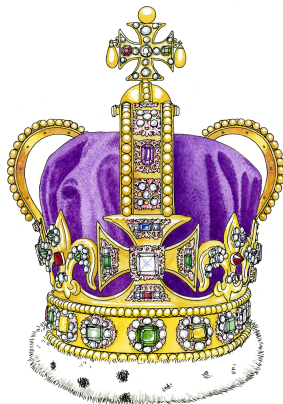


Benefice Magazine for
Wem, Lee Brockhurst and Weston-under-Redcastle

May 2023



Consisting of the parishes of:

St Peter & St Paul's, Wem,



St Peter's, Lee Brockhurst,

St Luke's, Weston-under-Redcastle



Rector:

The Reverend John Christopher Jukes BTh (hons) MA
The Rectory
Ellesmere Road, Wem SY4 5TU

01939 235343

revjohnjukes@gmail.com

Retired Clergy: Prebendary Rob Haarhoff
 Canon Dr William Price
 The Reverend Edith Quirey

Reader: Cathy Dibben

Reader Emeritus: Celia Camplin

Further details are available on our website:
www.wemcofe.co.uk

Find us on 

@Wemparishchurch

ST PETER AND ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WEM

Churchwardens:	Chris Mellings Cathy Dibben David Murray	01939 809521 01939 236178 01939 236134
PCC Lay Chair:	Sybil Farmer	01939 232568
PCC Treasurer:	Caroline Sinclair	01939 232626
Organist:	Glyn Williams	01939 234954
Sacristans:	June Powell & Kath Ridgway	01939 234412 01939 290162
Church Flowers:	Sybil Farmer	01939 232568
Church Hall Bookings:	Via website/Facebook	
Baby and Toddler Group: (Sweet Peas)	Alison Hope	07526 757492

From the Registers of St Peter and St Paul's, Wem

At Rest

4th April Jean Mary Dudley

5th April John Robert Roberts

15th April Allen Evans - Interment of Ashes

27th April Jean Matilda Fallows - Interment of Ashes

Holy Baptism

30th April Evie and Harry Dunphy

Book of Remembrance for May

2 nd	Patricia Joan Scott	17 th	William 'Bill' Henry Manning
4 th	Edgar Alexander Herriman	19 th	Joy Reece
4 th	Gwendolen Grace Mayhew	21 st	Ruth Emma Kidman-Beaver
5 th	Alice Lucinda Sarah Eckford	22 nd	John 'Jack' Jones
5 th	Edith Ivy Stroud	24 th	Keith Michael Walter 'Mickey' Arrowsmith
5 th	Derek 'David' MacKay	27 th	Albert Sandall Cyril Fothergill
5 th	Bryan Huxley	30 th	Sharon Elizabeth Carter
6 th	Wilf Bayliss	30 th	Joyce Eileen Schmeisser
7 th	Janet Margaret Fenn Wiggin	31 st	Stephen Charles McNickle
8 th	Henry 'Harry' Ormes		
12 th	Hannah May Evans		

ST PETER'S, LEE BROCKHURST

Church Warden:	Val Lusby	01939 235610
Church Warden and Treasurer:	Roger Ashton	01939 232425
PCC Secretary:	Phoebe Ashton	01939 232425
PCC Lay Chairman:	Tim Wilton-Morgan	07802 735769
Church Warden Emeritus:	Robert Marsh	01939 200641

ST LUKE'S, WESTON-UNDER-REDCASTLE

Church Warden:	Frank Hosie-Kingham	01939 200618
Church Warden:	Helen O'Neill	01939 200663
Treasurer:	Colin Holloway	01939 200682
Church Warden Emeritus	Arthur Fox	01630 685180

From the Registers of St Luke's, Weston-under-Redcastle

At Rest

29th March Joan Woolley - Memorial service following cremation

SUNDAYS IN MAY ACROSS THE BENEFICE

DATE		WEM	WESTON	LEE
7 May	Easter 5	8.00 am HE 9.45 am HE	9.30 am MP	11.15 am HE
14 May	Easter 6	8.00 am HE 9.45 am HE	9.30 am HE	11.15 am HE
21 May	Easter 7	8.00 am HE 10.30 am SE	Combined Benefice Service at Wem*	
28 May	Pentecost	8.00 am HE 9.45 am HE	11.00 am HE	11.15 am HE

* Please see below your invitation to this special event!

