

St. Thomas' Church, Wednesfield

Church News



The Rector's commute - photo taken by Nick on his cycle route to St Alban's Church



50p
August/September 2016
www.wednesfieldteam.org.uk

ST THOMAS' CHURCH, WEDNESFIELD

In the Wednesfield Team Ministry

Sundays

8.00 am Holy Communion
 10.15 am Family Eucharist
 (with Junior Church and Tots Church)
 6.30 pm Evening Worship

Weekday communion services

Wednesdays: 10.00 am
 Fridays: 10.00 am
 Baptism: Sunday afternoon, monthly

Clergy

For enquiries relating to St Thomas' please contact:

Team Rector:

Rev'd Nick Watson
 Wednesfield Rectory, 9 Vicarage Road
 E-mail: revnickwatson@gmail.com

01902 731462

Curate:

Rev'd Ness Tobin
 E-mail: revnesstobin@aol.com

07854 773432

For enquiries relating to St Alban's please contact:

Team Vicar:

Rev'd Sam Leach
 St. Alban's Vicarage, Griffiths Drive, Ashmore Park
 E-mail: revsamleach@gmail.com

01902 732317

Officers

District Wardens:

Mrs Norma Thompson, 17 Frome Drive, Wednesfield
 Mr Clive Postle, 118 Amos Lane, Wednesfield

01902 305170

01902 733169

Parish Wardens:

Mrs Kathryn Godwin
 Mr Carl Taylor

Organist and Choirmistress:

Mrs Gillian Edwards, 16 Greenfield Lane, Fordhouses

01902 783264

Parish Office: St. Thomas' Church

Secretary: Margaret Walker
 E-mail: wednesfieldteam@gmail.com

01902 723310

The office is normally staffed 9am-12noon on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

Requests for Baptisms and Marriage at St Thomas' – please come to St. Thomas' Church at 6.30pm on a Friday evening or telephone Reverend Nick Watson on 01902 731462.

Do you have an article for the magazine? Or any ideas of what you would like to see included? If so please have a word with Joanna Watson at Church, leave articles in the parish office, or email them to joannawatson@hotmail.co.uk.

Letter
from
the
Rector



St Thomas' Pokégym

You may have read about it or seen news reports about it. You may have noticed even more people than usual walking around while looking at their phones rather than where they're going. You may have seen groups of teenagers and young adults leaning on the wall at the end of the churchyard. One way or another, you've probably heard of 'Pokémon Go'.

Just in case you haven't, it's a mobile phone game which does incredible things with the smartphones so many of us now carry – combining their GPS navigation, Google maps and information about places and phone cameras to add a whole layer of

geography and zoology on top of the world we see *without* smartphones. The game involves finding and catching cartoon characters (Pokémon) with your phone. The new bit is that to find the Pokémon you don't sit indoors staring at a computer screen. You have to go to where they are in the real world, and look at a location through your camera's phone to see the Pokémon added to the scene.

Pokémon can appear anywhere, but there are fixed places too which show up on a map on your phone screen. Some are Pokéstops, where you can collect the things you need to catch Pokémon. One of these is in our churchyard – the John Bate memorial! More significant are the smaller number of Pokégyms, where people who've played the game for a while can train and compete their Pokémon against teams from other gyms. I think. At this point my understanding of the game gets a bit hazy!

Like many churches, St Thomas' has been set as a Pokégym in the game – which may explain some of the people hanging around outside; you can only use the gym if you're within a short distance of it physically, though you don't have to be inside the building.

One great thing about the game is that it gets people out of the house and moving. If you find an egg in the game, the only way to make it hatch is to walk between 2-5km! Given the national obesity crisis, anything that gets people out and moving has to be good. It raises the question, too, of how we can make the most of the opportunity that a lot of people are attracted to the church building by the maps on their phones!

But at a deeper level, it's making people look at places in a new way, by their links to something unseen. Admittedly, the 'something unseen' in this case exists only on some very sophisticated computers somewhere, but it's still got a bit of magic to it beyond the desire to collect all the characters.

Surely we should be open to the possibilities of helping people to see the unseen reality, as well as fantasy, that's around us constantly – the realm of the spirit, the invisible work of God and the angels. In Genesis 28:10-17, Jacob had a vision of angels going up and down a ladder linking heaven and earth – not because he'd miraculously gone to sleep in the right place, but because that's what's happening behind the scenes all the time, everywhere.



