

St Mary's Parish Church Whitegate



NEWS FOR SEPTEMBER 2024



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester

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www.stmaryswhitegate.org

Our cover photo

Giant Spyder™ in churchyard! In recent months, several of the wooden shingles from the steeple at St Mary's have fallen to the ground, leaving gaps where water could enter. Closer inspection and repairs were essential but not easy, given the height and the shape of the building. Quotes were obtained for scaffolding but then a Spyder™ was suggested. This ingeniously designed piece of kit comprises a remotely controlled vehicle, which travels on caterpillar treads to spread the load. The base carries a high, articulated cherry picker, enabling the vehicle to be moved into place to allow access to otherwise inaccessible spots. The name "spider" comes from the jointed legs which, when outstretched, stabilise the machine. On 6th August, the Spyder™ and handlers arrived at 8.00 am and left again by midday, repairs completed. Look up when you are passing and spot the new shingles before they weather and darken to blend with the old ones.

Another change to look for in the churchyard is the new handrail alongside the tarmac path leading to Whitehead Field. The path can become slippery in the winter and with the slope down to the gate, it was deemed necessary to put in a handrail. It has been designed, made and installed for us by Steve Simpson of Little Budworth, with help from Tony Hall. We thank them both very much.

A verse for SEPTEMBER

John Ch 20: Verses 15-16a

He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary."

I wonder if you know why your parents gave you the name they did, and how you feel about having that name. I am called Jane (which is my middle name in fact) after Jane Eyre and Jane Austen. Both Janes, albeit one fictional and one real, are powerful independent-minded women, and I am quite contented to have them as my namesakes. Our names mean a lot to us. They are a core part of our identity. They are very often the first thing we ever learn to write. And other people use them in so many different ways. Our name can be a reprimand or a warning or the most tender expression of love or sympathy depending on the other person's tone of voice.

Do you ever try to imagine Jesus' tone of voice as he turns and speaks to Mary on that first Easter morning? Gentle and reassuring perhaps? Telling her that everything is going to be all right?

SJM

SEPTEMBER Diary

SEPT 1st	9.30 am 9.30 am 11.00 am 11.00 am	Trinity 14 Morning Prayer Storytelling Service Service in the Pits (<i>see page 11</i>) Margaret leads worship at Holy Trinity	St Mary's The Mews Oulton Park Castle
2nd	2.00 pm	Parish team meeting	
3rd	2.00 pm	Bible Study at Commonsides	L.B. Methodist Chapel
4th	10.00 am 12.00 noon	Crafty Coffee Holy Communion (BCP)	The Mews St Mary's
5th	10.30 am	First Thursday Café (<i>see page 11</i>)	The Mews
7th	2.00 pm	Whitegate Village Show (<i>see page 11</i>)	Recreation Room
8th	10.30 am	St Mary's Patronal Festival Benefice Communion	St Mary's
10th	9.30 am 2.00 pm 7.30 pm	Middlewich Deanery Chapter Quiet Day Bible Study at Commonsides St Mary's PCC Meeting	L.B. Methodist Chapel The Mews
11th	9.00 am 10.00 am 12.00 noon	Men's Breakfast (<i>see page 11</i>) Crafty Coffee Holy Communion (BCP)	Tarporley G'dn Centre The Mews St Mary's
15th	9.30 am 9.30 am 11.00 am	Trinity 16 Morning Prayer Storytelling Service Paul leads worship at Holy Trinity	St Mary's The Mews Castle
16th	6.30 pm	Gentlemen's Dinner (<i>see page 12</i>)	Alvanley Arms, Cotebrook
17th	2.00 pm 2.00 pm 7.30 pm	Bible Study at Commonsides Pastoral & Fellowship Committee meeting St Mary's Mothers' Union meeting	L.B. Methodist Chapel Dairy Cottage The Mews
18th	10.00 am 12.00 noon	Crafty Coffee Holy Communion (BCP)	The Mews St Mary's
19th	9.45 am meet for 10.00 am start	Whitegate Amblers (<i>see page 12</i>)	Anderton Boat Lift Visitor Centre
22nd	9.30 am 11.30 am	Trinity 17 Holy Communion Baptism of Thomas and Harriet Porter	St Mary's St Mary's
23rd	Paul Dawson on duty at Chester Cathedral all day		
24th	2.00 pm	Bible Study at Commonsides	L.B. Methodist Chapel
25th	10.00 am 12.00 noon	Crafty Coffee Holy Communion (BCP)	The Mews St Mary's
26th	9.00 am	Bishop Sam to dedicate the new classroom building	Whitegate Primary School
28th	9.00 am	Whitegate Church & Churchyard working party with lunch in The Mews	
29th	10.30 am	Trinity 18 Benefice Holy Communion	St Peter's