AA	All Age Service	EC	Extended Communion
HE	Holy Eucharist	MP	Morning Prayer
SE	Sung Eucharist		

You are welcome to join services at any of the three churches in the Benefice. Please note that the regular Thursday morning service will NOT take place on 4 May.

ASCENSION DAY

A service will be held in St Peter & St Paul's Wem on Thursday 18 May at 7.30 pm.

Golden Jubilee

The Coronation is not the only significant service in May!

I was ordained priest on 20 May 1973 by the Bishop of St Davids, so, all being well, I am about to celebrate 50 years as a priest. With the generous consent of the Rector I am planning to hold a Service of Thanksgiving in Wem Church on **Sunday 21 May at 10.30 a.m.** This will be a Benefice Sung Eucharist for all three churches. The preacher will be the Right Reverend Dr Richard Fenwick, retired Bishop of St Helena. After the service there will be a buffet in the Church Hall.

Everyone is invited to the service and the buffet, and I do hope that you will all join my family and me on this special occasion.

William Price

Rector's Ramblings May 2023

Last month I looked at the Bible in the Eucharist, this month I would like to muse on a few words from the Lord's Prayer.

In the Lord's Prayer we say: "as we forgive those who sin against us".

Why are we called to forgive others? What is wrong with the Hammurabi Code? This is a collection of Babylonian laws, developed during the reign of Hammurabi (1792–1750 BCE). Perhaps one of the best-known examples of which is "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth". There is no forgiveness here. It is pure payback.

But forgiveness has been found to be beneficial to your health. Today scientists say 'forgiveness is good for you'. Dr Martin Seligman, one of the founders of Positive Psychology, writes in his book *Authentic Happiness*:

'Forgiving transforms bitterness into neutrality or even positively tinged memories, and so makes much greater life satisfaction possible: You can't hurt the perpetrator by not forgiving, but you can set yourself free by forgiving. Physical health, particularly in cardiovascular terms, is likely better in those who forgive than those who do not. And when it is followed by reconciliation, forgiving can vastly improve your relations with the person forgiven'.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu wrote a book called *The Book of Forgiving*. In it he shows how forgiving others can release us to a new life. Forgiving does not mean forgetting, or condoning. Desmond Tutu:

'Without forgiveness, we remain tethered to the person who harmed us. We are bound with chains of bitterness, tied together, trapped. Until we can forgive the person who harmed us, that person will hold the keys to our happiness; that person will be our jailor. When we forgive, we take back control of our own fate and our feelings. We become our own liberators. We don't forgive for others. We forgive for ourselves'.

However, there are some things that we find very hard to forgive. On these occasions perhaps it is enough to want to forgive? Corrie ten Boon writes in her autobiography after giving a sermon on forgiving:

“There suddenly stands a man before me, co-responsible for the slow horrible death of my dear Betsie [Corrie’s sister] and he dares to ask me for forgiveness. All those beautiful sermons about forgiveness but now I have to forgive myself. And I can’t.”

“I pray softly to Jesus. I don’t want this! You have to help me. Then I realize, ‘Forgiveness is not an emotion. It is an act of the will.’ The feeling is not there but I can move my hand. Almost mechanically I place my hand in his. And then something extraordinary happens.

I suddenly feel a warm wave through my body. From my shoulder, through my arm, to our hands. I have to cry, “I forgive you brother, with all my heart.” There we stood. The camp guard and the prisoner. For a long time we held hands. And never before have I experienced the love of God so deeply.”

As you read this is there someone you need to forgive? Not to forget, and not necessarily for their sake, but for yours.

Yours in Christ,
Reverend John.

Volunteers needed at St Peter and St Paul’s Church Wem

Currently there is a small number of people who are willing to lead intercessions and act as welcomers. Our thanks go to Keith Edwards and Tim Heavisides who have helped in these ways for many years but have recently moved away from Wem.

