

Chester

Diocesan News

June 2017

News, features, jobs...
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Growing stronger parishes

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land



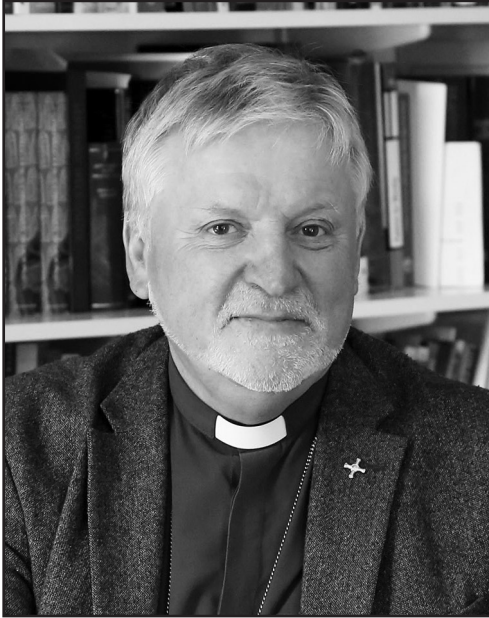
More than a hundred people from Chester Diocese went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land just before Easter. There are lots of pictures on the Diocesan website.

Pictured above is His Beatitude the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem. Archdeacon of Chester, Prof Philip Alexander, +Libby, His Beatitude, +Peter, Canon Prof Loveday Alexander, Prof Walter Moberly

New Diocesan Website

Visitors to the Diocesan website will have noticed it has had a make-over. The menus have been simplified and the new site is designed to work well on mobile phones and other devices. For the first time ever there is a Google map page which lists all churches and shows them on an interactive map. There is a search box on the site so it should be easy to find all information quickly. To see the site visit www.chester.anglican.org

Pray for our unbelieving neighbours



Another professor visiting with us, Philip Alexander, spoke one evening on the contrast between Jesus and his disciples and the Qumran community, which met in the desert and gave birth to the Dead Sea Scrolls. How was it that Qumran no longer existed, but the Church continues to thrive and is present in every culture and on every continent?

Because, he said, Jesus preached the kingdom of God, and made that kingdom present by his death and resurrection, so it is possible to enter that kingdom and live under Jesus' authority now, here as much as then, there. I found that comparison one of the most important insights of the whole pilgrimage. However faithless I am (and I am) that is not the end of the story; the kingdom of God is not dependent on my perfection but comes to me in my imperfection to bring forgiveness and Jesus' Spirit. And his kingdom is given to us together so that as we pray Jesus' prayer we pray for our own becoming like him.

"Thy Kingdom Come" is a call to prayer from Ascension Day until Pentecost. I hope you and your church are planning to join with churches across the diocese and country to pray for our country as Jesus asks us to pray.

Sometimes it is hard to pray. I have just come back from the Diocesan pilgrimage to the Holy Land. We began in Gethsemane where the Revd Professor Walter Moberly led us in considering how hard it was for Jesus to pray, "Your will be done", and how the disciples just fell asleep overcome by exhaustion or fear or both.

The pilgrimage in a country every bit as secular as our own and where public expressions of religious faith can repel as much as attract made me think how was it possible for Jesus' kingdom to be known by us? How could we live faithfully in our culture, when Jesus' own contemporaries rejected him?

He makes this possible so that even in 21st century Britain there is hope for his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. We can be good Samaritans, we can welcome tax collectors and sinners, we can call both younger and older brothers home to their Father, we can sit at Jesus' feet like Mary, we can become fishers of men and women.

Going to the Holy Land brought these truths to us who went as pilgrims, but the good news is that you don't have to go there to either enter his kingdom or live within it. May we have faith to pray for our own unbelieving neighbours and friends and see them enter the kingdom of heaven.

+Keith

New Director of Education appointed



Mr Chris Penn has been appointed as the new Director of Education for the Diocese of Chester. Chris is currently the Headteacher at Heswall St Peter

CE Primary. He will lead an Education Department which supports the 116 Church of England schools across the Diocese of Chester.

Chris has been Headteacher of Heswall for 10 years. Before that he held various teaching and advisory posts on the Wirral.

Chris said; "I am both thrilled and excited to have been offered the opportunity to become the Diocesan Director of Education – this is such an important and pivotal time in education. There is so much to celebrate within our church schools right across the diocese, and I look forward to working with the Education Team in getting out to schools to encourage, share and grow the great work that is taking place. Together, we aim to embrace and deliver the Church of England's vision for education, one that is deeply rooted in the Christian faith and enables all of our children to experience 'life in all its fullness.'

Bishop Libby Lane, who leads the Diocesan Board of Education - the education authority for the Diocese, said; "We are delighted that Chris will be joining the Diocese as our new Director of Education. He comes to us with a proven track record in education as head of a Church of England primary school in the Diocese. He has been appointed with a passion to inspire, engage and encourage our schools. He brings a deep faith and professional expertise to the post. We are delighted that he is joining the team at this crucial time, and I look forward to working closely with him to enable our schools to continue as transformative Christian communities academically and missionally."

