

ST. JOHNS CHURCH DONISTHORPE

GRAPEVINE

NOVEMBER 2021



GOD IS BIG ENOUGH TO HOLD US ALL STEADY

Since I live in Groby but work for the Woodfield Team in North West Leicestershire, I do a lot of driving between the two. And this is one of my favourite times to drive because I can watch the changing colours of Autumn. As I watch the leaves change and see the glorious shades of reds, oranges, yellows and browns, I cannot help but simply be in awe of our beautiful world.

Within the church this is a time when we focus on creation. We have just come to the end of the season of Creationtide, and we have recently been celebrating God's amazing abundant generosity in our harvest festivals this year. And given the trials of the last eighteen months it was particularly good to be able to welcome some of the children back into church.

At this harvest time we focus on the land and on our world, not only to give thanks but also to reflect on the damage that our greed and our thoughtlessness is doing to our world. To reflect on the effect that climate change is having on the harvests of some of the poorest people in our world and to reflect on how unfairly God's gifts are distributed.

On the 21st November the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, or COP26 as it is also known, will begin in Glasgow. I hope that the world's nations will realise the urgency of the situation. In the first book of the Bible, in Genesis, we are called to care for God's creation and we all have a responsibility to do what we can to ensure that our wonderful planet can thrive. We all have a responsibility to those who will come after us. I found it interesting that Prince William, after William Shatner's flight into space said this 'We need some of the world's greatest brains and minds fixed on trying to repair this planet, not trying to find the next place to go and live.'

As surely as the Autumn colours herald the changes of winter, we too will all face changes. Change is part of our lives whether we like it or not and change can be an unsettling and anxious time. But we can be hopeful that spring will come, and we can trust in a steadfast, unchanging God, to walk with us through these changes.

I love these words from the Venite Cantic:

In his hands are the depths of the earth; and the peaks of the mountains are his also.

The sea is his and he made it; his hands moulded dry land.

I fully believe that God is indeed big enough to hold us all in his healing arms. And at times of change, at times of uncertainty, I feel great comfort from being able to trust in God to lead us through the difficult times into the spring ahead.

God Bless

Wilma

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES THIS MONTH AND BEYOND

NOVEMBER SERVICES ACROSS THE WOODFIELD TEAM.

We are still not opening all of our 8 churches every Sunday, but moving round on a rota basis.

November's services look like this: (all starting at 10am unless otherwise stated).

November 6th: **Donisthorpe** (Lights of Love Service at 2pm)

November 7th Measham & Snarestone (HC) Packington & Appleby (Bap.) + 5pm. Zoom Service

November 14th **Remembrance Sunday in St. Johns Church Donisthorpe 10.00am**

November 21st **Donisthorpe** (Bap.), Swepstone & Appleby (HC), Normanton (Fam. Service)

November 28th **Donisthorpe & Packington (HC), Measham (Bap.), Swepstone (MP)**

LIGHTS OF LOVE - SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE:

Saturday 6th November at 2pm at St John's Church, Donisthorpe



A reminder about this service during which we can remember those whom we've lost and to whom we still want to say 'We love you'. There's a chance to light a candle and say a prayer for your loved one. Feel free to come along if this would be helpful to you. A Tree of Remembrance will be part of our Lights of Love service this year. It is sited in St John's Church. The church is open during the day-time (10am – 4pm) and please do feel free to come in.

There are tags to hang on the tree, where, if you wish, you can write the name of your loved one, and a message.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY PARADE SERVICE: 14th NOVEMBER: At 10am

The service of Remembrance at St John's Church will start at 10am in church and then conclude with the 11am silence at the memorial gates. It's an opportunity to remember those who laid down their lives in the past, but also those who continue to die in this world with so much unrest and conflict.

We are trying to get back to something like 'normal' this year after two years of disruption through Covid 19 and it is hoped that The Brownies, Guides & Rangers will be coming along to the service.

There are no specific restrictions around Remembrance Sunday services. The national situation has moved from an epidemic state with current variants of coronavirus reaching new individuals to an endemic one where the virus is present in the community but where previous infections and the national vaccination programme means the majority of people have some immunity.

Levels of immunity do vary individually and some people will continue to be significantly vulnerable to the virus and its potential long-term effects.

Current guidance emphasises the personal and corporate responsibility of individuals and organisations to undertake actions to protect others and themselves.

Within the Church we believe that everyone is known and loved individually by God and that as many members within one body we are called to be responsible to and for one another, respecting the more vulnerable whose suffering is our suffering (1 Cor 12:12-27).

Where we are now means we are being asked to take even more personal responsibility around coronavirus than when we were compelled to adhere to Government restrictions.

At St. John's we consider face covering by mask or visor, and taking care to maintain a safe social distance that you personally are comfortable with, while not compulsory, continues to be a reasonable precaution to take for the protection of yourself and others.



CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2021

Limited resources this year, require that we look carefully at what worship services we will be able to provide across the Woodfield Team of Churches this Christmas. Each church has been asked to consider what they would like to put on this year and to 'submit their bid' for consideration. We have requested that we hold 'Carols by Candlelight' on December 19th, 'Christingle' on Christmas Eve, as this service has become a very popular tradition in the village over recent years, followed later by a traditional Midnight Communion Service.