We are asking for new volunteers for all our lay support to services: leading intercessions, reading lessons, acting as ministrants and welcoming people to our church services. Please indicate your willingness to undertake these tasks by adding you name to the list at back of church – Reverend John will provide volunteers with an induction into each of these activities.

We now enjoy a cup of coffee and a chat in the church hall after 09:45 service. This is dependant on a few people who put out the tables and chairs, bring milk and biscuits/cakes, serve coffee and clear up. Please let Sybil Farmer (01939 232568 email syb.hbcwem@btinternet.com) have your contact details if you can help with refreshments after the service.

The Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery, Wem

**We're Lending
a Hand**



The [Big Help Out](#) is a national day of volunteering happening on Monday 8 May 2023. It's about inspiring a new generation of volunteers and is set to be one of the centrepieces of the celebrations for the [Coronation of HM The King](#) and HM The Queen Consort.

As part of this initiative, The Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery are holding a volunteer event at the cemetery, starting at 10.00am on 8 May. If you can, please join us and lend a hand!

We need people of all ages to help to clean and prepare the 200-metre perimeter fence prior to painting with wood protector (the painting will be done at a later date). Preparing the fence is no mean task and we will need all the help we can get! If possible, we will also prepare the front railings prior to painting and there may be other worthwhile tasks on the day – please look out for our posters.

The chapel will be open all day!

Forthcoming Events in Wem

Community lunch on 20th May 11:30 -14:00

Coffee morning on May 27th 10:00 - 12:00

Plant Sale

at

The Gables
Meadow View Court
Wem SY4 5TJ



Saturday 13th May
From 10.30 - 12.00

Refreshments and produce
will be available

Proceeds to St Peter's Church
Lee Brockhurst

For further information tel: 01939 235610

Any queries about searches in the Whitchurch Road Cemetery
or elsewhere

Please contact Mr Tom Edwards of 1 Eckford Park,
Wem, SY4 5HL or on 01939 233932

Holy Days in the May Church Calendar

1 st	Philip and James, Apostles
2 nd	Athanasius, Bishop, Teacher of Faith, 373
4 th	English Saints and Martyrs of the Reformation Era
8 th	Julian of Norwich, Spiritual Writer, c1417
14 th	Matthias the Apostle
16 th	Caroline Chisholm, Social Reformer, 1877
19 th	Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, 988
20 th	Alcuin of York, Deacon, Abbot of Tours, 804
21 st	Helena, Protector of the Holy Places, 330
24 th	John and Charles Wesley, Evangelists, 1791 & 1788
25 th	The Venerable Bede, Monk, Scholar, Historian, 735
25 th	Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, 709
26 th	Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, 605
26 th	John Calvin, Reformer, 1564
26 th	Philip Neri, Spiritual Guide, 1595
28 th	Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1089
30 th	Josephine Butler, Social Reformer, 1906
30 th	Joan of Arc, Visionary, 1431
30 th	Apolo Kivebulaya, Priest, Evangelist in Africa, 1933
31 st	The Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth

All in the month of MAY

It was:

250 years ago, on 10th May 1773 that Britain passed the Tea Act, which favoured the British East India Company over the American colonies, which led to the Boston Tea Party in December, which escalated into the American Revolution and the establishment of the USA.

150 years ago, on 1st May 1873 that David Livingstone, Scottish missionary and explorer, died. Best known for his search for the sources of the Nile, and for going missing (and being found) in Africa.

100 years ago, on 26th-27th May 1923 that the first Le Mans 24 hours endurance motor race was held.

90 years ago, on 2nd May 1933 that the first modern sighting of Scotland's Loch Ness monster was reported in the Inverness Chronicle.

80 years ago, on 16th-17th May 1943 that the RAF launched Operation Chastise, which became famous as the 'Dambusters' Raid'. Bouncing bombs were used to bypass anti-torpedo nets and breach dams, which caused catastrophic flooding in Germany's Ruhr Valley.

