

# Chester Diocesan News



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
Diocese of Chester

#EverydayFaith across the Diocese of Chester | September 2021

## Foxhill re-opens



Revd Jonathon Green  
invites you back

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**A**s we plan our retreats for the autumn and into 2022, the words of the well-known hymn 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind' has come to mind, especially the final two verses which are based on 1 Kings 19:

***Drop thy still dews of quietness,  
till all our strivings cease;  
take from our souls the strain and stress,  
and let our ordered lives confess  
the beauty of thy peace.  
Breathe through the heats of our  
desire  
thy coolness and thy balm;  
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;  
speak through the earthquake, wind,  
and fire,  
O still, small voice of calm!***

We have felt as though we were living through a time of earthquake, wind, and fire. As we have tried to 'fix it', strain and stress have been evident in all areas of life as we have all tried to listen to God.

Joe Simpson's compelling book, *Touching the Void*, feels relevant as we grapple with these challenges. It tells of a mountaineering accident, more than 6,000 metres up in the Andes, that involved not only an extraordinary ethical dilemma but a four-day solitary life-and-death struggle without food or water, crawling back to base camp with a badly broken leg. He speaks mystically of his *via negativa*, the terrible desolation of those lonely days.

What kept him alive was a voice:

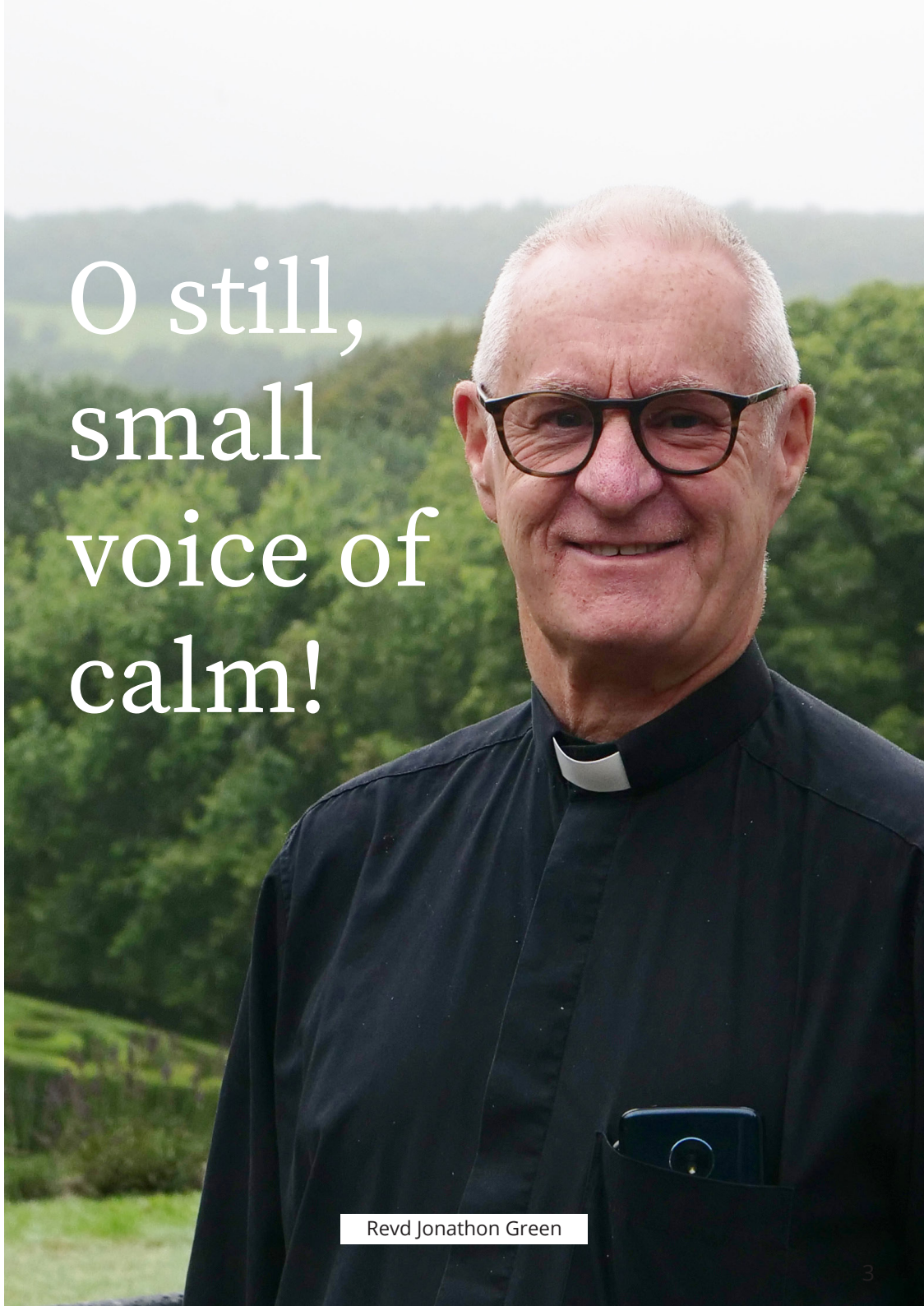
*There was silence and snow, and a clear sky empty of life, and me sitting there. It was as if there were two minds within me arguing. The voice was clean and sharp and commanding. It was always right, and I listened to it when it spoke and acted on its decisions. The other mind rambled out a disconnected series of images and memories and hopes which I attended to in a daydream state... The voice had banished the mad thoughts of my mind. An urgency was creeping over me, and the voice said: "Go on, keep going"..."*

This account has spoken to me as we have navigated the past months.