HARVEST EVENTS

Friday 4th October 7.00pm, Harvest Songs of Praise and Supper at St Peter's
 Sunday 6th October, Harvest Festival, 9.30 am at St Mary's & 11.00 am at St Peter's
 Friday 11th October 7.00 pm, Harvest Supper at Whitegate

September thoughts from the Vicar

Both our parishes have open churchyards which are deeply valued by many. They take a deal of maintenance and at this time of year we have working parties of volunteers who help us tidy things up and carry out much needed work. Look at the diary to find dates in September and October when we will be working in our churchyards. Please join us if you can and bring some gloves and tools. As ever we are at the mercy of the weather so we may need to reschedule.



Speaking of the weather I have just got in from wandering around St Peter's churchyard in the pouring rain picking up abandoned flower arrangements and pots of dead flowers. I was meeting a couple to plan their wedding and afterwards had some time to spare. Churchyards in the wet are never at their best. St Peter's PCC are looking into how often we can afford to trim the grass to keep the churchyard looking neater. With the grass too long, not only is it untidy but the trimmed cuttings make more of a mess.

Some churchyards leave areas where grass is not cut. The aim is to create greater biodiversity and provide wildflowers to support insect life. Not everyone appreciates this, thinking the churchyard has just been left to run wild. But it can be part of a careful management strategy.

One issue St Peter's churchyard faces is that there are very few spaces left for new graves. We are looking at how to create space for one more full row but doing the work needed comes at a cost.

Whitegate churchyard is most certainly not short of space! The work of local members of the community planting trees and bulbs around the Whitehead Field section has been very much appreciated and we hope we can continue to develop this area as a community resource and place of natural beauty. We shall be holding an event in the future to thank the volunteers who have given their time and skill so generously.

You will know that I quite regularly get cross with bishops. I was told recently of a bishop (who shall remain nameless) who told newly ordained clergy to hope that they are never appointed to a parish with a churchyard. In contrast I remember a former Bishop of Warrington, Michael Henshall, who in a clergy gathering said, "Thank God for clergy willing to take on churchyards. It's a massive task and we need people willing to do it, and do it well." When Bishops of all people advise clergy to dodge the difficult jobs it's no wonder people lose faith in the Church of England. We hold sacred spaces in trust and I continue to lament that as a nation we expect these public spaces to be funded by local congregations with no contribution from the public purse. Other countries recognise that churches, and churchyards, belong to the wider society and provide some public funding for their upkeep.

Our churchyards are special places. They are where we remember those whom we love but see no longer in this world. They are havens for wildlife. They are sacred space where we can pause and be still. It is very rare for me to be in either of our churchyards and not meet someone who values time to talk and allow their story to be heard. You can do a lot worse than loiter in churchyards and enjoy chance encounters.

Of course, like all shared space, churchyards have to have rules and sometimes people don't like following the rules. Or they want others to be the same as them and get cross when people do things they don't like. Which is why I take the view that it's no good trying to please everybody because that just isn't going to happen.

The rules are published on our Diocesan website; go to www.chester.anglican.org, click on 'Support and Information' / 'Church Buildings' / Churchyards and then on the link for the Churchyard Regulations. We try to apply them gently but fairly. Perhaps I could just remind everyone that if you want to add anything to a grave you need written permission to do so. Glass, ceramic and plastic items added to graves are liable to be removed. Balloons and strings of lights which wildlife can get tangled in are removed immediately.

One issue which troubles me is the amount of plastic and non-recyclable waste that is left in our churchyards. Today I filled half a wheelie bin with plastic pots. After Christmas we fill several wheelie bins with plastic and oasis from wreaths. At funerals florists often create elaborate arrangements containing large amounts of plastic and oasis. These are left on graves and subsequently abandoned. We recycle what we can but there is a huge quantity of material which goes into landfill. I can only urge families arranging funerals to be mindful of floral tributes and try to make them as environmentally friendly as possible.

