

“News” from St Michael’s Churchyard “Don't panic! We are here to help”

Further to my introduction in last month's church newsletter - I, William Reginald Rabbit of the 10th Warren of Much Hoole (a highly respected and long established rabbit family) would like to update you on our progress of overseeing the church lands for you, our human friends, at this difficult time.



All is going well, although there are slight issues in the border by the southern entrance. We had successfully kept the pansies and wall-flowers at the absolute minimum, and at the beginning of May what were left of these flowers had been removed. Flower ladies were then seen digging over, feeding with natural fertilisers and watering the soil. At this point all our colony were becoming quite excited in anticipation of what the new plants would be! My favourite, the primula? My beloved Flopsy's favourite, the pansy? - We would have to wait until the frosty nights were over...

By the third week of May the plants appeared: Lobelia; French and African marigolds. All our LEAST favourite plants - and not only that - a strange smelling powder had appeared, carefully sprinkled on the edge of the border.

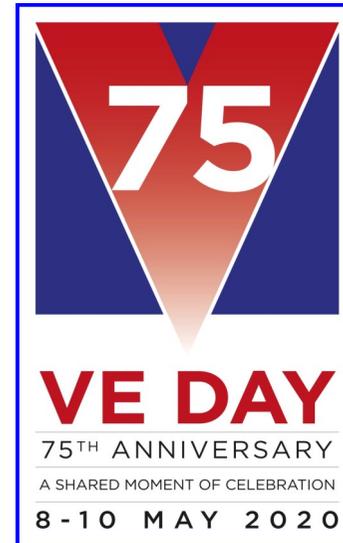


When one tried to identify the powder by sniffing with one's nose, one got an extreme bout of sneezing!

So, as you can imagine, we are very busy trying to overcome these challenges. Please do not worry- we, at the 10th Warren of Much Hoole, will do our very best to keep these new additions to the border under our control!

God bless you all,
William Reginald Rabbit.

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH MUCH HOOLE NEWSLETTER



JUNE / JULY 2020 WELCOME!

Welcome to the second edition of St Michael's Newsletter: we hope you enjoy reading the reports and activities about our VE Day celebrations.

As we are currently still in lockdown we are again sending this out electronically to all those for whom we have email addresses and will aim to deliver what we can to those who usually have a magazine but are not on email. We will also leave spares in the church porch for people to pick up. Ideas and suggestions for future possible publications would be gratefully received.

With best wishes, Ann and Erika

FROM THE RECTORY

Dear Parishioner,

The highlight in the last few weeks in the community was undoubtedly the VE Day celebrations. Although we couldn't have the great community weekend celebrations we were planning, we did manage to mark that key day which was of huge national and international significance and at the same time still keep to the Lockdown regulations.

Our church bugler Carole Bamber played the Last Post outside the Rectory on May 8th at 11am, the houses of Liverpool Old Road were decorated with bunting, the sun shone, the traffic stopped and everyone lined up outside their houses to observe the 2 min silence and join in the national anthem. And so together we gave thanks for those who gave their lives and won peace for Europe.

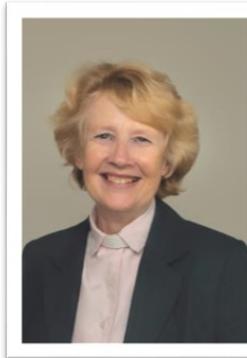
The church bells were then rung and all Hoole celebrated with family gatherings in their front gardens in parties -all day- celebrating victory. On Sunday 10th May the VE Day anniversary was the theme of our virtual service. During the service Betty Wignall describes, as if it were yesterday, the celebrations in Hoole in 1945 she enjoyed on that day when she was 15 - see below for an extract from the service and the full text of what Betty said. If you can, go to our website www.hooleparishchurch.com to see the video of Betty.

And do put the Remembrance Sunday weekend 2020 in your diary when we are planning to put on the events which coronavirus prevented. There will be a 1940s social event on Friday 6th November in Walmer Bridge village hall and a civic service in St Michael's Church with the

Bishop of Blackburn on Sunday 8th November.

Meanwhile let's continue to pray for our schools, our businesses and one another as we and the country strive to safely extract ourselves from Lockdown.

Ann Templeman, Rector. May 25th 2020.



ST MICHAEL'S VE DAY CELEBRATION SUNDAY 10th MAY

Extract from VE Day 75th Anniversary service with Betty Wignall:

Sermon:

"God is our strength and refuge ... the Lord Almighty is with us"- Psalm 46

We think first of that first great victory which brought peace to Europe after 5 and a half long years of a devastating war. It has been intensely moving to watch all the footage of the national celebrations in London with huge excited crowds outside Buckingham Palace and in the Mall wearing red white and blue, cheering, hugging, waving flags doing the conga and cheering with an unutterable relief and joy.

