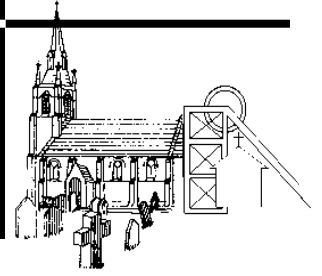


OUR COMMUNITY



KIM'S QUEST HOLIDAY CLUB 2008

**SEPTEMBER
2008
30 P**

We had a brilliant week at this year's holiday club. With loads of games, crafts, fun and activities that kept all the twenty five young people busy and entertained everyday.



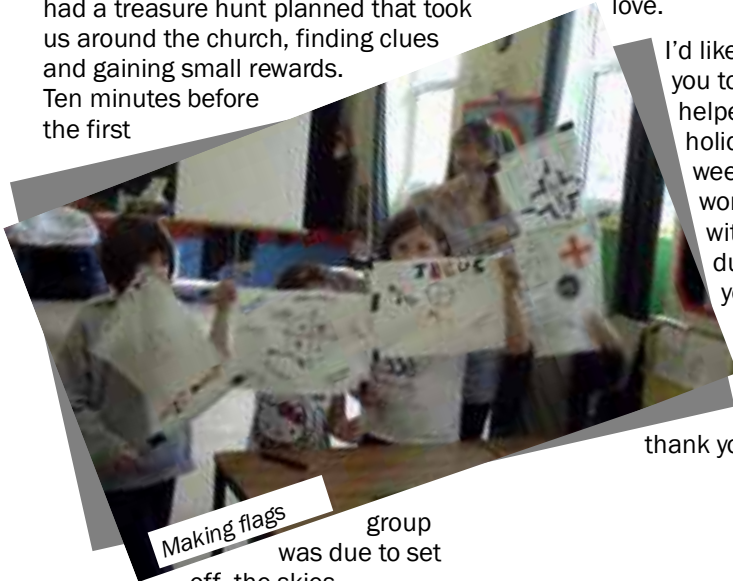
Treasure boxes

We made everything from huge treasure islands, to treasure boxes, and parrots that sat on our shoulders. We saw God's provision all week, especially of Friday when we had a treasure hunt planned that took us around the church, finding clues and gaining small rewards. Ten minutes before the first

person and that God has placed in us the treasure of greatest worth: His love.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who helped make this years holiday club a brilliant week. Without the hard work of so many of you with the preparations, during the week or your support with materials, the week wouldn't have been the success it was so once again, thank you.

Steve Medley



Making flags group was due to set off, the skies

changed from dull and rain- filled to dry and eventually sunny. The sun continued well into the evening which helped immensely with the family barbeque attended by nearly all the holiday club children and their families.

As we heard the 'Kim's Quest' story we explored what it means to be part of God's family, what it means to be valued as a



Making an island

*A wise man
will desire
no more than he
may get justly,
use soberly,
distribute
cheerfully and
leave
contentedly.
Anon*

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ST. THOMAS' CHURCH CALENDAR

September

Sunday 7th

9am Holy Communion & hymns. Sunday school and Pathfinders restarts. Peter Walker

10.30am Family Service. Peter Walker

Monday 8th onward

Groups and activities start again this week

Sunday 14th

9am Holy Communion. Ruth Walker

10.30am Family Communion. Peter Walker

Sunday 21st

9am Holy Communion & hymns. Peter Walker

10.30am Family Worship. Peter Walker

Sunday 28th

9am Holy Communion. Ruth Walker

10.30am Family Communion. Peter Walker

October

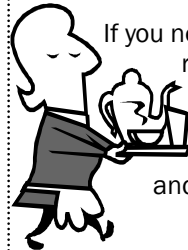
Sunday 5th

9am Holy Communion & hymns. Ruth Walker

10.30am Harvest Family Service. Peter Walker

Refreshment for all

Tuesday afternoons, 1.30-2.30pm in the Galilee Room



If you need transport or would like to request prayers, please contact Margaret Bosworth on 7633 7932 leaving a message if necessary with your name and telephone number and she will ring you back.

Daily Prayer

8.30am Monday, Wednesday and Friday at St Thomas' Church, Tuesday at Keresley Village Community Church.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Sunday Morning Activities at St. Thomas'

10.30am (during term time)

1st Sunday Family Service in Church

2nd Sunday 3-11s, Sunday School in Galilee Room, 11+, Pathfinders in the Church Hall.