Before signing off for September, those present (physically or via the magic of YouTube) at Margaret's ordination in June may remember the preacher referring to 9th September as a sacred and holy day.

I did some research on the internet (so it must be true) and found this:

"International Buy a Priest a Beer Day occurs on September 9th. It isn't officially commemorated by any Christian denomination. However, it is still a day when Catholics build relationships with their priests by taking them out for a beer, showing appreciation, and sharing how their ministry has been important to them. Even if you aren't a Catholic, you could still buy a priest a beer. Or, you could buy a beer for your pastor, rabbi, or another spiritual leader. This tradition apparently goes back to the time of St. Hopswald of Aleyard, the first man to take his priest out for a beer!"

www.internationaldays.co/event

Paul.

SEPTEMBER NEWS FROM ST MARY'S

□ Extra responsibilities for our clergy

During September and October we shall be supporting Holy Trinity, Castle, who are currently without a vicar. On 8th September Margaret begins her secondment to St Stephen's, Moulton, who are also currently without a vicar. She will be sharing her time 50/50 between St Mary's and St Peter's, and St Stephen's.



□ Mothers' Union at Foxhill

In July, members of our branch at St Mary's were welcomed to Foxhill House and Woodlands. The house, near Frodsham, was gifted to the diocese in 1968 and became the Chester Diocese Retreat and Conference Centre.

With coffee on arrival, we were shown into a sitting room set aside for us and during the first session we talked about the poem, passage from literature, hymn or article we had each brought with us, sharing a little of ourselves as we explained the importance those texts held for us. Later, we were joined by Revd Lucy Brewster, who together with her husband David, is Director of Foxhill. In the delightful circular chapel, she interpreted for us the full significance of the account from St John's Gospel of Jesus' meeting with a Samaritan woman at the well in Sychar. It's a story of great significance for those at Foxhill, for they consider the house and gardens to be a place of encounter – and there is a well in the grounds. A beautiful stained-glass window, installed recently in the chapel blends key elements of that story with features of the Foxhill gardens.

At midday, we were pleased to take part together in a service of Holy Communion, which felt very intimate as we sat in the round.

Our visit finished in the Dining Room, where a delicious lunch was laid out for us. It was a morning that will long stay in the memory.

Perhaps next year we'll do it again!



□ **The Big Clean at St Mary's**

Saturday 28th September is the date for our annual clean and tidy, both inside St Mary's and in the churchyard. All who are able, please bring buckets, dusters and polish etc. and garden tools if you prefer to work outside. We shall start at 9.30am and work till lunch time, when a Pastoral Buffet Lunch will be provided in The Mews. Many hands will make light work.

□ **Donations to local charities**

Many parishioners will know that St Mary's is committed to giving 5% of the money raised from freewill giving and from fund raising to other charities who need our help, be it international, national or local. So far in 2024, St Mary's has donated £693 to Embrace the Middle East, £301 each to The Pettypool Trust and to Cheshire Young Carers. At a recent meeting of the Mission and Giving Group, it was decided to make donations of £290 each to Joshua Tree and to Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy.

□ **Fresh paint in The Mews**

Apologies to all who saw their activities at The Mews cancelled at short notice over a period in August – but it was for a very good reason. The decorators came in for 5 days and repainted inside for us, giving the interior a fresh new look. The renovated Mews reopened in April 2017 and has been much used and appreciated in the seven years since then. The exterior was repainted last year and by maintaining the building in this way we hope it will serve us well for years to come.

□ **"Are we nearly there yet?"**

A final reminder that Jane Millinchip needs our photos for the next exhibition in The Mews by the end of September. On the theme of journeys, the title is "Are we nearly there yet?" Jane invites photos of different means of transport, roads and paths, bridges and gates, Send them to her by email: revdjanemillinchip@outlook.com



□ **Community directory**

The PCC at St Mary's is looking to compile a Whitegate Directory, a listing of groups, organisations and activities in the parish, which would be a useful resource for everyone to know just what is available within our local community. Anyone who would like to have an entry in the directory should contact Paul Dawson: vicaragecinderhill@outlook.com

□ Donations for the Foodbank

Readers will know that at St Mary's we collect donations of food items for the Mid-Cheshire foodbank. Pam & Mike Venables deliver all we collect to the warehouse. Collections have diminished recently, but the demand for food parcels has increased, particularly over the school holidays. This means that stocks in the warehouse are very run down.