If you're not keen on looking for angels at work, you might look for the moments of love, kindness, beauty and truth that show God at work behind the scenes. Perhaps there's a reminder to all of us in Pokémon Go – Church is a great gym, a place for developing our ability to see what God's up to all around us. But to get the best vision of the hidden reality of the spiritual world, we need to get out there, move around and look with different eyes. No smartphone is needed, but a willingness to look in a new way at the world we know all too well is essential.

God is at work around us – let's see where and join in.

The Rev'd Nick Watson

St Thomas' Church Pokémon Gym, as seen on Pokémon Go!

A Holiday Club for children aged 5-11

Seeking God's Treasure

Where?



**St. Thomas Church Centre,
Church Street, Wednesfield,
WV11 1SB**

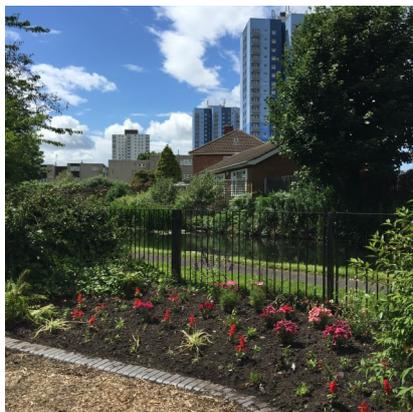
**How
much?
It's free!**

When?

**Monday 1st –
Friday 5th August**



To book call 01902 723310,
send a Facebook message
to stthomaschurchwednesfield
or email: wednesfieldteam@gmail.com



Clockwise from the top:

Crochet flowers decorate the railings; a flowerbed at the back of the St Thomas Centre; new planting in the graveyard; flowers in church; mural under the bridge by a Tom's Tots grandad; sunflowers opposite church; and a cross decorated by members of Junior Church and Tots' Church.

There was a huge amount of activity around and about Wednesfield in the period leading up to the judging of Wednesfield in Bloom. And the results were wonderful! The churchyard looked beautiful, with flowering plants and shrubs in parts of the churchyard which haven't been touched for years. And the area behind the St Thomas Centre was transformed thanks to the hard work of Tom's Tots children, older brothers and sisters, mums, dads and grandads.

We helped celebrate the whole event with the church decorated full of flowers, a CakeFest, trips up the tower and the Village Show. It was wonderful to welcome so many into the church and the centre. Here are just a few of the highlights!



We won't know until September whether Wednesfield has won anything in the 'Heart of England in Bloom' competition - but we do know that the judges were very enthusiastic and talked about the passion they had seen in different projects. There are already plans to enter again next year, so watch this space. And if you can help at all - either with keeping maintained all the projects from this year, or thinking about what could be done next year - please do let us know and we'll pass your details on!





Congratulations!

Many congratulations to our curate, Rev'd Ness Tobin, who was ordained priest by the Bishop of Wolverhampton at St Michael's Tettenhall on Saturday 18th June. We wish her every blessing her future ministry.

And congratulations to Rev'd Gill Joynson, who was ordained deacon in Lichfield Cathedral on Sunday 26th June. Gill spent a period of time with us at St Thomas' during her training. She is now curate at St Luke's Cannock (far right in this photo taken at the Cathedral).



Tom's Tots

extra!

Toms Tots Extra is for all pre school and primary school children and their parents/carers. It is run during in summer holidays by members of Toms Tots play group. This year is Roald Dahl's 90th Birthday, and in each session we will focus our crafts on one book.

Cost is £1 for those over 1 year old. Tea coffee and toast will be on sale. Free squash and a biscuit to each child. There will be a raffle each week.

Hope you can come!



August 16th - The Enormous Crocodile



August 16th - The Witches





Christian Aid News

This year's Christian Aid Week total for Wolverhampton is just over £19,000, of which St Thomas' raised £2,804.48, an outstandingly impressive figure that includes £342 earned by our sure-footed and well-sponsored Northcote trekkers.

Tettenhall and Pendeford are organised separately and their total is not included above, but, at St Paul's CE Primary School, Pendeford, our own Kathryn Godwin raised £70 through organising a week of school breakfasts for the pupils.