Chris will take up his new role in the autumn of 2017.

Chester Diocesan News

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Church opens Cheshire Show

“The Church at the Show” will play an important part of the Show once more this year. The Show opens with a service at 7.30pm on Monday 19 June and each day begins with a Communion Service at 8am on Tuesday and Wednesday. A Service for the Countryside is held at 2pm on both show days.

The church marquee also provides a place to showcase all that is good about the Christian Church across Cheshire. There will be some beautiful knitted Bible scenes displayed by the Warrington Salvation Army Corps. Salt of the Earth will be returning with their mix of science and faith and Messy Church activities will take place alongside the church marquee.

Revd Anne Lawson, Chaplain to the Cheshire Agricultural Society, said; “If you are planning to come to visit the Royal Cheshire Show this year, please call into “The Church at the Show”. You will find it in the Rural Life Section, close to the Bandstand. You can be assured of a warm welcome, a place to sit down, some simple refreshments and an opportunity to appreciate all that is good about the Church in Cheshire.”

About the Show

For more than 175 years, the Cheshire Show has been a key agricultural event which celebrates the people, businesses and traditions of the county. In 2016 the Show was awarded the honour of ‘Royal’ status and, in April 2017, Bishop Libby became Show President.

With its roots firmly embedded in farming, the Royal Cheshire Show holds many competition classes for best cattle, sheep, pigs and dairy goats, but also includes hundreds of classes for light and heavy horses, show jumping, rare breeds of livestock, poultry, pygmy goats, pigeons, cavies, rabbits and dog show.

The 2017 show will also feature the Roberts Bakery Food Halls and Food Live Theatre, The Sainsbury’s Agri Centre, Inspired Villages Village Green, Countryside Experience Area, Creamline Main Ring, and the Costain Rural Life Area which includes, Cheshire WI, NAFAS Flower Marquee, Schools Out, NFU Publicity and many, many more.

The Royal Cheshire Show takes place on 20 and 21 June 2017 at The Showground, Tabley.





Church Housing Trust launches booklet to support churches

The 'How to Help Homeless People' booklet provides advice for clergy and laypeople on how to help homeless callers and what further action they might take, especially if



they do not run any services themselves. It includes practical advice and a poster that can be filled in with local shelters, hotlines and other emergency contacts.

Visit churchhousingtrust.org.uk to download 'How to Help Homeless People' for clergy and volunteers, or contact 0207 269 1630 or info@churchhousingtrust.org.uk to request hard copies.

St Mark's are having their Garden Ramble and Scarecrows on Sunday 18 June 12 – 5pm, tickets £5. Tea, cakes and free parking will be available at the Village Hall. All proceeds go to the Porch

Restoration Fund. Tickets are available from the Village Store and Village Hall on the day. Further information contact Maggie Brooks 0161 941 6738 or email maggiebrooks49@googlemail.com.

Director of Education for the Diocese retires



More than 80 people gathered to celebrate the retirement of Jeff Turnbull, our Diocesan Director of Education, in late April 2017. Jeff has been in the role for the past 25 years. Jeff's

wisdom, experience and enthusiasm has benefitted generations of children and teaching professionals in Cheshire and wider afield. Please remember him in your prayers.

Messy Easter Events

Messy Easter took place at Oxton St Saviour's parish centre on 1st April 2017. It was a wonderful morning filled with crafts, activities, fun, friendship and fellowship.

Egg carton crosses, Easter baskets filled with chocolate eggs, Holy week banners, palms, an Easter prayer tree, Easter cards

to make... were just a few of the exciting things that were on offer. Hot cross buns, cakes, biscuits, juice, tea and coffee were enjoyed whilst the Easter story was told.

An Easter hat competition was held in church followed by an exciting act of Messy worship, with a story, prayers (with sweets!) and lots of singing to bring the day to a close. 91 people attended this fun filled morning!



Stations of the Cross at St Laurence Church

Children from Frodsham Church School have created a series of images to tell the story of Easter. A Christian artist, Chris Gilbert, led workshops which took place over two days. A number of people from the church community supported the children in their work. The finished artwork was displayed around the church with information about each image.

Gail Fullbrook, who helped organise the event, said: "The children were amazing to work with and their depth of understanding and empathy with Jesus took our breath away. The children were also asked to comment: Emma said; "I used sad subdued colours to portray the sadness felt by Jesus and by the friends who were watching him." Maddy said; "The light around Jesus shows that even at this dark moment, God was with him." Clementine said: 'I painted the centre red to remind us that Jesus shed blood and

died for us on the cross.' And Jonathan said; 'Jesus is shown on the cross with his Spirit leaving him. You can see God's hands reaching out. The cross is shining in the darkness.' Heather; 'My image is a Pieta which is the Italian word for pity. It is where people recreate a picture of Mary holding Jesus as a baby, but they paint it showing Jesus as an adult. Mary cries. As a mother she expects to hold her baby son in her arms, but not to hold him at his death. It is so sad.'