In 1 Kings 19, like the mountaineer, Elijah has reached the end of his resources in the face of Jezebel's threats. From now on, the Lord is not in the fire, nor in the titanic generalities of a grandstand event. He is in the voice that speaks with minute and specific intent; not the comforting 'still small voice of calm' of the hymn, but one requiring urgent obedience, summoning him to do the hard thing, to leave his cave and go back to where ordinary life is lived and where a prophet's words and actions belong.

As we journey together, we would love to welcome you on retreat at Foxhill, to give the opportunity to take time out and to hear the still, small voice as we seek the Lord's direction in our next season.

**Revd Jonathon Green**  
**Director of Foxhill, House and Woodlands**



O still,  
small  
voice of  
calm!

Revd Jonathon Green

# Foxhill welcomes you back

**F**oxhill is the house of prayer, study and mission for the Diocese of Chester, a Christian space for retreats, conferences and training. Set within 70 acres of woodland and lawns, the house, with its twenty-one bedrooms and three conference rooms, is the ideal venue for overnight stays, day visits or meetings. Whether your stay is residential or just for the day, Foxhill offers you peace and space for relaxation, reflection and renewal.

Foxhill is an oasis of calm located just outside the market town of Frodsham, just a few miles from the M56 and the local train station. Christian groups can host their own events here or you can join us on one of our numerous organised events which include quiet days and guided retreats.

For more information, visit [www.foxhillchester.co.uk](http://www.foxhillchester.co.uk)



Set in 70 acres  
of woodland  
and lawns



# Events at Foxhill

We have several forthcoming events at Foxhill. Some are listed on the opposite page, where you'll notice three retreats. But what is a retreat and who is a retreat for?

In simple terms, a retreat is exactly what it says on the tin, a time and place to get away from the normal day to day of life for a while, to escape the routines, the distractions, and the worries. Of course, it's unrealistic to think that a retreat can work like a magic wand, instantly distancing our thought processes from their default settings, but a retreat can certainly help and guide us into a calmer and considered state of thought spirituality.

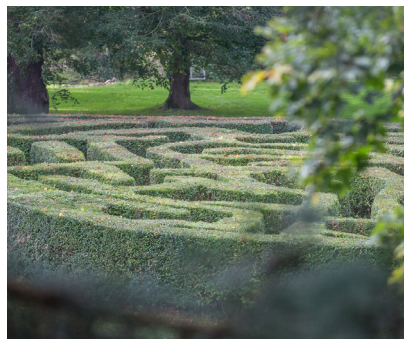
No two retreats are the same. An organised retreat will have a retreat leader or guide, who will usually focus on a particular theme, passage of the bible or spiritual learning. Leadership styles vary amongst leaders, which is why retreats with similar titles can be so different from each other.

Foxhill occasionally organises silent retreats, which can sound (no pun intended) a bit intimidating for those that have yet to experience one.

Some people who try them feel that they are not for them, whilst others really enjoy the experience. It's important to remember that many silent retreats aren't silent at all, but there'll be times when the leader will ask people to reflect on a subject, in silence. If you allow yourself to go with the flow, even if it feels a bit strange at first, by embracing the experience you will open your mind to a new way of thinking and connecting with God.

If you are interested in attending any Foxhill event but aren't quite sure which one would be best suited to you, why not phone us for a chat. Our director, Revd Jonathan Green, or another member of our team will be very happy to talk.

**Call 01928 733777**



## Sanctuary Time: Renewal Retreat for Church Leaders

For ordained and lay church leaders from all denominations to spend time with God.

29 Sept - 01 Oct 2021



 Foxhill

## Sanctuary Time: A Renewal Retreat

A chance to enjoy the rest and refreshment that Foxhill offers, along with worship and ministry.

01-03 October 2021



 Foxhill

## 'Let him easter in us': living the resurrection today

This is a weekend for all Christians wanting to refresh their joy in Christ.

05-07 November 2021



 Foxhill

## Re:Source retreat with Bishop Mark and Christopher Landau

Retreat and worship, with time to enjoy the house and grounds.

10 November 2021



 Foxhill

# Events



## Including those with dementia

13 September 2021- Online

This course offers the opportunity to learn more about dementia and the challenges people face and to find out ways in which you and your church can support them.

[More](#)



## Being There: Taking Funerals

16 September 2021- Online

A five-session course - Readers and Pastoral Workers can attend this course as part of the preparation for undertaking funeral ministry.

[More](#)



## Youth Speak

18 September 2021- Foxhil, Frodsham

Youth Speak is for 10–18 year olds to meet together and exchange ideas on topics that affect them and the world today. Come and join us for our first meeting [More](#)



## Digital Advances

16 September 2021- Online

Almost every church has used digital technology, but which of these changes will be part of our churches going forwards?

[More](#)



## Wellbeing of all God's people

14 October 2021- Handbridge, Chester

We have been living through extraordinary times. Step back and reflect with us on the mental health challenges we face at the end of 2021.

[More](#)