Kenya project

Over the past couple of years, Wolverhampton supporters have raised £5,000 for a Maternal and Child Health project, designed to improve conditions for mothers and babies in Kenya. As the project is match-funded 3:1 by the EU, it means that we have been instrumental in raising £20,000 altogether. Amongst other benefits of the project, 863 community health workers and 1,350 mother companions (previously traditional birth attendants) have been trained to provide skilled help to pregnant women in health centres and clinics. 2,157 women have received hygiene packs. Money raised by the last two Christmas Concerts at St Thomas' went towards the project.

Changing the story

Refugees tend to be portrayed negatively in the media; we hear far less about the positive contributions they have made to our society over the years. Christian Aid is trying to change the story – to celebrate the way we have benefited from accepting refugees at various times in our history.

The UK government has currently committed to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees by 2020, but Christian Aid, together with 84 Church of England bishops, are calling on the government to host 50,000 refugees in five years. Christian Aid says: "As one of the world's richest countries, the UK has a legal and moral responsibility to protect those fleeing from violence, but our government's response has not so far matched the scale of the crisis – unlike poor countries such as Lebanon and Iraq who are hosting 86% of the world's refugees."

On 19 September, President Obama will host a high-level meeting on this subject, with the aim of bringing countries together behind a more humane and coordinated approach and we are asked to express our support for this in local newspapers. To find out more, go to www.christianaid.org.uk/changethestory.

Roger Poole



Performing a traditional Kenyan dance

Wednesfield Calendar 2017

Calling all keen photographers!

We are once again going to be producing a calendar - this will be our sixth!

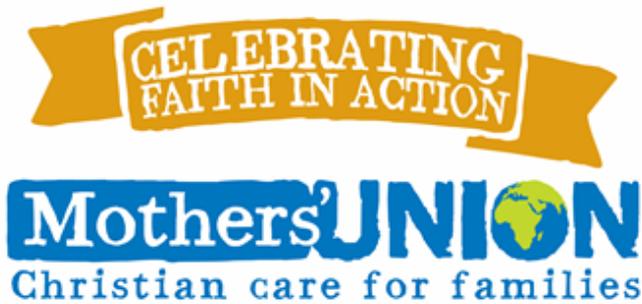
All photographers - amateur and professional - are invited to enter this competition to provide the photographs for the Wednesfield Calendar 2017.

- We're looking for photographs that show Wednesfield at its best
- We will need 13 photographs
 - one for the cover (ideally portrait format)
 - one for each month (ideally landscape format).
- Please do not include people in the photographs.

For more details, including terms and conditions and how to enter, please see the notice in St Thomas' Church.

Closing date for entries is Monday 8th August 2014. Email entries to photocompetition@wednesfieldteam.org.uk with the words Calendar Competition in the subject or deliver via mail or by hand to St Thomas Church, Church Street, Wednesfield, WV11 1SS. All envelopes should be clearly marked 'Calendar Competition'.





Happy Birthday to Mothers' Union!

This year will see Mothers' Union mark 140 years of faithful Christian outreach to families of all faiths and none. Since 1876, when Mary Sumner first brought together parents in her own parish to build their confidence in bringing up their children in the Christian faith, we have grown to an organisation of over four million women – and men – in over 80 countries of the world.

Why celebrate 140th, rather than wait for 150th? In the Old Testament of the Bible, in the first book of Samuel, there is the story of Samuel marking an unlooked for victory against the mighty Philistines by erecting a stone between Mizpah and Shen, naming it "Ebenezer" meaning "stone of help" as a permanent reminder of the leading and guidance of God "Thus far has the Lord helped us".

Over the past 140 years, Mothers' Union has faced, and will continue to face, many challenges. Family life is under increasing pressure and the call on our resources is higher than ever. But we can look at how we are meeting these challenges and say, like Samuel, "Thus far has the Lord helped us."

The same chapter in Samuel recounts how throughout Samuel's lifetime the Lord helped him and Israel meet the challenges they faced. As we mark our 140th year, the future of Mothers' Union is very much on our minds. Our celebrations are not only about celebrating how God has led and blessed our mission, but how He is leading us into our future ministry, guiding us as we discern the needs in our communities that are necessary for stability for both families and society as a whole.

During 2016 over 500,000 people will benefit from Mothers' Union's support for family life. Many more will know the support of our membership without any tally being taken – because not only our programme work but in their daily lives our members support families in prayer, in voicing their support for policy changes that benefit families and in their practical support.