75 years ago, on 14th-15th May 1948 that Israel was declared an independent state as the British mandate in Palestine came to an end. Next day the Arab-Israeli War began with the invasion of Israel by Egypt, Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq.

70 years ago, on 29th May 1953 that New Zealand mountaineer Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay became the first people to reach the summit of Mount Everest.

50 years ago, on 17th May 1973 that the Watergate hearings began in the US Senate and were televised nationally.

40 years ago, on 20th May 1983 that the journal Science reported the discovery of the HIV virus that causes AIDS.

25 years ago, on 23rd May 1998 that in a referendum the people of Northern Ireland voted to accept the Good Friday Agreement. 75% were in favour of a Northern Ireland Assembly.

15 years ago, on 12th May 2008 that the Sichuan earthquake took place in China. More than 69,000 people were killed, over 370,000 injured, and nearly five million made homeless.

10 years ago, on 27th May 2013 that Bill Pertwee, British comedy actor best known for his role as the Chief ARP air raid warden William Hodges in Dad's Army, died.

The next issue is scheduled to be prepared on Thursday 18 May. It will be available in an electronic version. If you are not currently on our email list and wish to be please contact the address below.

Items for the magazine can be left in the drawer
at the back of the church in Wem (by 9 am Thursday)
or sent to: [**pamedgmond@hotmail.com**](mailto:pamedgmond@hotmail.com)



WEM MILLENNIUM GREEN TRUST

SPRING IS HERE AND ITS TIME TO TIME TO START
PLANTING UP SO, PLEASE JOIN US AT

OUR ANNUAL PLANT SALE

At
WEM MILLENNIUM GREEN
ASTON STREET WEM
(OPP WEM METHODIST CHURCH)

Saturday 20th May
9am – 12 noon

There will be a huge variety of plants and vegetables for sale

Also a **RAFFLE** with many lovely prizes

Refreshments will be available at the Wem
Methodist Chapel

If you would like to book a stall, please telephone
01939 233533



Crossing the Bridge: Keeping connections through advancing dementia

My dad lived with dementia for the last 10 years of his life – and that involved a journey of the heart for our whole family, as we stayed in step with him. Through his advancing dementia, we found it helped to cross the bridge and meet him in his own world. Christopher Eccleston, whose father lived with dementia, said, “I eventually learned that, instead of trying pull people with dementia into your world, you have to enter theirs.”

What are the things that help us to cross the bridge, as dementia advances? If language is fraying at the edges, shorter sentences may help. Beyond words, there may be connection through pictures – on an iPad or in a magazine or a book. ‘Pictures to Share’ books are designed for people with dementia – and ‘Strength for the Journey’ from that series focuses on Christian faith. Or you might enjoy making your own scrapbook of pictures.

Music can make such deep connections too. Perhaps you can enjoy singing a favourite hymn or song together. I went to see my aunt one day, and I was waiting for her in the entrance hall of the sheltered accommodation where she lived. A woman was in the hall and it was clear we weren’t going to connect through a rational conversation. I wasn’t sure how to cross the bridge to connect with her. So I made a stab at finding a bridge of connection by starting to sing, “Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do”. Within a moment, we were both happily singing and dancing round the hall together.

My dad connected with dogs in a new way: they seemed to understand one another, without the need for words! Also, we loved playing with a beach ball together. For his 80th birthday, my brother gave my dad 80 seashells and there was complete, absorbing delight in arranging these. And a Memory Box of objects that bring joy can be a source of on-going connection. Also, touch can be so important – simply staying in touch.

And of course God always keeps connection with us, crossing the bridge to meet us where we are, even when we are in uncharted or unchosen territory. God is always alongside, asking, “Where do we go from here?” I love the words from Joshua 1:9, “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Dementia Action Week runs from 15-21 May this year. I wonder whether your action might be to try crossing the bridge, meeting someone living with dementia where they are.

