

*A Place of Peace
and Reconciliation*

**Pentecost 2026
Issue 32**

To find all the latest information about Sunday services and mid-week activities at St Andrew's, visit our website or Facebook page. The address is at the bottom of page 23.

We welcome items for future editions. They should be sent to John Daymond at: john.daymond1@btinternet.com

Deadline for the Harvest Edition is Sunday, 23 August 2026



The Ascension window at Inverness Cathedral. The caption reads: 'Then he was parted from them and carried up'. The cathedral is dedicated to St Andrew.

May the Spirit fill our praise,
Guide our thoughts and change our ways.

The Holy Spirit is alive, at work



*Rev'd Canon
Dr Edmund
Newey
writes:*

Pentecost, as described in the Acts of the Apostles, is loud and disruptive, so much so that it provokes accusations of drunken disorder:

And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. (Acts 2:2-4)

But we'd be wrong to think that the Holy Spirit was absent from the world before that first Pentecost. From the beginning of the Bible, the Spirit is present – 'a spirit (or wind) from God swept over the face of the waters' (Genesis 1:2). Throughout the scriptures, the Holy Spirit is alive and at work: sometimes in loud and dramatic ways, sometimes gently and hidden.

By temperament, some Christians are more drawn to the quieter manifestations of the Holy Spirit and others to the more dramatic, but whichever way we're inclined, we can be quite sure that the Spirit is there: deep within each of us; woven through the whole of creation; and animating the whole of history. Steven Shakespeare's beautiful prayer poem gives us some clues to how we might attune ourselves to her frequency.

Come, Holy Gift

What kind of gift is this?
Who can hold the wild wind
running through the fingers,
shivering the water's skin?

She is the womb of the dawn,
the arc of the arrow's flight.
She is perfect stillness, ever moving,
the wing that holds the sky.

She is there when the Word takes flesh,
when he rises from the water.
She is the one who remembers,
the revealer of things to come.

She is the unspoken prayer
when words fumble and fail.
She is fire and fierce defender,
song of the one in the many.

What kind of gift is this:
leading us to the desert,
falling like flame on the altar
caught in the sails of prayer?

Mountain Revelation



*Rev'd Hugh
Priestner,
writes:*

One of my favourite walks in the whole world is to follow the River Suld up a wooded alpine valley to Pochtenfäll. This is not far from Thun and Interlaken in the Bernese Oberland, the most scenic landscape in Switzerland.

On one such occasion, Carole and I, in murky weather, had made this walk and continued up the steep path to the side of the 80 metre high waterfall, to reach the upland alpine valley above. Everything was shrouded in mist and low cloud, but it was time for some refreshments. So we stopped beside a large rock and opened our picnic. As I poured out two hot drinks from our flask, quite unexpectedly, it was as though two curtains were being drawn back.

The mist retreated up each side of the valley in front of our eyes and there, basking in sunshine was the breath-taking majesty of the Morgenberghorn, almost 7,500 feet high, towering above us. Its ramparts were covered in snow and the sun's brightness made it gleam, in contrast to the dark ribs of rock reaching up to its peak. The light made it feel as though we could reach out and touch this amazing and beautiful mountain.

As you can imagine, that was very special. We sat, entranced, on our rock, forgetting, for the moment, our sandwiches and coffee. And without a word being said, we both felt that we were being treated to a very private viewing of this incredible sight, sitting as we were, alone in that high valley. It spoke to us of God's great love for us, tiny though we were, compared with that mountain: He granted us these moments of revelation and reward, after our strenuous walk up into the murky heights of that place.

Almost as quickly, the mist tumbled back down the valley sides, and shut out what we had been so delighted to experience. We turned our backs on the now obliterated mountain, to take a path down one side of the valley, shrouded in a damp fog, to return to the village below where we were staying. But the memory was secure, etched in our minds as a very precious encounter with the majesty of God,

to be seen in creation.

But that is only half of the story!

Just ten days later, back in England, Carole and I were at St Martin's Finham, on the outskirts of Coventry. I had been invited to lead the Service of Holy Communion there, while they had a vacancy. I was sitting quietly at the front of the church, preparing myself for worship. Meanwhile, in the Vestry, the worship team were gathered for prayer too. And in their prayers, they were given a picture for the visiting clergyman – me! And so it was that Ingrid came to me quietly just before the Service to share what they had been given.

'We have a vision of a mountain, shrouded in mist. But then the sun breaks through to reveal God in the glory of that mountain'.