But what about Hoole - what was going on here in Hoole? How did we celebrate? Let me introduce you to Betty who was born in Town Lane on a farm in 1929. These are her memories of VE Day in Hoole in May 1945. Betty was 15.

"On VE Day, I was working on the farm with my father and brother. We were quite a way from the house. I went back to get the bagin (which is a drink) and I was met by Alice, my stepmother, who was very excited. She told me she'd been listening to the Churchill on the radio. He said the war was over. So I dashed back to the field and to father and my brother and he threw his cap up in the air and we were so, so excited. Upset really, with tears and laughter. So emotional.

Soon after, the church bells started ringing and the hooters from the ships on the river, the River Ribble, started hooting and we came home. We finished the work and we wanted to listen to the king's speech. We were drained really, so emotional we were. We put the flag out; we had a Union Jack, we put it through the

window: we had a sash window, and we put it through the window. We didn't have any street parties because we lived too far from the neighbours in those days.

We had a party, but it was in the Methodist School in Walmer Bridge, and we had a really, really good party. Then we went to the recreation field for sports and there was all sorts of sport and entertainment and a fun fair. The highlight of the afternoon was a challenge between Tommy Horrod, who was a very lively and vivacious chap, and Dick Wignall, who was more sedate and they undertook a 100 yards race. Well, Tommy set off like a house on fire, but his legs wouldn't keep up with his body and he fell flat on his face and Dick just strolled past! Talk about the tortoise and the hare, that's a typical example! We had a really good time; everybody was in such a good mood, and excited. But we were still very sad at the news coming on the radio about the Concentration Camps: they had just found out about them. We couldn't believe it. It was all very emotional."



Betty Wignall

Thank you so much Betty for helping us to capture something of what you experienced on that glorious but very emotional day.

But where does God come in? He is our strength and refuge an ever-present help in times of trouble says Psalm 46 which we have just read.. The Christian knows that ultimately there is no need to fear whatever happens – the Lord Almighty is with us.

God is Sovereign; this is his world. He is in control. The original context of this Psalm was some notable deliverance of Jerusalem from the attack of heathen invaders. But the deeper central meaning works for every age and situation. It is a sublime expression of quiet confidence in God's Sovereignty amid the upheavals of nature and history. So it is supremely relevant in the midst of a global pandemic. We all long for a Victory against this terrible virus. There are signs of hope but the Victory is certainly not yet complete; people are still suffering and dying. We all have a responsibility to play our part, whatever that is. All of us can make a big difference here: let's make sure we keep looking out for one another as life gradually we hope returns to normal, let's keep offering to get shopping for each other where needed, let's keep donating to the food bank, let's keep enjoying and giving thanks for the glorious countryside round here, let's keep chatting and making new friends in the street and let's keep sharing – speaking personally I am hugely grateful to all those who have been sharing surplus books and supplying me with new thrillers and crime novels. Above all else let's keep turning to our sovereign God for help.

God is here with us; He created us and loves each of us more than we can imagine. He sent His Son to save us. And now He is suffering with us, comforting, giving us strength to serve Him and others through it all.

As Christians we know that through the cross and His glorious resurrection the greatest Victory has been won. As CS Lewis remarked we are still living in enemy occupied territory - there is still

evil in our world – and there are still minor skirmishes to be fought. But the War is over; we are on the winning side and we have immediate access as Christians to High Command through prayer.

So, what is our task now? In our brief first reading from 2 Corinthians chapter 5 we are told that God has entrusted us with the message of reconciliation; we are Christ's ambassadors bringing that message of peace to all those around us. Start with the personal: now is the time to mend that broken relationship – try taking the initiative and saying sorry. And now outwards to your wider circle of friends and neighbours and share with them the message of reconciliation and the most crucial reconciliation of all – 'Be reconciled to God'. A truly awesome task but one we can take up with joy in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.

And so, we too with Christians down the ages who can say, "We will not fear; God is with us."

VE DAY AND CORONAVIRUS



Friday 8th May marked the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Regarded as one of the grandest celebrations in British history, during which festivities took place in 1945 to mark the end of the Second World War in

Europe. Parties in the streets and crowds cheering in Trafalgar Square marked Victory in Europe Day with the British public rejoicing after six long, hard years of war. This year, the Coronavirus pandemic has meant that hundreds of celebrations planned for the 75th anniversary of the momentous day all had to be cancelled.