There has never been a more challenging or more exciting time to be part of Mothers' Union.

A very big "Thank You" to all our members who both supported and took part in our branch 140th celebrations this summer and made them so special! We raised £212 at our Light Lunch for The Big Summer Appeal which was really great too. Once again thank you to our members for their help and support.

Our next Meeting on 10th August is our annual Summer Party.

Our coach trip is on 10th September to Carsington Water. & Byrkley Garden Centre. All welcome to join us. Please put names on list in St Thomas Room.

14th September is our Grand Auction.

MU Committee Meeting August 13th at 10am in St Thomas Centre. (subject to confirmation)

All welcome at our meetings and events, please come and join us.

Jill Ellson, Branch Leader



Members of St Thomas' Mothers' Union branch with a rose bush planted to mark the 140th anniversary of the founding of the Mothers' Union.

From the Church Councils

District Church Council (DCC)

The DCC met on Wednesday 6 July. As well as prayer and our usual business we discussed the following matters;

- Finalising the Mission Action Plan, with members of the DCC taking responsibility for different priorities to make sure that we follow through on the decisions taken.
- Developing the Team Rector's Role Description. This now goes to the Archdeacon for approval as a guide to Nick's priorities in ministry over the next few years.
- Following up the 'PCC Tonight' training attended by members of the DCC and PCC, we discussed ways to make our meetings more effective as part of finding and moving in God's way for St Thomas'.
- We spent some time looking at the finances of the church. We currently anticipate a deficit on the Parish Share this year, and need to develop our giving and fundraising to safeguard the future life of the church.

The next meeting of the DCC is on Wednesday 21 September. Please pass any items for the agenda to Rev'd Nick or to Maggie Shelley by Friday 9 September.

Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The PCC has not met since the last magazine.

The next meeting of the PCC will be on Wednesday 7 September. Please pass any items for the agenda to Linda Storr or Rev'd Nick by Friday 26 August.

Deanery Synod

The Synod met at Holy Trinity Church, Short Heath, on Thursday 21 July.

James Henderson, David Primrose and Ruth Brooker spoke to Synod about areas of work for *Transforming Communities*, and in particular about the new Diocesan emphasis on encouraging churches to provide support for families in crisis.

We also discussed plans for Bishop Michael's 'welcome weekend' in Lichfield in September.

Our deanery secretary, Carol, has announced that she wishes to stand down for personal reasons. We are grateful to her for her work – if you're interested in taking on the role, or know someone who might be, please talk to Rev'd Nick.

The next meeting of Deanery Synod is on Wednesday 19 October at 7.30pm. The speaker will be Rev'd Jeff Leach on keeping church accessible to all, along with other issues around ability and disability. If you're interested, come and join us!



Congratulations!

Many congratulations to everyone who won certificates and rosettes at the Wednesfield Village Show on 2nd July.

An extra-special well done to Ann Wardley, who won Best In Show for her incredible owl book art, and Lydia Weston who won the Junior Best In Show for her stunning photograph!



What's on in...*August*

1	Monday	10.00am 2.00pm	'Seeking God's Treasure' in St Thomas Centre Hand of Friendship – tea and chat in the Centre
2	Tuesday	10.00am	'Seeking God's Treasure' in St Thomas Centre
3	Wednesday	10.00am	'Seeking God's Treasure' in St Thomas Centre
4	Thursday	10.00am	'Seeking God's Treasure' in St Thomas Centre
5	Friday	10.00am	'Seeking God's Treasure' in St Thomas Centre
6	Saturday	From 4.00pm	Parish Barbecue at the Rectory
7	Sunday <i>Transfiguration of our Lord</i>	8.00am 10.15am 4.30pm 6.30pm	Holy Communion (said) Family Eucharist with Holy Baptism Holy Baptism Evening Worship
10	Wednesday	7.15pm	Mothers' Union
12	Friday	6.30pm	<i>No Parish Office session</i>
13	Saturday	10.00am 12.00pm 2.00pm	Mothers' Union Committee meeting Marriage of Sophie Johnson and Luke Simmons Marriage of Rebecca Wright and Robert Dobson
14	Sunday <i>Trinity 12</i>	8.00am 10.15am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (said) Family Eucharist with Junior Church Evening Worship
16	Tuesday	10.00am	Tom's Tots Extra in the St Thomas Centre
19	Friday	6.30pm	<i>No Parish Office session</i>
20	Saturday	4.00pm	Marriage of Leanne Parker and Adam Price
21	Sunday <i>Trinity 13</i>	8.00am 10.15am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (said) Family Eucharist with Junior Church Evening Prayer
23	Tuesday	10.00am	Tom's Tots Extra in the St Thomas Centre
26	Friday	6.30pm	<i>No Parish Office session</i>
28	Sunday <i>Trinity 14</i>	8.00am 10.00am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (said) Parish Eucharist Evening Worship
31	Wednesday	7.30pm	Worship Committee at the Rectory