It would be trite to say *you could have knocked me down with a feather!* But it was like a benign electric shock! It instantly connected me with that magnificent experience from a few days earlier. The picture, so real for me, flooded my mind. I could see it all again.

And I also knew instantly that this was something I had to share with everyone I was worshipping with that morning. This was a gift for me and all the congregation.

You will not be surprised when I tell you what happened next. I could not do anything other than share what had just happened. So the Service began, not with what I had prepared, but with an account of what I had seen in that Swiss mountain valley and what the prayers of the worship team had revealed.

And why was this the only response I could make? I have kept one key fact from you until this point.

This Service took place on the morning of Pentecost! Just as Carole and I had that overwhelming sense of God's gift in showing us the mountain through the mist, so He was demonstrating for us His intimacy with all our lives. This is the gift of Pentecost to us: known; loved; guided and instructed. There is no detail of our existence that cannot be touched by God, Father, Son *and* Holy Spirit.

Reverend Pamela Gould

We are extremely saddened to report that Reverend Pamela Gould died in the early hours of Thursday 23 April whilst in Palliative Care at Town Thorns Care Home following a short illness, and our sincere condolences are extended to Matthew and her immediate family, her many friends and all those who knew and were touched by Pam over her many years at St Andrew's, Onley and elsewhere.

A tribute to Reverend Pam will feature in our Harvest Issue and we keep Pam, Matthew and her extended family in our prayers at this sad time.

The Joy of Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts



*Joanna Bryan, our
Community Events
Lead, reflects on
Tuesday Concerts*

An unexpected delight of working at St Andrew's has been being part of the Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts — what a great example of community in action at its best!

Since 1975 St Andrew's church has presented a vibrant programme of Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts celebrating a wide range of musical genres and performers. At the heart of the series is a commitment to creating high quality cultural experiences that are accessible to all and enrich our community.

The musicians all perform for free; the concert is free at point of entry, bringing a cultural experience that's open to the entire community. How generous! We do ask people to leave donations if able and these go towards the upkeep of the piano and church community projects. A perfect circle of community in action!

Currently we partner with and support Warwickshire Music — who brought in Rugby High School students to perform. Rugby School students are regular performers. A new partnership this year is with Royal Birmingham Conservatoire who also bring their performers to church, and we hope to continue expand our collaborations and our audience. Look out for a group of sea shanty singers who are performing in September.

The best way that we can promote Tuesday Lunchtime Concerts is by you sharing your experience of them! Please share with your family and friends, invite them along, stay for tea and cake in the community café.

If you would like any promotional materials to share there are leaflets in church or please pop into the office for posters if you have somewhere to put one.

Recitals begin at 1pm and last between 30 – 45 minutes, offering a perfect lunchtime retreat. All are warmly welcome.

Volunteering at St Andrew's

*Our magazine Editor,
John Daymond,
suggests there is a place for
everyone at
St Andrew's Church*

Have you been called? No, No, No, No,
No, No, ... Yes, Yes, Yes,

There are many opportunities to use your skills and abilities, or learn new ones to benefit yourself and others both in Church and our community, and here are a few examples of the opportunities offered and you could turn No into Yes:

Bell Ringing in the two towers, one of eight bells and the other of five bells, for regular services and at special times, and hand bell ringing in Church and Nursing Homes at certain times of the year – contact Christine Homer, the Bell Tower Captain for further details.

Are you interested in reading a lesson or leading the intercessions during a service? Then contact Rev'd Edmund or Rev'd James.

Are you interested in joining the welcoming/stewarding team for our regular Sunday services, helping before, during and after the services? Contact Hash for more details.

Are you drawn to joining the Baptism team providing a welcome for the family and their guests of those to be baptised, being involved in pre-service

preparations, assisting during the service and the closing down procedures? Then contact Rev'd Edmund or Rev'd James.

Perhaps you are interested in joining the team to help look after Funeral or Wedding Services held at Church? Helping at these life events will ensure they are well delivered – you can obtain more details from Joyce, Hash or Kate.

The Pastoral Team provide for those in Nursing Homes or housebound for different reasons, enabling them to receive home communion and pastoral support when necessary, in a discreet and confidential manner. Should you be interested in joining this part of our outreach and want to learn more then please contact Joyce, our Senior Churchwarden for more details?