Sarah Thorpe, is the Dementia-Friendly Church Enabler for Lichfield Diocese

“Head to Heart: Shared family reflections on living through dementia” is a 30-minute video resource, sharing Sarah Thorpe’s family’s experiences, including sections on “Crossing the Bridge” and “New Ways to Connect”. It’s on YouTube, at:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?
list=PLpKbHvSWJtxeszOX7GS6ryE2WhsrzdKuJ](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpKbHvSWJtxeszOX7GS6ryE2WhsrzdKuJ)

or simply search “YouTube dementia head to heart”.

For more on our Diocese of Lichfield Dementia-Friendly Churches Network, contact Sarah Thorpe on sarah.thorpe@lichfield.anglican.org or 0798 224 8949 .

Website, Weekly News Sheet, Benefice Magazine

If you have any information that you would like to be included on our website and/or included on the weekly news sheet please email this information to Sybil Farmer syb.hbcwem@btinternet.com - for inclusion in the weekly sheet please send the information by Wednesday for inclusion in the following Sunday sheet.

You may find it convenient to copy information you send to Pam for the magazine (pamedgmond@hotmail.com) about any special events to Sybil at the above email.

The website, news sheet and benefice magazine are all great ways to share news and notice of forthcoming events amongst us all.

When you talk, you only repeat what you already know, but if you listen you may learn something. – *Amish school proverb*

Unfettered inquisitiveness, it is clear, teaches better than do intimidating assignments. – *Augustine*

Lee Brockhurst – Dates for your Diary

At our recent Annual Parochial Council Meetings, we agreed various dates for key services and fundraising events over the coming year. Further details for each will be available nearer the time but the following is our plan:

Fundraising

Saturday 13th May - Plant Sale at The Gables, Wem 10.30 – 12.00

Saturday 20th May - Plant Sale at The Millennium Green, Wem - open early

Saturday 8th July - Strawberry Tea at Brockhurst Farm 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Saturday 9th September - Ride and Stride, fundraising for Shropshire Historic Churches Trust

Monday 25th September - Harvest Supper and Auction, Lee Village Hall 7.00 pm

Saturday 18th November - Autumn Fayre, Lee Village Hall 10.30 - 12.30

Key Services

2nd July - St Peter's Patronal Festival – details to follow

Sunday 24th September - Harvest Festival 11.15 am

Sunday 17th December - Carol Service 6.30 pm

Church Flowers at St Peter and Paul's Church



Quite a few people have kindly remarked “how nice it is to have flowers decorating the church for Easter”. We plan to continue with flower arrangements thro’ the coronation weekend, the summer and autumn. In the past people have kindly donated to the flower fund in memory of loved ones or to celebrate special anniversaries.

If you would like to dedicate flowers for a particular date please contact Sybil Farmer 01939 232568 or email:

syb.hbcwem@btinternet.com.

Any donations should be given to Caroline Sinclair who is looking after the Flower Fund.

Lee Brockhurst WI News

Our March speaker was Anne Harrison, an extremely knowledgeable retired Reaseheath College lecturer who spoke about 'Easy Plants for your Garden', which very appropriately was perfect timing for our visit to Oakgate's Nursery at Ellerdine. Armed with our monthly suggestions of successful plants to purchase and a healthy appetite we enjoyed a very tasty brunch and retail plant therapy!

Our April meeting was our Open Meeting where we welcomed guests from our Wem Group WI's - Clive & Grinshill, Edstaston, Loppington and Prees.

Our speakers were Mike Clayton and Emma Porter of the Midlands Cave Rescue Association who were both involved in the successful rescue of the Young Footballers who were trapped in an underground cave in Thailand in 2018. Their empathetic, difficult, passionate and determined miraculous efforts over many days to bring all 12 football members together with their coach out of the cave brought many of the audience to a standing applause. It must be noted that The Midlands Cave Rescue is supported by volunteer funding alone - such that many attendees made voluntary donations to the charity.

Our successful raffle winners on the night were June Jackson (Lee Brockhurst), Christine Bolland (Hadnall), Jenny Saunders (Clive & Grinshill), Paula Oldham (Lee Brockhurst), Rosie Duxbury (Hadnall), Adrian Holland (Guest), Millie Bricknall (Edstaston), Liz Addis (Lee Brockhurst) and Barbara Reeves (Edstaston). The competition winners for the most interesting key were 1st Elizabeth Jones, 2nd Sue Wilton-Morgan and 3rd Helen James

The next meeting will be on Tuesday May 16th where we will be given a talk about 'Hedgerow Foraging for Food and Refreshment' by Bev McGovern, followed by a short walk in the hall vicinity to identify herbs and then enjoy some welcome herbal tea!