What's on in...

September

4	Sunday <i>Trinity 15</i>	8.00am 10.15am 4.30pm 6.30pm	Holy Communion (said) Family Eucharist with Junior Church Holy Baptism Evening Worship
5	Monday	2.00pm	Hand of Friendship – tea and chat in the Centre
6	Tuesday	9.15am	Tom's Tots meet in St Thomas Centre
7	Wednesday	7.30pm	Parochial Church Council meets in St Thomas Centre
10	Saturday	4.00pm	Marriage of Michelle Morgan and Paul Tolley
11	Sunday <i>Trinity 16</i>	8.00am 10.15am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (said) Family Eucharist with Junior Church Evening Worship
13	Tuesday	9.15am	Tom's Tots meet in St Thomas Centre
14	Wednesday	7.15pm	Mothers' Union
18	Sunday <i>Trinity 17</i>	8.00am 10.15am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (said) Family Eucharist with Junior Church Evening Prayer
20	Tuesday	9.15am 7.30pm	Tom's Tots meet in St Thomas Centre 'Life to the Full' group in St Thomas Centre
21	Wednesday	7.30pm	District Church Council meets in St Thomas Centre
23	Friday	7.00pm	Ashmore Park Choir Concert at St Alban's Church
25	Sunday <i>Harvest Festival</i>	8.00am 10.00am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (said) Harvest thanksgiving worship Evening Worship
27	Tuesday	9.15am 7.30pm	Tom's Tots meet in St Thomas Centre 'Life to the Full' group in St Thomas Centre
30	Friday	7.30pm	Harvest Supper in the Thomas Centre

Buying time

The end of June is a good time to take stock of the church's finances. How well things have gone in the first half of the year should indicate how we shall stand at the end of it.

Income between January and June totalled £32,682, during which period we spent £38,524, including £11,325 late payment of 2015's parish share. So, quite a lot more went out than came in. More serious still, we're already £12,099 behind with this year's parish share!

We haven't yet received our annual tax refund on gift-aided giving, and that should bring in several thousand pounds, but it looks certain that we shall end the year in the red.

It costs £1,620 each week to keep St Thomas' Church going – that's £231 a day, £9.64 an hour day and night, £1.60 for ten minutes. Heating and lighting alone cost £95 in an average week.

We need to consider how much time each of us is buying with our direct giving to St Thomas'. Obviously, some members of our church can afford more than others, and many are already giving thoughtfully and sacrificially. But we should all take a look at our disposable income and be honest both with ourselves, and with God, when it comes to what we are giving back to Him.

£1.60 for ten minutes. How much time can you afford?

Roger Poole



Offering the hand of friendship

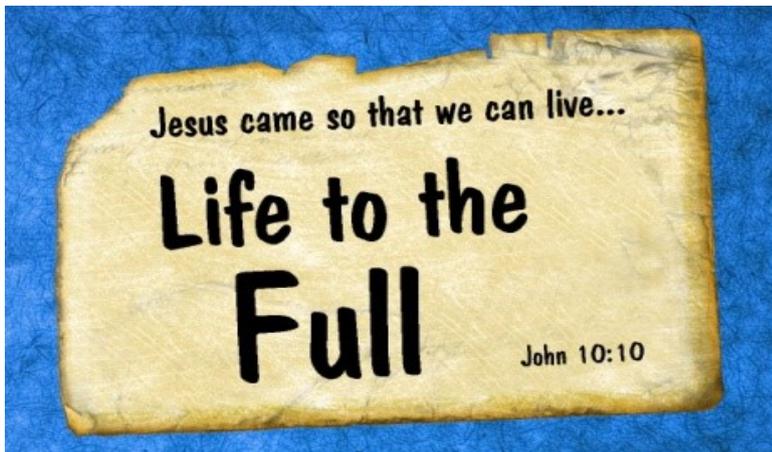


Our social group is aimed at anyone who likes a chat and a cuppa. We provide the cuppa, you bring your friendship. This is an opportunity to get out of the house for a couple of hours, a chance to catch up with old friends and to make new friends, an opportunity to share and care about each other.