The Thirteen Bells Café – provides nourishment for the body and soul, catering for our community six days of the week as well as welcoming, food preparation and serving, taking time to listen and engage with visitors as necessary – if you are interested then do contact Joanna Bryan our Community Engagement Lead for further details.

Are you interested in joining the Events Team helping during the various concerts and events held during the year, which provide a major income stream for the church? Contact Joanna Bryan our Community Engagement Lead for more details

Are you artistic and impressed by the

floral displays in Church, and drawn to explore more? Why not join our Flower Arranging Team – making and delivering the various floral arrangements and displays throughout the year at the regular services, at special events and for the main festivals during the year. Contact Deborah Fraser for more information.

Are you drawn to our Children and Families Team helping with one of the age groups during a Sunday Morning Service, interested in learning more of Godly Play, Messy Church or other activities, supporting one of the weekday groups or helping with crafts and activities during the major festivals? Then speak with Peter or Rosemary Privett for more details.

Are you interested in singing in our Robed Choir, that is a major part of our musical heritage and takes part in many services during the year including the major festivals in Church life and some other events? If you are, do take the opportunity to speak with Will, our Director of Music for more information.

If you are a young person interested in singing and learning more, and you wish to join the Young Choristers then do speak with Rachel Cliffe, our Young Choristers' Trainer for more details?

Have you been drawn to growing your technical abilities by joining the Audio and Visual team which enhances the enjoyment of those attending in person and enables the digital distribution of our services to those unable to attend? The team also support our events programme with audio and lighting

effects. Speak with Ben Foster, our Technical Co-ordinator for more details

The above are a few examples of volunteering at St Andrew's, they are not exhaustive and our valued team of volunteers enable St Andrew's to deliver so much.

If you wish to find out more then you can speak to a named individual as above in a specific area of interest, or a member of the Clergy, one of the Church Wardens, or Kate our Parish Administrator, or you can email: volunteers@rugbychurch.org.uk

Further contact details can be found on page 23 of this magazine.

All positions require a DBS check and full training will be provided as necessary and applicable to any special requirements of the position, such as Health and Safety, Food Hygiene and Safety, First Aid, Fire Safety and Prevention, and Emergency Procedures, although this is not an exhaustive list of training requirements. Full details will be provided by the lead in the different sections as applicable.

You can turn Don't Know or No into Yes, Yes, Yes – and in doing so play your part in the vibrant and varied life of St Andrew's Church.

A Common Understanding



*Rev'd Canon
Sue Hardwick
writes:*

When I was 17 years of age, I spent a year at an International College. Over 20 different nationalities — only five of whom were British — from all over the world, and 100 pupils between the ages of 16 and 20 years.

This wondrous Tower-of-Babel onslaught of different languages, swept over and around us all, as we arrived on the first day. As I stood there in the midst of this swirl of noise and different voices, I began to make out one or two languages I thought I recognised — but the rest, no.

Each person represented various cultures, understandings, perceptions — and misperceptions — about the others. From the beginning, mixing was encouraged and the life of the college was organized to facilitate this as much as possible. English was the common language used for all teaching and formal college communication.

Of course, as with all such large groups, everyone soon shook down into particular friendships, finding their own comfortable groups.

Microcosms usually reflect wider cultural norms and, over time, particular loyalties and historic tensions between different nations rose to the surface.

To try to reach new and deeper understandings through living, talking and learning to appreciate each person, however different, was part of the college ethos, so it was very important that these differences were not ignored or buried but were worked through to a common understanding: respect of the other, their background and culture and beliefs.

In this way the Other, with whom I might feel little natural connection, may potentially become my Friend.
That First

Pentecost

The disciples were all together in one place. Suddenly, there came from the sky what sounded like a strong, driving wind, a noise that filled the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them flames like tongues of fire coming to rest on each one. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other tongues as the Spirit gave them power of utterance.

There were staying in Jerusalem devout Jews from every nation under heaven. At this sound a crowd of them gathered, because each one heard his own language spoken. Parthians, Medes, Elamites; inhabitants of Mesopotamia, of Judaea, of Cappadocia, of Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, from Rome, Cretans and Arabs — all of them hearing the disciples in their own tongues, of the great things God had done . . . of Jesus of Nazareth . . . Many were cut to the heart by what they heard, and some 3,000 were baptized that day.

Behind that first Pentecost was the love, wisdom and power of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit poured down upon those first disciples.