Each individual or family visiting the foodbank, after referral from one of the agencies, receives supplies for at least three days' worth of healthy balanced meals. A typical food parcel includes breakfast cereal, soup or snack meals, pasta or rice, pasta sauce, tinned meat and fish, tinned vegetables and fruit, tea and coffee, longlife milk, toilet rolls and store cupboard staples. When they have them available, the staff will also give out fresh fruit and veg, eggs, bread, petfood and toiletries.

At present, the following items are urgently needed:

Desserts Jam/Honey Coffee Soup Custard

Obviously, all food items are gratefully received, but let's try and boost their stocks of these particular essentials during the month of September. Pam and Mike will be only too delighted if they have more to deliver. Thank you for your support.



WHITEGATE WI - September meeting & the Village Show

On Wednesday 4th September at 7.15 for 7.30 pm in the Recreation Room, we welcome Kevin Reynolds who will give us "Devil's Darning Needle an Introduction to Dragonflies" .

Then on Saturday 7th September, again in the Recreation Room, we host the Village Show 2.00 – 4.30 pm. (Entries please, from 9.00 – 11.00 am.) See *advert on page 11 for more details.*

Contact Alison: whitegatewi@outlook.com with any enquiries.

SAFER ROADS IN OUR PARISH



W&MPC has recently issued a special newsletter dedicated to issues of road safety and calling on the help of all householders. As they explain, parish councils are not responsible for the maintenance of the highways or deciding on speed limits and they are wholly dependent on CWAC Highways department for appropriate allocation of budgets and for approvals.

Our Parish Council's role is to raise the issues important to those of us affected by CWAC's decisions and they do this regularly, but progress is slow. They have therefore decided to focus on THREE priorities and knowing the strength of feeling among residents, they are asking us personally to engage with CWAC and our MP by emailing them (see addresses below) about one or more of these three issues:

- 1. Potholes & uneven road surfaces.** There are problems with potholes in a number of locations within the parish, but particular areas of concern are Cinder Hill, Cassia Green and Clay Lane. Heavy agricultural vehicles visit farms locally and the volume of traffic passing through the village means our road surfaces degrade quickly and yet as rural roads, they are not prioritised and repairs don't last.
- 2. Approach to school.** W&MPC recently requested that the speed limit outside the school be reduced to 20mph, as is the case with 120 of schools in CWAC. We are one of only 25 schools who do not have a 20mph limit outside their school. Highways say that past assessments show that the criteria for reducing the speed limit were not met.
- 3. The Beeches.** The Recreation Room is used daily in term-time by Whitegate Pre-school and other community groups during the evening. The carpark is across the road from the building and so parents with young children / elderly residents have to cross the busy road. There is a history of accidents at this location. An interactive sign was installed some years ago funded by the Parish Council. We would like to see a 20mph speed limit at school drop off/pick up times, pedestrian crossing road marking and improvements to the car parking surface (in the lay-by).

Please voice your concerns about these issues by emailing to lobby one or more of the following:

Highways: ENGVRoyal@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Councillors: gina.Lewis@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

stuart.Bingham@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Our MP: andrew.cooper.mp@parliament.uk

Contacts

Please note that only e-mail addresses for the Vicar, the Safeguarding officer, the News coordinator & the Mews Lettings officer are shown in the online version of the monthly News. If you need the e-mail address of one of the other Contacts, please phone them to ask for it.