All join the service around 11.25am

3rd Sunday All ages start in Church

4th & 5th 3-11s, Sunday School in Galilee Room, 11+, Pathfinders in the Church Hall

All join the service around 11.25am

This pattern may change occasionally for special services.

Youth Essence

Monday evenings, 7.30pm, Galilee Room

(School Year 9 and above. Contact Steve Medley for more details)

Thursday at St T's

For 5-11 years
Meets in the Galilee
On Thursdays
From 6pm to 7pm



First Steps . . . with Jesus

For babies and pre-school children with their parents and carers

Meets in the Galilee Room, weekly in term time

Mondays 1.30-2.30pm

THE ALPHA COURSE

Where and when:
The Galilee Room,
St Thomas' Church

Times:
you choose -

Wednesdays at 7.30pm; or
Fridays at 7.30pm or
Sundays at 5pm

we will run the course on the day which most people can manage.

Duration:
10 weekly sessions and an optional Day Away

Each session lasts between 1½ - 2 hours, there is a break for half term

If you would like to take part this year please contact the Vicarage and indicate all the times you could attend.

"WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?"

WHAT IS ALPHA?

The Alpha course is an opportunity for anyone to explore the Christian faith. It's relaxed, low key, friendly and fun. Nice refreshments are served at the beginning of each session which gives you an opportunity to get to know each other. Listen, learn, discuss and discover. And ask anything. Alpha is a place where no question is too simple or too hostile. And it's supported by all the main Christian denominations.

WHAT'S INVOLVED?

The Alpha course consists of a series of talks looking topics such as 'Who is Jesus?' and 'Why and how do I pray?' After each talk we divide into small groups for a time of discussion.

WHO IS ALPHA FOR?

Alpha is for everyone, especially:

- † Those wanting to investigate Christianity
- † New Christians
- † Newcomers to the church
- † Those who want to brush up on the basics

WHAT WILL IT COST?

There is no charge for the Alpha course, although you may be asked to make a contribution towards food.

Renewing our Stewardship

Every year at Harvest we are reminded that

All good gifts around us
Are sent from Heaven above

In other words we owe everything we have to God's good gifts.

Since all of our possessions are God's gift to us, we must use what he has given us responsibly. For instance, we must use our resources to care for our families, to meet our own needs, to care for others in particular need, and to do God's work in the World. Most of us in Church know this. What we do not find so easy is balancing the demands of all our own needs and wants, with the opportunities and responsibilities we have to give to other things. And we face all of this at a time of rising prices and more difficult economic circumstances.

So this Autumn the PCC have asked for us to "**Renew our Stewardship**". There will be special teaching in church on 3 Sundays: 21st September, 28th September & 5th October. Regular worshippers and Electoral Roll members will all receive information about the church's needs through the post. Then members of the PCC and others will approach people to ask you to consider how much you give to the church. The actual sum of money you decide to give remains confidential, but the team will answer any questions, help with practical information about envelopes etc, and ask you to complete a confidential Pledge Form.

Do we need this? Yes, for two reasons. Every year at the annual meeting, this church has been reporting Income that is thousands of pounds less than Expenditure. This is not just a matter of special projects like the redevelopment, this is for the everyday costs of running the church. We have managed financially by dipping into our Savings, however we cannot keep on doing this because one day we will run out of money! But we also need this Renewal of Stewardship to help us individually think about how to balance all the demands on our resources: eg hobbies vs family, or family vs charity, or church vs other charities, or borrowing vs saving.

So please do not be put off by Stewardship - it is mostly a matter of getting our priorities right - come along and ask God to help you think clearly about your priorities.

Peter Walker



HOW COME THE WAITRESS GETS 15% AND GOD ONLY GETS 10%?



CITY OF SANCTUARY

City of Sanctuary is a movement of local people, community groups, organisations and businesses who share a common aim of ensuring that their city is a welcoming place for people seeking sanctuary from war or persecution.

Coventry is looking to build on its history of welcoming people from other countries by becoming the UK's second City of Sanctuary - Sheffield is the first City of Sanctuary and many other large cities in the UK are working towards achieving this status.

In order to achieve City of Sanctuary status, Coventry has to show that the city and its services are welcoming and accessible to people seeking sanctuary, refugees and all vulnerable migrants.

For many years Coventry has offered a home to people whose lives were in danger in their own countries. Many have lost their homes and families, but they have brought new skills, music, food - contributing to our vibrant and diverse community

Coventry is looking to bring people and organisations together to see how we can build on this good work.