Pentecost 2026

That first Pentecost was not just an amazing faith- and life-giving, life-affirming story from the distant past, but with little relevance to today. When we look around our world we can see the

need for that original vision, we can hear their voice calling to us, just as the Holy Spirit does, to reach out in a deep desire to *really* know and love our neighbour, of whatever race or creed.

Our Christian faith teaches us to open our hearts and minds — and our church doors — to the world; what it can teach us and what we can learn from that wide vision. If we *really* listen to the other, and learn from and about them, we can all begin to build a world that draws us together, rather than separates and divides.

Martin Buber, one of the most famous philosophers and theologians of the 20th century, emphasised the importance of the ‘*and*’ in ‘*I and You*’.

He saw that meeting between ‘*I and You*’ as the most important aspect of human experience, because it is in relationship that we become fully human and so ultimately points us to our relation with God.

A Common Understanding

I and You. Us and God’s World. Us and God. You and God. Me and God. Us and God’s World. You and I . . .
Amen.

The Hope Which Is Not Seen



*Rev'd Dr James
Sampson-Foster
Assistant Curate*

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. Romans 8:22-26

Good news is hard to come by. Glancing at a newspaper, tuning into radio or scrolling online can be a depressing experience. What we see and hear and read is often bad news – reports of a world suffering and groaning under the weight of the stone hearts of humankind. There is too little kindness; there is far too much of its opposite.

I use the word depressing quite intentionally, because the relentless drip drip of bad news has its way of seeping into our bones – and as it seeps in, hope, unseen, seeps out. Faith does not make Christians immune to the resulting sadness any more than anybody else.

Whilst there are some churches where many feel a pressure to put on a façade of cheerfulness, I am pleased that St Andrew's is not one of them. Such churches take on a glossy, brittle veneer of unreality, where faith presents no true answer to suffering and so the truths of life must be politely avoided. If the call of Christians is to worship the Lord in Spirit and truth, then dishonesty – whether in the name of cheerfulness or anything else – undermines the whole enterprise.

Enforced cheerfulness isn't true worship, and it isn't biblical.

Romans 8 talks about the groaning of the world – all creation groaning in labour pains until God's kingdom is fully revealed. But Christians do not float three inches above this groaning. We may not be of the world, but we are still in it and we share in this inward groaning. We share in the world's sufferings just as Christ did before us.

But as we share in the travails of the world, we are called to search and strive and wait for something which is not often visible on our television screens. Hope.

As Paul writes, it is precisely the fact that it is not seen which gives Hope its substance.

It is unseen, but it is real and it is powerful.

Knowing how to pray in the midst of a groaning world can be a difficult thing. Apart from anything, it can be hard to know where to begin. But in truth prayer is not a matter of effort or qualification; prayer is not something we do, but rather something God does within us.

If Hope is unseen, but real and powerful, then it is because it is a gift of the Spirit who, though unseen, is the power and reality of God. It is this same Spirit who prays for us when our hearts are empty and our words fail us.

This Pentecost, as we rejoice in the presence of the Spirit with us, may we remember God's call to us to worship in Spirit and in truth. As a community of honesty, where God calls us to come as we are, may we invite God to aid us in prayer as we bring our true selves before God and one another – seeking the one who is unseen, but who is very much with us.

GASK Memorial Update

We have in previous copies of The St Andrew's Magazine introduced you to, and updated you on, the planned memorial to Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy MC, a previous Curate at St Andrew's and a First World War Army Chaplain who won the VC for his actions in the Somme.

This memorial will be placed in a Peace Garden in Memory of Rex Pogson which will be in the area to the right of the South entrance to Church. With the majority of permissions having been obtained, the small team driving this project has moved to the fund-raising element of the project, already receiving support from some funding partners to help achieve our planned financial target.

As part of this phase we are holding a concert in St Andrew's at 4pm on 27 June – A Community Celebration of Music and Song – A concert Inspired by The Life and Work of Rex Pogson. Following the Concert, Drinks and Refreshments will be available. Admission is free – with Donations Invited for the work of Myton Hospices and to support The St Andrew's Peace Garden.

Further details of this Concert are contained elsewhere in this issue and more promotional activity will be happening in and around Church to keep you informed, so do look out for the material.

An information leaflet of the project has been released and will be available to provide an illustrative description of the project. Should you be interested in receiving more information on this memorial to the life and work of these two incredible men who achieved so much locally, regionally and nationally, or are able to support the project in any way, then please speak with Reverend Edmund, Peter Privett or John Daymond.