We always welcome visitors to join in the fun and friendship at Lee Brockhurst. All meetings take place at Lee Brockhurst Village Hall unless otherwise stated. If you would like to know more, please contact our Secretary Dawn, on 07527 089616 or dawnwickham1@aol.com who will be very happy to help.



Wem Library

Regular Events Diary

Scrabble Group

Weekly meet up for people who love Scrabble. Open for everybody.
Tuesdays 2.00 to 5.00 pm.

Knit & Natter

This is a weekly group for those who love knitting, crocheting and a good natter. Thursdays 10.30 to 12.30 pm.

Craft Club

Bring along your current craft project. Tuesdays from 10.30 am and Fridays from 2.30 pm.

Storytime with Nan

Stories for children under 5. Fridays (term-time only) 2.15 to 2.45 pm.

Book Group

Join in our book club every last Thursday of each month. 2.00 pm.

Further details from wem.library@shropshire.gov.uk 01939 236995

A Prayer for our new King, Charles III

Everlasting God, we pray for our new King.
Bless his reign and the life of our nation.
Help us to work together
so that truth and justice, harmony and fairness
flourish among us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

HEDGEROWS

Hedgerows have been an integral part of our beautiful countryside for many centuries, but very much increased by the Enclosure Acts starting in the 1750s, which at that time disadvantaged the peasant farmers and their use of extensive common grazing land and gave greater power to landlords. Government regulation has also affected the growth and demise of hedgerows from that time to the present day. Large scale hedge removal began after the Second World War to address national food shortages. Then in the 1970s there were the Farm Improvement Schemes funded by grants from The European Economic Community to intensify agriculture and target a goal of food surplus, the idea being to store this surplus in huge refrigerated ships then release it back into the food market if there were shortages to maintain a balance of supply and demand. Unfortunately these surpluses became too large, at great cost to the tax payer, and the scheme was abandoned. It also led to vast hedge destruction particularly in the big arable areas of the south east.

Hedgerows of course provide boundaries, shelter for livestock, reduce soil erosion and provide a home for a vast amount of wildlife from tiny insects to endangered small birds and animals the size of badgers, foxes and rabbits. Drainage is helped too if there are ditches alongside. Hedges have to be maintained and looked after and the old tradition of laying a hedge is still practised as a means of keeping dense growth low and improving its ability to keep livestock in place. However environmental regulation in more recent years has brought about a big increase in height and mechanical flail hedge trimming only allowed every two or even every three years, the argument being that it improves habitat for wild bird life and all other hedgerow dwellers. This has a down side as flail trimmers work most efficiently on one year's growth and keeping hedges low means they are much denser. At three years growth the flails smash the ends of the branches! Hedgerows now have become important in mitigating climate change, and increasing biodiversity. The new farming environmental land management schemes and countryside stewardship schemes have involved hedges as a vitally important part of addressing a way forward. Very recently laser scanning has shown that hedgerows can capture carbon at twice the rate of woodland due to their linear three dimensional structure. Interestingly hedges have been related to reducing risk, the old adage "hedging your bets" and in recent years the hedge fund, very pertinent points in this climate change and carbon net zero-targeting present time!

Lots of public footpaths run alongside hedges, get out there and enjoy the therapy of our glorious British countryside.

Roger Ashton

Churches Count on Nature 2023

In 2021 we started Churches Count on Nature, working in partnership with the Church of England, the Church in Wales and A Rocha. The idea behind Churches Count on Nature is to encourage as many people as possible to visit, explore and enjoy their local churchyard, spotting wildlife and recording what they see. These records are then sent to Caring for God's Acre; via an online system such as iNaturalist or iRecord, by emailing us the list or by popping it in the post. These records then go to build up a picture of just how important churchyards are for biodiversity, information which we can then share more widely.