A request was also submitted that our usual Toy Service could also take place.

Bids need to be coordinated with other churches in the Woodfield Team before final decisions can be made and dates decided. More detail and information will be in next month's Grapevine.

THANK YOU. FROM VIVIEN

The life of the retired! I'm just back from a week's holiday near Bishop Auckland and am now living without anything to speak of in the diary. Very strange freedom. I still have a huge amount to do though here at my new house – too many boxes still in the garage and I'm challenged to know where to put it all. However, I am doing it little by little: slowly.

What I want to say though is how grateful I am for your generosity in my leaving gifts – absolutely brilliant. I've ordered some new curtains which part of your gift will cover, so very helpful and practical. I haven't yet turned my attention to the garden but there will be much to do when I have the energy. Thank you all so much. Thank you also for the cards which mean so much.

I have tried the church locally here. It feels familiar and not that different from the Woodfield team, but I keep my head down for now. I am not tempted to try to get too involved as yet. Skipton itself is a bustling place and a sense of life. It feels very odd though to go out and not see anyone I know which was not true in Measham and the other villages.

I am asked about dogs. So far no joy but I keep looking. It will happen I'm sure.

With my love to you all,

Vivien

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

A big thank you to all who brought harvest goodies along to St. Johns and other churches in the Team – it's all gone off to the Marlene Reid Centre in Coalville to help those families in need locally.

FROM SOLDIER TO SAINT

November 11th is the Feast of St Martin of Tours. This has particular significance to us in this Diocese, as Leicester Cathedral is built on the site of a Roman Temple dedicated to St Martin of Tours some 900 years ago.

St Martin was born somewhere between 316 to 336 AD at Savaria, Pannonia, now modern day Hungary, and is patron saint of the poor, of soldiers, of conscientious objectors, of tailors, and of winemakers. He died in 397 AD.

As a young soldier, Martin encountered a beggar in Amiens. The beggar was un-clothed, and it was very cold. Martin removed his cloak and with his sword and cut it in half. He gave this half to the beggar and dressed himself in the remnant. That night, Martin had a vision in which Christ appeared to him wearing the half-cloak. The vision spoke to him which moved him to renounce military life and become a monk. He later became an abbot and then a Bishop.

This story is depicted in a stained-glass window in Leicester Cathedral.

About the age of 20, Martin made clear to his superiors that he would no longer fight, He refused his pay prior to a battle and announced he would not



join in the combat. He became the first recognized conscientious objector in recorded history. Many miracles and the casting out of demons were attributed to Martin during his lifetime.

From the late fourth century to the late Middle Ages, much of Western Europe, including Great Britain, engaged in a period of fasting beginning on the day after Saint Martin's Day, November 11. This fast period lasted 40 days, and was, therefore, called "Quadragesima Sancti Martini—the 40 days of Saint Martin. On Saint Martin's eve and on the feast day, people ate and drank very heartily for a last time before they started to fast. This fasting time later evolved into "Advent."

SHAPED BY GOD – TOGETHER

DIOCESAN SYNOD VOTES IN FAVOUR OF A MINSTER COMMUNITIES FRAMEWORK

The Diocese of Leicester Synod has voted in favour of a Minster Community framework with an amendment that the stipendiary (paid) leadership team of at least four people (including lay and ordained roles) in each of the 20-25 MCs will be led by an Oversight Minister who is ordained.

One of the team will be a Growing Faith focussed minister (lay or ordained) to increase inclusion of children and young people within the ministry of our churches and fresh expressions. As well as the Oversight Minister, the leadership teams will comprise at least (but not limited, to depending on resources) three other stipendiary posts.

A Minster Community will be a "group of parishes" who work together to collaborate in mission without losing their individual identity, and who work alongside their church schools, fresh expressions of Church, chaplaincies etc.

The framework was overwhelmingly supported (72%) by Synod and it is intended it will gradually be brought into place by 2026, depending on discussions between parishes, schools and fresh expressions working together to decide what their local leadership will be.

You can read a summary of the framework on the Diocese website .

The next steps for the diocese will be to prepare for local conversations in parishes for early in 2022 and it is likely that two or three pilots will be set up in the first instance.

Bishop of Leicester, the Rt Revd Martyn Snow said that the comments made by Synod members during the debate and concerns raised would all be addressed and taken into account as the framework is worked out over the next few years.

Bishop Martyn said: "Nothing is going to change overnight and everything will be done in discussion with parishes. Every PCC, school governing body and fresh expression will be involved. Each will decide for itself how they engage with this."

You can read more about the Shaped By God Together process which the diocese is journeying through on their website

PROJECT HEART (TRANSFORMATION)

Activity level over the past month has been considerable:

The exhibition has been used in the church for two weeks, in Oakthorpe Leisure Centre for a week, at the village Apple day on October 10th and at Moira village hall from October 11th for 5 days followed by a further 5 days display at DM's from October 18th The interaction with the broader community is also in hand with plans to become involved with the Donisthorpe Action Group and the inclusion of the project as a regular agenda item to ensure that the community outside of the church is kept in the loop. This initiative will be supplemented by regular articles in 3 Views News and Grapevine. It is also proposed to produce a 3 minute promotional video to explain the project to potential funders and local businesses.