The Place of Quiet in Our Lives



*John Howes,
Lay Worship
Leader,
writes:*

How much do you enjoy peace and quiet? I suppose my answer would be sometimes, and certainly not when I am playing my Elton John records at such a volume that I can hear what each musician is doing. Silence can also be intimidating, especially when it is the silence of isolation — a silence we don't choose ourselves.

But often I yearn for quiet. Take a Tuesday morning when I might have sat through a gentle and reflective communion service at St Andrew's Church, exchanged some chat with friends over a cup of coffee, but then find myself unleashed into the horrors of a supermarket. Shouts, yells, sirens, bleeps ... everything has to make some sort of noise. Nothing seems to happen quietly anymore.

So I was immediately fascinated when I stumbled upon the notion of Quietism whilst doing some research of my own. This swept through the European church in the late 1600s and taught a form of meditation where individuals try to stop all thought, imagination and desire. In a way, you are encouraged to become a blank slate. Then, the soul will rest in quiet, making it totally receptive to the Holy Spirit, leaving you open to God working through you.

Well, this sounds good to me, though I am constantly troubled by what some writers have called 'the monkey mind', the incessant leaps going on inside your head, over which you have little control. (Regrets about yesterday, fears about tomorrow, random thoughts about what you might have said, where you are going today and so on.)

One of the key figures in Quietism was the fascinating figure of Madame Guyon (1648–1717). After a turbulent early life, she met a priest who told her to seek God within her own heart. She said prayer should not be a complex intellectual exercise, but a simple resting in the presence of God.

'Prayer is not an exercise of the head, but a fire of the heart. It is not a matter of thinking much, but of loving much'.

But her implication that one could experience God without the formal sacraments of the church inevitably led her into conflict with the religious authorities and she found herself locked up, spending five years in the Bastille, and her works banned. Nevertheless, she had a huge influence on the development of Christian thinking, possibly on the Quakers and on John Wesley and Methodism.

Madame Guyon

Be like the calm of a deep sea.



particularly like her simple advice on reflection. Read a short piece of scripture and then rest in the presence of God. Do we need to do much more than that? She has been criticised for the passivity of her followers; sometimes we need to do more than sit and pray. If we are totally passive, what do we do about suffering and injustice in the world? However, if we use our time of quiet reflection as a springboard for our outer work for good, then there is something to be admired here. And the very word — Quietism — appeals to me enormously. There is too much noise in the world, too much chatter, and much of it negative and unproductive. Our age

of easy communication has brought great advantages but also much negativity and destruction.

As Madame Guyon said, 'A soul that is calm and peaceful in God possesses all things. Be like the calm of a deep sea, which remains tranquil in its depths even when the surface is agitated by a storm'.

If you value quiet, why not try a little more? You could go for a quiet walk. A friend recently told me he never listens to podcasts on a walk because he wants to hear nature around him. You could sit in silence for a while after reading a verse or two from the Gospels. If you can't find silence at home, you could visit a church like St Andrew's and spend some time just sitting there. We don't need to be afraid of quiet if it helps us.

Recently I visited another St Andrew's Church, this time in West Dean, Sussex. As I paused in the stillness of this country church, words came to mind from the great Welsh poet R.S.Thomas who wrote, in *Kneeling*,

*Moments of great calm,
Kneeling before an altar
Of wood in a stone church.
It is the place where the silence
Respects my presence.
We are pilgrims together,
The silence and I,
Waiting for the light
To brighten on the edge
Of the mind ...*

Precious Sparrows



*Rev'd Sharon
Crofts, Associate
Minister, writes:*

At the end of January this year I took part for the first time ever in the RSPB Garden Bird Watch – where you sit for a period of an hour and record the number and types of birds that visit your garden. One bird which is recorded by the RSPB as the most prevalent in the UK is sadly completely absent from my garden, yet I hear and see so many when I'm out with my dog only several hundred metres from my home.

This little bird is very plain to look at and doesn't have a beautiful song – just an annoyingly loud 'cheap, cheap' sound – but this very common bird is sited all over the world and has been for thousands of years – it's the sparrow.

Today it is 'native to Europe, Africa, Asia and then later introduced to Australia, New Zealand and finally the USA in 1850's in order to assist in eradicating a particular tree stripping caterpillar'. However, the RSPB report now that 'since 1970, almost 30 million of these little birds have vanished from the UK'¹ so they – like many bird species today are in significant decline.