We meet on the first Monday of each month, from 2pm until 4pm in the St Thomas Centre. Future dates are:

- Monday 1 August
- Monday 5 September

Everyone will be made most welcome.



When Jesus spoke of why he'd come to earth, he said he had come so that we 'might have life, and have it to the full'.

Through the autumn we'll run a course on Tuesday evenings to think together of the core of Christian faith, and of how that helps us to live life more fully.

The first meeting will be on 20 September and we will meet weekly, except 25 October (school half term) until 8 November. The first meetings will be in the St Thomas Centre opposite St Thomas's Church. There is no charge for the course. More details are on the poster in the church porch or on the website www.wednesfieldteam.org.uk.

Each evening will run from 7.30 – 9pm, and the series as a whole will be ideal for anyone who would like to be confirmed or baptised, or simply to look again at the basics of Christian faith and life.

If you're interested, please contact Rev'd Nick on 01902 731 462 or email revnickwatson@gmail.com.

It's a while since we gathered some quotes about Life to the Full, but these from a previous year might help you decide whether it's worth a go!

Hi all, just to let you all know that I completed the "life to the full" course and not only did it lead to my confirmation, it lead me to meeting lovely friends, it was also a great opportunity to get to know Nick a little better and ask lots of questions. Most importantly it allowed me to understand God and his work a little better. I'd definitely recommend it. Enjoy x

Beverley

"Life to the full" classes were great, they really help to break down the barriers to church and religion. It is a real opportunity for people like myself "newbies" to church and Christianity to ask questions and not feel as though others will think you're daft or stupid. You really made us feel welcome Nick and as though we are part of our "church family" and it made me realise that the church is what WE want it to be!! The videos were very powerful and gave a good insight into religion and different perspectives on religion. It was a lot more modern than I thought it would be. I loved it!

Claire

Celebrate Harvest at St Thomas'

Sunday 25th September

10.15am Parish Harvest Festival

4.30pm Junior Harvest Praise and Harvest Tea

Gifts of produce will be gratefully received, to be given to the Good Shepherd

Friday 30th September

7.30pm Harvest Supper in the St Thomas Centre

Buffet meal and entertainment for all the family
£4 adults, £2 children

For more details please call the Church Office on 01902 723310



Holiday Reading...

If you're looking for something to read over the summer, why not try one of these? I'm going back to some favourite authors, but recommending some new books by them.

'Jesus: A Pilgrimage' by James Martin SJ

I've recommended James Martin's book 'The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything', and still would if you haven't already read it.

This summer, though, I'm recommending 'Jesus: A Pilgrimage'. Martin's writing helps us to imagine the places of the Holy Land (or remember them if you've been there!) while bringing to life both the stories and the meaning of the life of Jesus from the gospels. He's very readable, and you'll probably find yourself thinking about Jesus a bit differently after reading this.

'Do Nothing to Change Your Life' by Stephen Cottrell

I still recommend Stephen Cottrell and Steven Croft's 'How to Live' as an excellent basic guide to Christian faith and life.

Over the summer, though, seems a good time to think about slowing down a bit, whether or not you're actually taking a holiday. I've been struck by how much people have appreciated the 'mindfulness and meditation' sessions I've led over the last few months. Stephen Cottrell's 'Do Nothing to Change Your Life' is a good starting point for slowing down the pace of life a bit to make time to appreciate life and notice God.

Another good book, approaching mindfulness and awareness from a non-religious angle, is 'This is Happening' by Rohan Gunatillake. Subtitled 'redesigning mindfulness for our very modern lives' it has short chapters and useful exercises to help you to build awareness and stillness into everyday life.

What Am I Doing Here? By Hilary Brand

If you're feeling a bit confused by church, then this is a great introduction to making sense of what's going on. It's light-hearted and wise, with good cartoons...

