mrs Anne Toms, chair of the diocesan synod's house of laity and one of its elected members on the Crown Nominations Commission which had chosen Donald for this post.

There were family and personal links for Donald in the consecration service. The first Bible reading was given by Lydia Asker, who will shortly be marrying the Allisters' son John in Cheshire.



The scene in St Paul's Cathedral during Donald's consecration

# n and installation as a bishop

The Revd Canon Dr Christopher Burkett, in his sermon, urged the new bishop to take time to study and ponder the scriptures. "Let the teacher teach how the teacher learns," he said, explaining that most people learn more by observing the teacher's methods than simply by absorbing his or her instruction.

Christopher also encouraged Bishop Donald to "resist the urge to be useful" but instead to be "set free from the compulsion of achievement." Living the Christian life, he said, was much more than completing tasks. "Take time to treasure people, cry with people, be with God and be with God's people," he said.

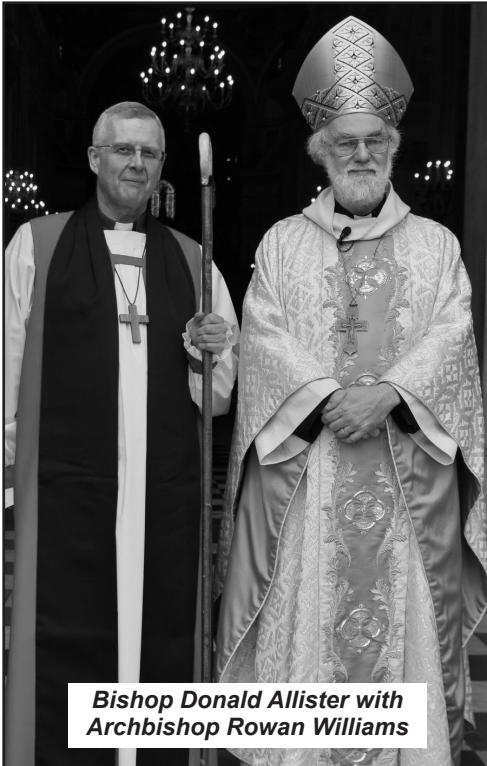
During his sermon at his installation in Peterborough, Bishop Donald asked for the congregation's support in helping him work with other religious groups in the multi-cultural city.

He said: "We want to build harmony in our society. Please pray for me and pray for the leaders of other faiths in this Diocese that we can be seen and known as friends, respecting one another, listening to one another, talking together while at the same time standing firm for our different beliefs.

"Our church, the Church of England which I love and which I want to be strong and alive, simply has too many divisions within it.

"I am determined during my time here as Bishop to do all I can to unite Anglican Christians so that our witness is clear and strong and our Lord is glorified."

## Pictures by Graham Laddao of St Paul's Cathedral



**Bishop Donald Allister with Archbishop Rowan Williams**



**Lydia Asker, who read the first Bible reading at Donald's consecration**

# Around the Diocese

## Congleton

The **concert organist** Carlo Curley will perform at St. Peter's Church, Congleton, on Saturday **10 July**, starting at 7.30pm. The performance will be relayed by HD video projection onto a large screen so that the audience can see as well as hear the performance. Carlo enjoys meeting his audience and there will be an opportunity to purchase CDs and videos. St. Peter's is a beautiful Georgian church – a fine setting for a concert. The organ in its present state was rebuilt by the Burslem firm of Steele and Keay after the style of the Harrison organ. Tickets, priced £10, can be obtained by phoning Pauline Drew on 01260 272315 or the Parish Office on 01260 273212.

## Bickley, near Malpas

Saint Wenefrede's Church, Bickley, Malpas, SY13 4JG, will hold a **flower festival** on the theme 'Life's Stepping Stones' over the weekend of **11, 12, and 13 June**. Opening times are 10.30am to 5pm. each day. Refreshments are available all day, including breakfast baps in the morning, and homemade cakes and puddings etc. All proceeds are for Church funds. St Wenefrede's is four miles north of Whitchurch, off the A49, 14 miles from Chester and Wrexham and 10 miles from Nantwich. For further details please phone 01829 720391.