I have a bit of a soft spot for the sparrow – I think of them as boisterous, cheeky but most of all incredibly communal. If you see or hear one sparrow, you will likely see or hear many together.

Sparrows are mentioned quite a few times in the Bible – both in the Old Testament and the New. Jesus talks about the sparrows in the context of assurance in both Matthew and Luke's Gospels:

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. Matthew 10:29

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows! Luke 12:6-7

Jesus is wanting his listeners to know just how much God the Father values us as human beings, made in God's image, in comparison to what then was an incredibly common little bird.

In fact, sparrows were so very prevalent that they were often captured and sold live at the markets for meat to those who couldn't afford to buy bigger birds.



House Sparrow

Female

This is what Jesus is alluding to in the Gospels when he talks of sparrows being sold in two's or five's. Jesus was deliberate in his choice to speak of this most insignificant little bird because everyone knew of their prevalence and just how little they mattered to humans – except for their disposable meat value. In explaining just how much God values every single sparrow, Jesus declares God's love, care and attention for humanity as far in excess of God's care for the little brown sparrow.

John Stott, a famous Christian and keen birdwatcher writes, 'These little creatures, lacking both colourful plumage and musical song, are nevertheless cherished, remembered and protected by God'.²
The prophet Isaiah encourages us to

think about God as Creator of all things, including the tiniest or most insignificant – yes, even things unseen or known about in our own human experience:

Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. – Isaiah 40:26

The Psalmist in writing about the Joy of Worship in the Temple states:

Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young—a place near your altar, Lord Almighty, my King and my God. – Psalms 84:3

God here described as protector and security. God's Temple a place of safety and where we can be close to God.

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? – Matthew 6:26

Every single life is precious to God, including yours. Trust and believe in God's compassion for you and ask God to help you know your worth in God.

1. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/house-sparrow> 19/04/26

2. John Stott 'The Birds; Our Teachers Collectors Edition'

How Did You Come To Ordina-



*Helen Bryant,
Ordinand, writes:*

If I look back to my five-year-old self, I wonder now if the journey to ordination did not begin then . . .

‘Big Vi’ (yes, there was a Little Vi in the congregation too) had just been made a Distinctive Deacon in our church and as a gift they gave her a cloak. I distinctly remember thinking ‘One day, I want a cloak like that’. From then on, my involvement in church grew, I enjoyed being in Sunday School but then moved to the choir where I continued until I was 18. I began to take other roles such as acolyte, reading on Sunday’s and then leading intercessions until I left for university in Durham to study Theology. I then spent 20 years teaching, after feeling God’s call in my life to teach Religious Studies while studying the law.

God’s call has been persistent, but patient and it has held me fast. No quick flash, but a slow and constant burning like the embers of a fire which never quite got going until I hit 40. This calling has been my rock and my strength, gradually forming guiding — sometimes

more forcefully that quietly — to where I am now. It has been a deep anchor in some extremely challenging seasons of life, through significant bereavements and life changing decisions.

St Andrew’s has been central to the journey up to this point; you have made space for me to grow, to make mistakes and to lead you in worship. You have made Angus, Arthur and Esme feel part of the family too and watched them grow — both up and in themselves.

By trusting in Him who will not let me go and following God’s call, I hope as school chaplain and SSM to live out that calling day to day, and be a light for the path just as others have been for me.

I wanted to thank you all for your kindness, compassion and love for us. We all leave you richer — you have allowed us all to flourish in our own way and you have helped set us on our next path. It has been a privilege to learn with you, to pray for you and pray with you and to grow in faith alongside you.

We’re not going very far, and St Andrew’s will be where I come in to land from time to time. I never really leave anywhere, I leave bits of myself lying about and come back to pick them up. If you find a piece, keep it and I will return. Hold us all in your prayers as we will hold you in ours and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Community Celebration of Music and Song

*A concert inspired by the life and work
of Rex Pogson*

*St Andrew's Church
Church Street, Rugby, CV21 3PT*

Saturday, 27 June at 4pm

Admission Free

Drinks and Refreshments available

*Donations in aid of Myton Hospice
and St Andrew's Peace Garden*

Change To Magazine Publishing Dates

Because of the set short time between Easter and Pentecost, after much thought by the Editorial Team it is proposed that from next year 2027, the Pentecost Issue will no longer appear and will be replaced by a new issue. Accordingly this will be the final Pentecost Issue, however we will maintain four issues each year by introducing a new issue with the working title of 'Summer' which is planned to be available toward the beginning of July and the phasing is intended to make the four issues more equal in the annual cycle. This proposal will remove the relatively short production time following the Easter Issue and reduce the time gap between the current Pentecost Issue and the time the Harvest Issue is published. The annual cycle of the issues of The Parish Magazines will become Easter, 'Summer', Harvest and Christmas. Thank you for your continued support of YOUR Magazine, for which your contributions are always welcome.