One last thing...

If you're heading for the beach or somewhere that you don't want to take a good copy of the Bible, why not take one of the paperback 'Abundant Life' New Testaments from the back of church to stick in your bag? A donation would be welcome (they cost us £1.49 each). They're easy to read and cheap enough that you can risk getting suncream on them... If you're not used to reading the Bible for yourself, I suggest starting with Luke's gospel, following that with Acts and the letter of James before you get into the rest of it.

Anyway, I hope that the summer gives you space for a bit of reading, and that what you read helps you to rest and to be renewed – in your mind as well as in the rest of life.

The Rev'd Nick Watson



St Thomas Centre, Wednesfield

*Are you looking for a venue to hold your party or community project?
Then why not come and have a look at the St Thomas Centre*

- ◇ Room hire for all occasions
- ◇ Recently refurbished
- ◇ Fully equipped kitchen facilities
- ◇ Available 7 days a week
- ◇ Competitive rates
- ◇ Capacity for 100 people

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01902 723310 or email wednesfieldteam@gmail.com***

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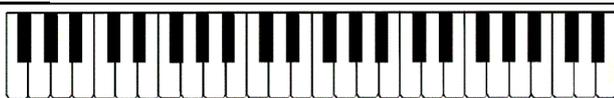
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Long Knowle Lane
Wednesfield

Mindfulness and Meditation

1pm & 7.30pm, Tuesday 30 August, Wednesday 28 September

Time to be still and rest - 20 minutes of non-religious 'mindfulness' or awareness meditation, a short break and 20 minutes of Christian meditation. Feel free to leave after the first part if you prefer; we offer this as a gift to all in our community, whether or not you consider yourself to be a Christian.

Sessions in the St Thomas Centre, Church Street (at the end of Wednesfield High Street).

No charge, donations to Christian Aid welcome.

Led by Rev'd Nick Watson - for more details, call 01902 731 462.





*You're invited to a
Barbecue!*

Where? The Rectory, 9 Vicarage Road
When? From 4pm until everyone goes home
Saturday 6th August

£3 each for all your food.
Please bring your own drinks,
and something to sit on!

Please sign the list in the St
Thomas Room so we know
you're coming!



**Tom's
Tots** **Tuesdays 9.15-11.15am
school term time**

Tom's Tots is our baby and toddler group, which meets in the St Thomas Centre. We have a lovely ever-increasing group of families coming along to play, chat and do crafts too!

If you are a parent/carer of pre-school children why not come along - or perhaps you have friends or neighbours who might be interested? We ask for £1 per family, including drink and snack, and other refreshments are on sale.

And new helpers are always appreciated!
For more details call 01902 731462.



A Glimpse of the Kingdom – the Transfiguration of Jesus

On Sunday 7 August we'll celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord. (It's officially on 6 August, but we're allowed to move it to the nearest Sunday!) So what's it about?

The story of the Transfiguration is told in the first three gospels. Here's how Luke tells the story in chapter 9.

²⁸ Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³⁰ Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. ³¹ They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³² Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³ Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said. ³⁴ While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" ³⁶ When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

Glory revealed – but just for a moment.

Reading Luke's account of the Transfiguration, I'm stuck by a detail which in fact is also in Matthew and Mark (though they disagree in the detail). After Jesus has told his disciples that 'there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God', the gospel writers state that the Transfiguration took place 'about eight days after these sayings'. (six days later in Mark and Matthew.)

It's unusual to have so clear a statement about the time here – I can only think that it's meant to link the Transfiguration with the promise of the vision of the Kingdom, to show that the promise was indeed fulfilled.

If that's the case, then I come back to my belief that the Transfiguration is a moment where the disciples see reality as it looks when seen from heaven. Jesus is still the carpenter rabbi, but he is also the blazing-with-glorious-holiness God the Son.

Seeing the Kingdom, then, includes the transformation of our perspective on the world. The Irish and Northumbrian Christians of Saxon times saw the world as a sacrament of the presence of God, a constant sign of his glory. One thing I long to do more consistently and clearly is to look at the world of my daily life in that way. For God is here, so often unseen and unnoticed. He is King, and so this world seen through faith is surely his kingdom.