Vicar Rev Canon Paul Dawson 01606 889995 The Vicarage, Cinder Hill, Whitegate CW8 2BH vicaragecinderhill@outlook.com	Churchwardens Anne Blayney 01606 74020 Sandra Paskin 01606 882031 PCC Secretary Roger Wilkes 01606 75738
Curates Rev Dr John Stopford 01606 558802 Rev Jane Millinchip 07981 981293 Rev Margaret Byrne 07368 375970	Treasurer John Duthie 01606 889836 Children's Worker Teresa Finney 01606 889311
Safeguarding Officer Sue Whitehead 01606 852302 safeguardingwhitegate@outlook.com	Mothers' Union Eileen Lees 01606 786895
Mews Lettings Andrew Millinchip amillinchip@gmail.com	"News" coordinator Christine Ball 01606 593260 chrisball2022@outlook.com
Musical Director Andrew Millinchip 07821 810772	Pastoral & Fellowship Committee Alan Newton 01829 760239
Church Flowers Pam Davies 01606 557833	Social & Fundraising Group John Blayney 07964 844642

❑ **OCTOBER NEWS:** Comments and contributions for the next edition of the Monthly NEWS are always welcome. Please send copy to chrisball2022@outlook.com by 15th September.



Service in The Pits 11.00 am – 12.00 noon
followed by

WALK, RUN, CYCLE

around

OULTON PARK RACING CIRCUIT

Sunday 1st September



12.30 - 2.45pm



£10 for adults, £5 for Under 12s

Sponsorship forms also available

Light refreshments available + BBQ + Ice Cream

This promises to be a great day for all the family!

SORRY, MSV DO NOT ALLOW DOGS INSIDE THE GROUNDS

For more details (and sponsorship forms) contact

Steve 01829 760377/07810 893456 or Anne 01829 760592/07973 139304



By kind permission of MSV, In aid of St Peter's Church, Little Budworth

FIRST THURSDAY CAFÉ

The Mews
Church Green
Whitegate
CW8 2AY

Thursday 5th September

Come to The Mews, catch up with friends
old and new & chat over tea, coffee and
delicious homemade cakes



10.30 am to 12.00 noon

Whitegate Village Show 2024

Horticulture



Flower
Arranging



**Saturday
7 September
2 - 4.30 pm**

(Everyone is welcome to enter - entries to be brought
between 9 - 11 am)

at

**The Recreation Room
(CW8 2BL)**

Afternoon Teas,
Raffle & Cake Stall

Photography



Produce



Art



Craft

Organised by Whitegate Women's Institute Registered charity 1021683

Enquiries: tel. Alison 07719184747

Email: whitegatewi@outlook.com

Schedules from St Mary's Church porch or the Station House Cafe
or online at www.whitegatewi.weebly.com



Men's Breakfast

Once a month, at
Tarporely Garden Centre

Join us for a great value
breakfast and chat in
friendly company

9.00 am

**Wednesday
11th September**

Sign up at St Mary's
Whitegate or St Peter's
Little Budworth,

or contact Alan Newton on
01829 760239

acenewton513@gmail.com



Gentlemen's Dinner

THE ALVANLEY ARMS Cotebrook



Monday 16th
September
6.30 pm

Join us for a delicious meal in convivial company.

Sign up & pre-order on the notice boards in St Mary's and St Peter's or contact Alan Newton: acenewton513@gmail.com
01829 760239

Whitegate Amblers

September - Anderton Nature Park

Please join us for our monthly walk discovering the beautiful countryside around the Village of Whitegate. If you'd like to come, please text, phone or just turn up on the day. If you need a lift from Whitegate please phone.

Date: Thursday 19th September

Time: Meet 09:45 - Walk starts 10:00 (approx 1 ½ hr)

Start: Anderton Boat Lift Visitor Centre Car Park, Lift Lane Northwich CW9 6FW.

Description: Walk along canal & tracks towards Marbury. No Stiles. Little Mud.

Notes: Carpark £2 for 3 hrs so may like to share transport. We welcome well behaved dogs who can be kept under control at all times. No Toilets as visitor centre closed on Thursday. For more Information call John Blayney (07964844642)



St Mary's Church Crafty Coffee Group

meets in
The Mews, Church Green
on Wednesdays
from 10.00 am-12.00 noon

We do various crafts and would like to welcome new members, whether you come for crafting or for coffee!

It's a good time for fellowship along with a cuppa and biscuits.

DeciBells

Tune ringing on handbells is a lot of fun and very sociable. Would you like to learn?

We're starting the Autumn Term on 25th September and meet weekly on Wednesdays, 4.00 – 5.00pm in The Mews, Church Green, Whitegate.

Come along one Wednesday and have a go. No experience is necessary and don't worry if you don't read music.

You only need to COUNT.

For more information, contact
Andrew Ball, 07398 295239