## Stockport

Choral works in the German tradition by Bach, Brahms and Mendelssohn will feature in a **concert by St George's Singers** at St George's Church, Buxton Road, Stockport, **Saturday 26 June**, starting at 7.30pm. The musical director will be Neil Taylor. For ticket information please phone 01663 764012 or email [tickets@st-georges-singers.org.uk](mailto:tickets@st-georges-singers.org.uk)

## Marple

Marple Choral Society's summer concert will take place on **Saturday 19 June** at Marple Methodist Church, Church Lane, 7.30pm. Works by Rutter, Taverner and Barber will feature. Tickets cost £7.50 and are available on the door or from any choir member.

## Bromborough, Wirral

Saint Barnabas, Bromborough, Wirral will hold a **flower show** and **mediaeval fair** to celebrate the church's patronal festival. The flower show is open on: **Friday 11 June** (11am to 4pm, and 7pm to 9pm); Saturday 12 June (10am to 3pm) and on **Sunday 13 June** (11.30am to 12.30pm). Refreshments will be available. On the Saturday there will be a mediaeval fair with stalls, craft workers, a mediaeval battle display, sideshows, a beer tent and other refreshments. On the Sunday there will be an open air service in Church Square, starting at 10.30am. For further details, please hone the Revd Canon David Walker on 0151 201 5026.

## Wrenbury, near Nantwich

St Margaret's Church, Wrenbury (between Nantwich and Whitchurch), will hold a flower festival on **July 2, 3 and 4**. It will coincide with the village's popular Scarecrow Weekend. A special flower festival display is planned in the church on the theme of 'Country Living' which will portray our lives in the countryside. For more details please phone the Vicar, the Revd David Walton on 01270 780398.

## Bramhall, Stockport

St. Michael and All Angels Church, Bramhall, celebrates the centenary of its building this summer with a **Celebration in Art and Flowers** on the theme of 'Faith and Angels'. Visitors are invited: from 2 to 4.30pm on **Thursday 8 July**; from 10.30 am to 4.30pm on **Friday and Saturday 9 and 10 July**; and from 2pm to 4.30pm on Sunday 11 July. Light refreshments will be available. If you plan to bring a group, please phone 0161 439 3989 or email [stmichaels@ctibw.org](mailto:stmichaels@ctibw.org)

## West Kirby, Wirral

St Andrew's Church in Graham Road, West Kirby, Wirral, will hold its annual **blessing service for pets** on **Sunday 3 October**, starting at 3pm. The Bishop of Birkenhead will be the preacher and the organisation *Pets As Therapy* will be there. The service is intended to give thanks to God for animals as part of his creation, and to recognise their value as therapeutic companions for humans.

# A new era begins in Whaley Bridge

Whaley Bridge parish in the north-east corner of our diocese has a new Priest-in-Charge.

The Revd Cheri Pinner was licensed and installed at a service at Holy Trinity, Buxton Road, Whaley Bridge – one of two churches in the parish, the other being St James in nearby Taxal.

Cheri, who hails originally from West Virginia, USA, and over the years has worked as a teacher in China and New Zealand, was ordained in 2007.

Her husband John is also a priest, and he will be acting as honorary assistant curate in Whaley Bridge parish, which had been without a full-time priest for more than a year before the arrival of the Pinner.

Bishop Peter conducted the licensing and installation service, which had a personal, moving and joyous atmosphere.