To hear more about **City of Sanctuary** or to find out how you might become involved, come along to:

the **Council House, Earl St**
on **Thursday, 25 September at 7.30 pm**

to discuss how we as individuals and as members of churches or other organisations can ensure the success of Coventry as a City of Sanctuary.

Speakers include:

Craig Barnett, City of Sanctuary
National Group

Councillor Andy Matchet, Lord
Mayor of Coventry



BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD

The 5 Minute Meditation

In his Sermon on the Mount our Lord said, *'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be satisfied'* (Matt. 5:6). These words that link hunger and thirst with blessedness sound strange in our ears. Every night around the world millions of people go to bed hungry and wake up to another day of not knowing where the next meal is coming from. Blessed? Hardly!

It is shocking and obscene when we are told the grim facts about world poverty and then told that the average family in Britain wastes £400 of good food every year. But of course our Lord was not talking about physical hunger and thirst on this occasion, although the world's hunger grieves him deeply and he expects that we and all his people will do all we can to relieve it.

Rather he was talking about spiritual hunger and spiritual thirst. We are truly blessed when we long for righteousness. 'Righteousness' is one of the very important words in the Bible. It describes what God is; God is righteous, meaning he is holy, just and absolutely dependable. We are blessed when we long to be like God - when we hunger and thirst to reflect his character in our lives.

When we look into the Scriptures we see that this longing for God and his likeness is the mark of the saints in every age. It is very prominent in the books of Psalms. Here is Psalm 42. *'As a hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God'* (vv.1,2). The

same longing is expressed in Psalm 63. *'O God, you are my God, I seek you. My soul thirsts for you as in a dry and weary land where no water is'* (v.1).

When the Psalmist is confronted with the enigmas of life, especially when the wicked seems to triumph, of one thing he is sure. *'Whom have I in heaven but you? There is nothing upon earth that I desire beside you'* (Ps. 73:25). One of the most familiar and most moving expressions of a pilgrim seeking after God is found in Psalm 84. *'My soul longs, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God'* (vv.1,2).

This longing for God is not confined to the Old Testament. In Philippians 3 Paul gives us a long autobiographical passage. He tells us what he used to be, what happened to him through meeting with 'Christ Jesus my Lord' - and now what the great all-absorbing ambition of his life is. *'That I may know him and the power of his resurrection'* (v.10).

Down through the centuries of the Church it has been the same; the mark of God's people is their longing to know him and be in closer communion with him. This longing fills the pages of the biographies and autobiographies of God's servants; from Augustine to Thomas Aquinas, to Martin Luther, to John Wesley, to Elizabeth Fry, to Mother Teresa. But of course this longing for God is not the prerogative of well known Christians in the history of the Church; it is the hallmark of all God's people whether expressed publicly or only secretly in prayer. And to all of them, and to us, our Lord gives the most wonderful assurance. When we hunger and thirst to be like him, we will be satisfied!

St Thomas' Keresley and Coundon

What were the local events and cares of the parish many decades ago?

They knew how to have fun - in 1938 the Sunday School went to Drayton Manor, but it doesn't sound like the roller coasters were there yet . . .

The Parish Church Sunday School Treat was held on Wednesday August 24th

The scholars with some parents and friends were taken in motor coaches to Drayton Manor. Tea was served about an hour after arrival, and after tea, the children amused themselves in the grounds.

The party arrived back about seven o'clock after a happy afternoon's outing in fine weather. Our best thanks are due to the helpers and the many friends of the Sunday school by whose generosity the treat is possible.

. . . and the Choir outing in 1908 sounds very merry according to this report written by A M Ensor!

At last the red-letter day, August 4, has dawned which the members of our choir had long been anticipating.

We jump out of bed and find a lovely morning greeting us.

After a pleasant walk we reach Foleshill Station in good time. When the train comes we find that our luxurious saloon is occupied by St Mark's choir boys, but luckily for us they are soon ejected. We have not been long in the saloon before we hear the cries of 'Up Jenkins', and also the stentorious cries of 'Snap' from the choirmaster. These are accompanied by shrieks of "Pop" which was kindly presented by Mr Butters. Some of our members occupied their time in viewing the scenery, which was indeed beautiful. We saw Lichfield Cathedral, Conway Castle and other interesting places.

Eventually we reach Llandudno, and we first find Smith's restaurant and arrange to have dinner here at twelve.

The adults then go for a sail, and the junior members retire to the sea to paddle. After paddling some visited the Orme. This seemed so fascinating that even the thoughts of dinner did not draw them away.