We decided to encourage all those involved with Churches Count on Nature to run some sort of nature spotting activity during Love Your Burial Ground week, a celebratory week which has been running for many years now involving those managing burial grounds of all types and denominations including our magnificent cemeteries. Many of you have taken part over the years and even more than joined in since 2021 via Churches Count on Nature. So far, we estimate that over 16,000 people have been involved in this initiative, some of them simply enjoying a visit to a beautiful and peaceful spot and listening to the bird song, others providing a full species list in Latin of the lichens and invertebrates they've found!

The good news is that we are running it all again from Saturday 3rd to Sunday 12th June, so please join in!

To take part, have a look on our website for information and inspiration, plan your activity, register it with us and request your free Starter Guides plus a Field Studies Council fold-out chart. Visit our website: page:

<https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/get-involved/event-register/>

Involvement can be very low key – a few friends listing wildflowers - or can be larger including perhaps your neighbouring school or Messy Church group. If you're unsure about what to do or who might be interested then start small, previous years' feedback suggests that you may be pleasantly surprised at the level of local interest.

We're hoping for a bumper year in 2023, perhaps the start of local action inspired by Sir David Attenborough and the Wild Isles television series?

We look forward to reading about all the actions taking place across the diocese.
All the best, Harriet Carty

*Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor, harriet@cfga.org.uk,
www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk*



The Venerable Bede

The Venerable Bede was an outstanding scholar who accomplished several 'firsts'. He was the first historian to date events from the birth of Christ. He was the first person to write scholarly works in the English language. And, of course, his world-famous, magisterial *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, completed in 731, is still in print today.

Bede was born in about 673, and sent as a child to Wearmouth monastery, and then later transferred to the monastery at Jarrow. His was a quiet life: he probably never travelled further than Lindisfarne to the north, and York to the south. In about 692 Bede was ordained deacon, and then, in about 703, he was priested.

Bede once described his own life: "I have devoted my energies to a study of the Scriptures, observing monastic discipline, and singing the daily services in church: study, teaching and writing have always been my delight." It sounds unremarkable, but Bede's fruitfulness has been extravagant: his writings have informed and influenced millions of people over 14 centuries.

As a theologian, Bede translated the Gospel of John into Old English, completing it on the very day that he died. He also wrote commentaries on various books of the Bible.

But Bede's outstanding gift was as an historian. His *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* is one of the most important sources that we have for understanding early English history. Bede was scrupulous in his use of sources, clearly identifying them. He also was careful to distinguish between fact, hearsay and legend. He had a healthy scepticism, and certainly did not believe that everything he was told was necessarily true.

His *Ecclesiastical History* tells the history of Britain up to the year 729. It starts with the story of the Celtic peoples, who converted to Christianity in the first three centuries after the death of Christ. Bede then moves on to the invasion of Britain by the pagan Anglo-Saxons, in the 5th and 6th centuries. They themselves were in turn converted by Celtic missionaries from the north and the west, and by Roman missionaries coming up from the south and the east.

Bede himself lived during the time of the Anglo-Saxon church, of which he was a wise observer of its various problems. He urged that episcopal visitations, confirmations, and Holy Communions should be held more frequently – for the good of the Church.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Genesis ch. 25:19-33, 27:1-42

Isaac and Rebekah had twin sons - Esau ('Hairy') and Jacob ('grasper'). When the boys were born, God said...

Esau is older but Jacob will be more important.



The boys grew up...

Esau liked to go out to hunt, but Jacob stayed at home.



When Isaac was old and blind he told Esau



I want to give you my special blessing; first catch me some food.

But Rebekah went to find Jacob



You could have that blessing

But Esau is hairy and I am not.



Use goat skin to cover your arms and wear Esau's clothes



Here is your food, Father



Are you really Esau? Come nearer.

Jacob was tricked by the goat skin and Esau's clothes.



May God bless you richly, my son.

Then Esau returned



I'm sorry, I already blessed your brother

You must run away or Esau will kill you. Go to my brother Laban's home.



Jacob!