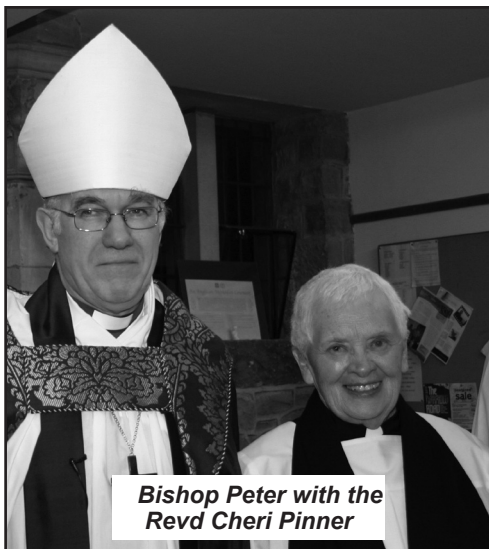
The bishop put the question to the congregation: “Churchwardens, church councillors and people of this parish, will you pray for, care for and support Cheri as she will pray for, care for and support you?” And all replied: “With the help of God, we will.”

Also present at the service was the Rural Dean of Chadkirck, the Revd Dr Peter Jenner, Pastoral Worker and Churchwarden Maureen Roberts, Churchwarden Pam Boon, and visiting clergy.

The Mayor of the High Peak borough, Peter Kay, told Cheri and John: “You will find High Peak is a very pleasant place to live.”

Afterwards there were tea and cakes and a wonderful feeling that a new era was beginning for Whaley Bridge.

Cheri said: “What a magnificent parish and place this is – and we have never felt so welcomed wherever we have lived.”



## New choral work gets a Chester premiere this month

Chester Bach Singers will present ‘Bells!’ – a new work by Martin Bussey on

**Saturday 12 June**, starting at 7.30 pm at St John’s Church, Chester.

The work is for soprano and tenor soloists, choir and children’s choir, accompanied by handbells, string quartet and piano. It features settings of poetry by Milton, Shakespeare and Apollinaire as well as arrangements of traditional songs.

This first performance will feature: Chester Bach Singers; the choir of St David’s High

School, Saltney; soprano soloist Jeanie Larkin; tenor soloist Jonathan Cooke; and Waverton Handbell Ringers. Martin Bussey, musical director of Chester Bach Singers, will himself conduct the production.

The BBC Performing Arts Fund is giving financial support to this concert.

Tickets are £11 (concessions £10; students and schoolchildren £5). They are available from CBS. Tickets on 0151 677 3137 or Chester Tourist Information Centre on 01244 402111.

# Free Media Training

This course covers some of the basic principles and practices of media handling and production.

It is tailored to the needs of clergy and parish workers with communications needs particularly those who may come in contact with the media or are involved with the production of parish newsletters.

The course comprises two sessions and will include the following topics:

## Publicising Parish Activities

- How to prepare an effective press release
- Getting to know your local media
- How to handle hostile press enquiries
- Designing a Parish Magazine / Newsletter.

## Digital Photography and Imagery

- How to get the best out of your camera
- Understanding your camera's features
- Photo editing software and techniques
- Preparing photos for publication

The course will take place at Foxhill, Frodsham, on Tuesday 22 Jun 2010. It is free to attend and includes lunch and refreshments.

To reserve your place phone Ann Finlay at Church House on 01244 681973.



## Frank Field's 'Saints and Heroes' book

Birkenhead MP Frank Field's Anglican faith has informed both his work as a reforming politician and his interest in English idealism.

In his new book 'Saints and Heroes – Inspiring Politics' he illustrates his understanding of English idealism through the life and work of five people. He looks at: father and son Frederick and William Temple (two Archbishops of Canterbury); George Bell (Bishop of Chichester during the Second World War); William Beveridge welfare pioneer; and social reformer Eleanor Rathbone MP.

The Labour politician is the former welfare reform minister who campaigns for justice and for new ways of ensuring the welfare of the poor. He is a member of the Church of England General Synod, a Lay Canon of Chester Cathedral, and co-founder of the charity Cool Earth which seeks to stop climate change.

'Saints and Heroes – Inspiring Politics' by Frank Field is published by SPCK, priced £12.99 (isbn 9780281061877).