May Blossom Farm



*Rev'd Alison Baxter,
Associate Minister,
Mission Hub*

As we head towards Pentecost, I am really enjoying seeing nature come to life on the sunny days we have had recently (I am writing this at the end of April so I'm sorry if by the time you actually read it the weather has become bleak again!). I love watching the first buds of snowdrops in February, daffodils and cherry blossom in March brightening our world. It really lifts my spirits and makes me breathe a deep sigh of relief that winter and the dark nights are over! Hallelujah!

I imagine that must have been a little like the disciples felt on the day of Pentecost. Hallelujah! Death has not triumphed, we thought we'd lost our hope and promise when Jesus died but NO, we now have a new beginning through the power of the Holy Spirit.

I often look at creation and the majesty of creation and think, how can anyone look at creation and doubt in a creator God? How could any of these wonders be put together by anyone or anything else? This is particularly the case when I go and visit May Blossom Farm, which I'm doing quite frequently now as my daughter is on a work experience placement there to support her college course.



On Easter Eve the farmer (Hannah) invited me to attend the opening of a new sensory garden they have built there. It is amazing! (See the pictures). The garden was opened by the Mayor of Rugby who made a wonderful speech about how wonderful it is that the garden has been able to be created through funding from the Severn

Trent community fund and Cummins inc. but also through the hard work of so many volunteers who give of their time each week to maintain the Farm.

One of the features they have built in the sensory garden is a story chair in honour of Rex Pogson, a much loved parishioner of St Andrew's and founding director of May Blossom Farm. On the back of the chair is a plaque in honour of him which Marion (Rex's wife) was invited to screw on to the chair. The plaque says: 'May stories shared here keep alive his love of learning, his delight in imagination and his joy in bringing people together through the arts'. What a wonderful and loving inscription of the legacy Rex has left behind.



It

was much to my great joy when Hannah asked anyone attending the buffet afterwards if they'd like to read a story on the story chair. As always, in such public situations, not many people volunteered but of course as a priest that's what your kind of trained to do! So, I agreed. I had a wonderful time reading a story to the children and families who attend May Blossom Farm. The adults joined in with the sound effects just as much as the children; it

was a truly special time.



The Mayor tries out the Story Chair

Just as the opening of the sensory garden is a new initiative for May Blossom Farm so the coming of the Holy Spirit was on the disciples, empowering them to go out and minister in Christ's name, as Hannah does with the families she welcomes to the farm.



My prayer for us all this Pentecost, as we celebrate the Holy Spirit being poured out, is that we may all feel empowered to bring God's Kingdom here on earth, in whatever way you feel led by God.

One More Step Along The

Rev'd Peter Beresford
writes:

In the Springtime it is a joy to see new life springing up everywhere — in our gardens and in the countryside. For me April and May are my favourite months of the year.

In our Christian calendar this year Easter and Pentecost (Whitsun) span these two months. Both speak to me of a different kind of joy — the joy of the first disciples of Jesus (but also us) discovering that despite all that had happened on the first Good Friday, God was still very much alive and active — and that they continued to be known and loved by him.

Then and now there is a strong bond between these two great Christian festivals: while Easter speaks of Jesus' victory of life over death, Pentecost speaks to us of the way in which, through the gift of his Spirit, the Risen Christ continues to root himself into the heart and mind of any person who is open to receive him. Just pious talk, divorced from the harsh realities of life in the modern world? Yes it will, of course, feel like this to many — but for anyone who has discovered this to be true it is far from that. The presence of God's Spirit within is life giving, and life sustaining.

One such person to discover this to be true was St Paul. Having met the Risen Christ on the road to Damascus, his life was literally 'turned upside down'. Reflecting on this and the change that he saw in others he wrote these words to his fellow Christians in Galatia: 'the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control'.

When it comes to such qualities of character we all fall far short — only Jesus didn't! We are all learners, all beginners on the road of life and faith. What matters most to me is that we don't just allow ourselves to drift through life. There is no time like the present to discern the right road, and then ask God to give us the courage we need to step out onto it, and to keep travelling along it day by day. I encourage you to see this as a journey, as an adventure. As with any journey it will have plenty of ups and downs, and twists and turns on it!