But in the same way that millions of Britons have used technology to satisfy their longing for the pub quiz, to see family members, and even get married, VE Day 2020 took place at home and online. In our villages, we listened to Carole Bamber playing the "Last Post" outside the Rectory at 11am followed by the ringing of the bells at church. A large number of parishioners and their friends came along to view both events. Ann and Peter provided a special VE Day service on Sunday 10th May, when Betty (see page 4) gave her memories of that amazing day.

Other online services by Ann and Peter on Sunday morning provide a wonderful thought provoking way of reading and accepting the bible stories.

As for Liz Boland's Sunday school presentation, it is a breath of fresh air, suitable for children and adults alike to watch and watch again.

One good thing to come out of our current situation is the way people are helping each other, and talking together, bringing the village feeling back to the community.

God bless you all.

Bill Carr, Church Warden Emeritus.



A THANK YOU FROM FOMO...

(received in early May)

FOMO says a massive thank you to all who were able to make a donation to help with our mission to improve the lives of the children in Mulanje.

In the past month we have been able to maintain the feeding programme, clinic including the HIV/Aids unit. As our secondary school has been closed to the Covid 19 restrictions, the staff have implemented a distance learning scheme through our 14 centres and electronic platforms for those that have access to phones. Also as a result of these restrictions a system of social distances and hand washing with soap has been implemented at the centres. Though not perfect, the children and staff are coping well with the new restrictions. Unfortunately the formal playschool periods have had to be suspended, but the children are still able to attend their nearest centre to access food. The tailoring centre is busy making face masks, but other activities have had to be suspended: Computer and Driving School; out of school activities; and including football and netball.

Official News: The government tried to implement a UK style stay at home 21 day lockdown, but this was challenged in the court and still after two weeks we are waiting for a decision, hopefully this coming week. The main concern is that as people live from hand to mouth on a daily basis, how they can survive without any income or plan to help them.

Malawi has recorded 33 cases of the virus and 3 deaths, but has only done just over 500 tests. There is a bit of confusion about these figures with conflicting accounts. The main referral hospitals have been cleared of patients and there are concerns about equipment and PPE. There is little transparency from the government on what resources they have and what plans need to be put in place.

Some travel restrictions into the country are in place, but people are still moving fairly freely across the borders.

If you have access to a computer or Google home devices then you can listen to Zodiac Radio, which gives some information in English about the current situation.

Malawi still has a long way until it gets back to normal and even normal is not that great.

FOMO will be there to help where it can and we appreciate all the support you can give to maintain our care and development programme.

Many, many thanks to St Michael's.

Keith & Mary Woodworth



WATER AID 2019-2020 – UPDATE...

Thank you to everyone who has dropped off their water aid collections in the last month.

Just a reminder that I am happy to pick your jar up from you, or you can drop it off at my house:

28 Liverpool Old Road, Much Hoole, PR4 4RB

07745 208617 / 01772 387404

Bw12252@hotmail.com

If you get your jar to me in the first week of June it will likely be included in our 2019-2020 donation.

The total as at 24th May is: £466.62

And there could be more as another jar has come in which has not been counted and banked yet.

By the way – for some reason we appear to have acquired rather a lot of foreign coins in the jars this year?! I am passing them on to an appropriate collection point as there is little I can do with them.

Many thanks

Barbara Wood - Treasurer



FINANCIAL STATUS UPDATE

Thank you once again, one and all, who have continued with their donations to Church by whatever method you use (and in some cases even increased them). It is really, really appreciated.

However, could I ask you to let me know **in advance** if you intend to make an online donation direct to the church bank account (unless you have already advised me you are setting up a standing order).

This will help me greatly in my book-keeping. Thank you.

Many thanks

Barbara Wood - Treasurer

Treasurer to the PCC Hoole Parish Church

07745 208617 / 01772 387404

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If you have received this newsletter by hand and have an email address to which it could be sent, please could you let Ann Templeman know by email as above.



Children's Work Update



Weekly Sunday School and Youth for Christ activities have continued to be sent out each week. Sunday School have kept in line with the same readings as the adults during their services. We have done an obstacle course, decorated biscuits, decorated big hearts with ways we can love God and love our neighbour, told the whole story of Jesus using a cross divided into sections, as well as had some fun prayer ideas, new songs and lots of Bible stories read by me, the children and families

and videos that retell the stories well on YouTube.

The older group of children have continued to watch videos produced by Youth for Christ on subjects such as online relationships, keeping focused on God and generosity. These are very well produced and thought-provoking videos produced for young people in this time of lockdown. They have been recorded to help young people keep focused on God and keep on track with their faith in these difficult times.

As adults, I ask that you will continue to pray for the children and young people in our church, that throughout this time, their faith will grow and they will come to a deeper understanding of God and faith. I will continue to produce these sessions will continue for as long as necessary, but hope and pray that it won't be too much longer before we are back in church together.

Liz Boland