If that's true, then how can anything be dull, insignificant or unworthy of notice? I can see that the world could become overwhelmingly glorious; but I'm willing to take the risk that, like Peter, I might say something a bit daft and try to cling on to the wonder. It would be worth it in exchange for the chance to say to Jesus, 'it is good for us to be here.'

This is an extract from my blog, 'Blogging the Bible', where I've nearly got through the whole Bible with comments on every passage. If you'd like to read more, visit revnickwatson.wordpress.com.

The Rev'd Nick Watson

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From the registers

Holy Baptism

'Shine as a light in the world, to the glory of God the Father'

- 5 June **Jasmine Rose Ryder**, daughter of Ian and Victoria Ryder
Noah Randall, son of Elizabeth and Roy Randall
Khia Larkland Price, son of Megan Campbell and Joshua Price
Daisy Victoria Rose Ball, daughter of Zoe and Stuart Ball
- 26 June **Maisie Ann Webster**, daughter of Katie and Richard Webster
Raymond James Webster, son of Katie and Richard Webster
Keziah Ahciaa Kwakye, daughter of Ernestina Kwakye
- 3 July **Isla Grace Bromley**, daughter of Gemma and Steven Bromley
Freya Geraghty, daughter of Tracy and Carl Geraghty
Summer Daisy Rose Bryan, daughter of Julie and Andrew Bryan

Marriage

'Those whom God has joined, let no-one put asunder.'

- 25 June **Keely Edwards** and **Trent Jackson**
 16 July **Hayleigh Freer** and **Steven Terry**

Funerals

'God will show us the path of life; in his presence is the fullness of joy.' (Psalm 16:10)

- 7 June **Beverley Williams** (54)
 14 June **June Postins** (82)
Harold Foster (87)
- 21 June **Kenneth Marston** (81)
 23 June **John Wallbank** (55)
 27 June **Jean Howl** (89)
 28 June **Elizabeth Adey** (87)
 30 June **Patricia Caddy** (70)
George Rowton (interment of ashes)
- 5 July **Percival Brindley** (86)
 7 July **Doreen Tomlinson** (78)
Terence Hyde (67)
- 12 July **Alan Hill** (77)
 13 July **John Bowyer** (85)
 14 July **John Thornton** (75)
 19 July **Logan Jordan** (baby)
 21 July **Michael Scalley** (54)
 25 July **John Price** (81)
Ronald Teece (87)
- 26 July **William Harriman** (90)
 27 July **Christine Lesley Woodall** (64)

In Memoriam

In memory of Harold Foster from Kath and Mark

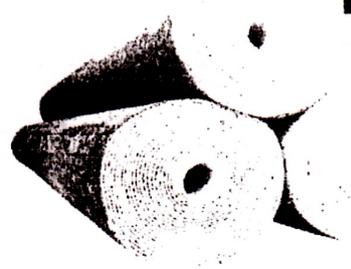
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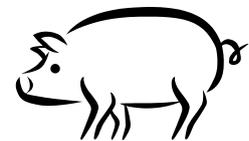
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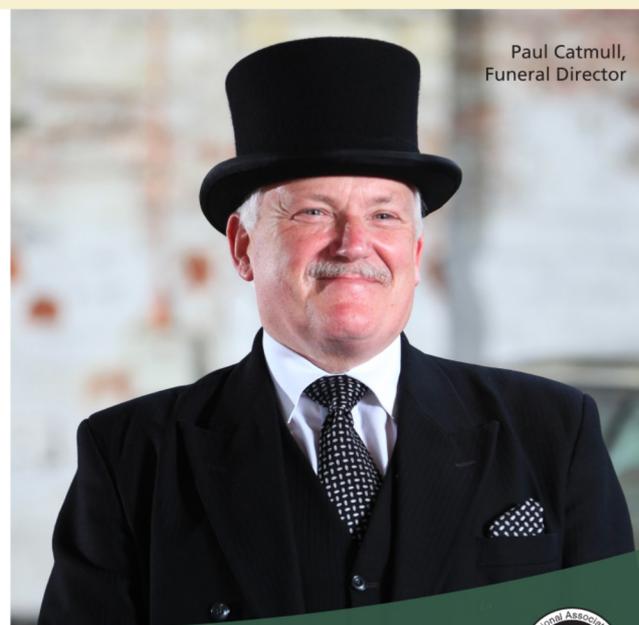
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