Although written for children I continue to find the song 'One more step along the world I go' helpful — especially verse four: *'Give me courage when the world is rough, keep me loving though the world is tough, leap and sing in all I do, keep me travelling along with you.'* As Anglicans we love our singing, but we don't do much 'leaping!' What we can do, however, is to discover afresh that the Risen Christ is walking alongside us every step of the way. It is in this that we discover the joy!

I conclude with the words of the chorus of the song 'One more step' ... *it's from the old I travel to the new, keep me travelling along with you.'* Many finely worded prayers have been written through the centuries. I find the words of this little chorus equally valid and helpful. May this season of Pentecost bring you, and all of us, a fresh glimpse of the joy that comes from stepping out onto and along this road of life and faith.

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News From The Towers



*Christine Homer,
Bell Captain, writes:*

Since the last magazine, we have continued with practices and morning service ringing as usual, including an unusual bank-holiday practice on Easter Monday, after a count-up on Easter Sunday showed we had enough ringers to hold a practice.

The D of E scheme learner we have been teaching to ring has reached the standard he needs for his Bronze award; he may leave us having achieved his initial goal although we'd like to think he could return and join our band. Our numbers are currently reduced by two as two of our members have had replacement joints (a new knee for Lyndsey and a new hip for John) and we have not rung for evensong for several weeks. Hopefully they will soon feel better than before and join us again.

We have gained a regular visitor to our Monday practices until July: a lady called Amanda who is doing a course in piano tuning in Rugby. I had no idea there was

a piano tuning school in the town: it's in Tom Brown Street and has a good reputation.

We have also had visitors from the canal who came to a practice and Sunday service ringing. They are now away travelling but may visit us again later in the year. A gentleman came over from Daventry — luckily for us on a Monday when we were very short of ringers.

We participated in the guild six-bell striking competition at Bilton and came a very respectable joint second in the method ringing section, helped by Mark being back in Rugby for the weekend and able to ring with us. Eleven teams took part, the team from Aston Cantlow won the method section of the competition, Warwick won the call change section.

A group of us did a tower clean of the West tower on the 28th March (having focussed on the NE tower last year). This coincided with a working party doing the church cleaning so there was a strong aroma of polish everywhere. Thanks to everyone who took part.

Despite being serviced in mid-February, the clock would not restart after the electricity was isolated for some work in the church in March. It required another visit from the engineer from Smiths of Derby, and appears to be working okay now; we are hoping for a better recovery from the next planned outage in early May— which is just over a week away at the time of writing.

Who's Who at St Andrew's

Rector: The Rev'd Canon Dr Edmund Newey
01788 574313 mobile: 07414 904931
rector@rugbychurch.org.uk *Note: Day off Saturday*

Associate Minister (Compassionate Communities):
The Rev'd Sharon Crofts, sharon.crofts@rugbychurch.org

Associate Minister (Mission Hub): The Rev'd Alison Baxter,
missionhub@rugbychurch.org.uk

Retired Clergy: The Rev'd Canon Graham Hardwick, The Rev'd Peter Privett,
The Rev'd Peter Beresford

Curate: The Rev'd Dr James Sampson-Foster,
james.sampsonfoster@rugbychurch.org.uk

Ordinand: Helen Bryant, helen.bryant@rugbychurch.org.uk

Lay Ministers: Sue Goddard, Gwyneth Hickman, Sue Minton

Community Engagement Lead: Joanna Bryan, joanna.bryan@rugbychurch.org.uk

Director of Music: William Uglow, directorofmusic@rugbychurch.org.uk

Young Choristers' Trainer: Rachel Cliffe, youngchoristers@rugbychurch.org.uk

St Andrew's Community Singers:
Amie Boyd amiemusic01@gmail.com

Administrator: Kate Foster, 01788 565609, office@rugbychurch.org.uk

Wardens: Joyce Woodings, warden1@rugbychurch.org.uk
Hash Mistry, warden2@rugbychurch.org.uk

Assistant Warden: Ian Sheppard, asstwarden1@rugbychurch.org.uk

Bell Tower Captain: Christine Homer

D. L. Maintenance

Odd jobs in the House & Garden

Turfing, Fencing,

Pointing, Tiling,

Patios, Painting,

Lawns Cut,

Trees Pruned

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