They, however, did arrive there just as the others had begun. When we had finished dinner the boys went bathing and the girls sailing.

At 3 o'clock we all retired to the 'Happy Valley' and here spent a very enjoyable time.

Afterwards we started to climb the Orme. The boys were very energetic, but I am afraid one boy came down much faster than he went up. The girls were very fatigued before reaching the Hotel at the top. However, after great efforts we succeeded and at the Hotel we had tea, which was very appreciable, as we had all good appetites after such a laborious climb. After tea we descended the Orme, but by rail, which was a much nicer way. We spent the rest of our time in buying presents for our friends at home.

We now made our way towards the station as the train started at twenty past eight.

In one part of the saloon, namely, 'Frisolous' or 'Happy Valley on Wheels,' there is great excitement; singing takes place and games are indulged in. We can also hear nothing but the classic refrain "o, Samuel, sing that melody," and it makes one think of that saying, 'Music hath charms.'

All this time they are enjoying themselves in the adult saloon. A banana game is invented. Further particulars of this game will be given on applications being made to Mr F Osborne. Also an Auction Sale takes place and some of the paraphernalia is sold.

At last we reach Coundon, hoping there to meet our brake, but, alas! We found that we had no brake to take us home, so we wended our way homewards, weary, but yet not downhearted. Reached home about 3 o'clock.

(that must be 3AM!! At least August 4th was a Tuesday so they weren't singing the next day- Ed)

And a 2008 Parish Outing . . .

On Sunday 27th July a group of 30+ church members and 4 family dogs went for a walk around Coundon Wedge and Allesley. The walk was arranged by Gary Owens.

The weather was perfect and the dogs worked as a team herding us all along very efficiently. They seemed to spend their time taking turns to run from front to back of the unruly flock of humans keeping us all together. Grace Owens had organised a treasure hunt by the old bridge for the younger members of the party, while the older ones took a break. Gary is hoping to organise another walk next spring.



KERESLEY VILLAGE COMMUNITY CHURCH SERVICES

September

Sunday 7th

10.30am Family Service Mr Alan Bennell

Sunday 14th

10.30am Holy Communion Revd Ruth Walker

Sunday 21st

10.30am Morning Worship Mrs Rose Bentley

6.00pm Holy Communion Revd David Hunter

Sunday 28th

10.30am Holy Communion Revd David Hunter

October

Sunday 5th

10.30am Harvest Family Service, Revd Ruth Walker

Regular Meetings

"Children's Club" Mondays Trailblazers 5-6pm

Tuesday mornings 9.30-10.30am First Steps for babies and pre-school children with their parents and carers, during term time

Wednesday 7.30-9pm – 'Drop-in' Centre for teenagers

Mondays and Thursdays

9.30-11.30am Coffee

mornings The Church is open for anyone to drop in for a drink and a chat.



Christian Basics: What about Heaven?

The vicar was visiting a man who was very ill. At the foot of the stairs the sick man's wife whispered apprehensively, 'Say something hopeful to him – not about heaven and all that'. We tend to imagine heaven as something remote and less real than this life. However, C S Lewis in *The Great Divorce* describes a heaven where everything is more solid than on earth, with flowers like diamonds and leaves heavier than sacks of coal. So what are the important questions to ask about the reality of heaven?

What is heaven like?

Importantly, heaven is being in the presence of God and his Son Jesus Christ. 'Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God' (Rev 21:3). This also means an end of all insecurity, pain, suffering, sin, death and evil (Rev 21:4). As a result we will worship and be united with all God's people; this is what we were created for – 'to glorify God and to enjoy him forever'!

What will we be like?

When sharing in the community of heaven, how will we recognise each other? Just as Jesus' followers were able to recognise him after his resurrection, so we shall know one another. We will have 'spiritual bodies' appropriate to the life of heaven. But it will be knowledge on a deeper level, with fuller love and understanding than we have ever known before.

Where is heaven?

Is heaven simply 'pie in the sky when you die'? As a sphere of existence outside of time and space, it is better to think of it as 'a dimension of present

reality' (Bishop Tom Wright). Indeed, the Holy Spirit is the 'deposit guaranteeing our inheritance' (Eph 1:14), giving us a foretaste of heaven in the present.

Who will be there?

Jesus is clear about heaven, 'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.' (John 3:16). If we enjoy a relationship with God today, we can look forward to the fuller experience in heaven. However, God simply underlines our choice if we reject him now! We live in a real world with real choices; what we choose today affects our lives now and in eternity!



