

ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD NOTTINGHAM



NEWSLETTER

Sept – Oct 2022 : Cost £1.00



Stoney Middleton Liturgy and Blessing of the Spring.

THE PARISH OF ST AIDAN AND ST CHAD, NOTTINGHAM

Worshipping in the Church of St Aidan,

Arnold Road, Basford, NG6 0DN

Priest: Revd Fr Julian Lowe 07952 174 206

Very Revd Hegumen David (asst priest) 0115-9622351

Deacon: Ian Thompson (retired) 01724-337521

The Advisory Council

Fr Julian Lowe

Fr David Gill

Tina Lowe (Church Warden and Secretary to the Trustees)

Katharine Dryden (Secretary, Welfare Officer)

Barry Dryden (Treasurer)

Dominic Pote

Margaret Handley

The Trustees

Fr Julian Lowe

Fr David Gill

Tina Lowe (Church Warden)

Barry Dryden (Treasurer)

Jim Moulton

Newsletter Editor: Frances Thompson

Website: www.nottinghamorthodox.org.uk

Deanery Website: www.thyateira-deanery.uk

registered charity. (#1174715)



Fr Julian's Letter

Not Just You!

How a clock measures time and how we perceive it are quite different. As we grow older, it can often feel that time goes by faster and faster. This speeding up of subjective time with age is well documented by psychologists, but there is no consensus on the cause. People are often amazed at how much they remember from days that seemed to last forever in their youth and it has been suggested that this is not because our experiences were deeper or more meaningful, it's just that they were being processed in rapid fire. This accelerated passage of time is exacerbated when one sits down in July to write articles for a September-October newsletter!

How often have you said, or heard it said, that school days are the best days of your life? Now, for me, school days certainly passed slower than these days. And it wasn't until I began to work that I realised just how important education and those school days were; and it wasn't until I began to write this piece that I realised just how much education features in the Scriptures. Here are just a few examples.

2nd Book of Timothy Ch 3:v16; *All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.*

Romans Ch 15 v4; *For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

1st Book of Timothy, Ch 4: v13; *Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching.*

And in the Old Testament too,

Daniel Ch 1: v5 *The king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank, and appointed that they should be educated three years, at the end of which they were to enter the king's personal service.*

Since the Bible is sufficient for equipping us to live a life of godliness, this must also include matters of education. We should take a high view of education because God does. God knows all things and has created an elaborate system of laws governing physics, biology and mathematics. We glorify Him by investing in a solid education. Having knowledge can be very useful. However, a good education requires more than knowledge, it also requires wisdom: the ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting. True wisdom is from God alone.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding; Proverbs Ch9:v10

As the new academic year begins let us pray for all those who are involved with Education; all in our church family who teach and those who study, together with all those who facilitate and support education. And let us not forget our own education. May we diligently study the scriptures and all the holy books available to us, remembering (James 1:5) that *“if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”*

And let us, together, make everyday a school day.

OBITUARY : HIERODEACON PETROC, 1959- 2022

It is with great sadness that the monastic house of St Anne, in the city of York, announces the falling asleep in the Lord of our beloved Hierodeacon Petroc. A humble and charming man, whom Fr Stephen has known for many years, he served for over a decade in St Anne's and was loved by all who knew him. He also had the privilege of travelling to Moscow at the reunification of our Archdiocese in 2019 and was a regular pilgrim to Mount Athos. Latterly he worked in social care work in Scarborough Council. He loved his dogs and the open countryside around his home in North Yorkshire. We pray for him, and for his family. May his memory be eternal.

Hieromonk Stephen Robson:

We first met Hierodeacon Petroc, in our garden on our parish's 21st anniversary, at Pentecost in 2016. It was a lovely summer's day; he'd been visiting Fr David and joined us for our parish breakfast after the 8 am liturgy. The first thing we noticed about Fr Petroc was his piercing blue eyes. We could see Christ's love shining from them.

We soon became good friends. He's not a friend that we saw often, but we would talk once or twice a month. We can't put into words how much we already miss his cheerful voice.

He was a very kind, generous, thoughtful, and humble man. When we think of Hierodeacon Petroc, the words of the Anglican Hymn 'When I Needed a Neighbour were you there' spring to mind, he embodied the words of this hymn. His vocation centred around his community and caring for those in need. He was a popular figure where he lived in Scarborough, and would often be accompanied by his beloved dogs.

With Fr Julian and Tina, we attended Hierodeacon Petroc's Panikhida at York Cemetery where he was laid to rest surrounded by his family and friends. We can be safe in the knowledge that our dear brother is at rest in the Lord. He will be missed, so much by all who knew him.

Katharine & Barry Dryden



OUR LIFE

Liturgies

It was with great joy that Fr Julian & Fr David served the Liturgy for The Feast of the Holy Glorious and All Praised Apostles, Peter & Paul on Wednesday 29th June, in the Church of St Mary Eleousa, Derby Road. Although numbers were low it was a joy to share this occasion with members of the Greek community and to receive their kind hospitality.

Fr Julian was delighted to accept an invitation to serve the liturgy and bless the spring in Stoney Middleton, Derbyshire.

Fr David visited Shepherds Law, Northumberland, and served Liturgy on Sunday 31 July. There was a good attendance with a group of young men who had travelled from Newcastle for the event. Brother Harold is presently in residence, but age is taking its toll and he will have to return to a care home facility in the Autumn. He requires daily care.

Following this, Fr David paid his annual visit to the very lively parish in Keswick. He was pleased to find that Fr John Musther is very much better but still requires support. The Parish is thriving with several young people preparing for baptism or chrismation and, as ever, with a well supporting community.

Chaplaincy & Education

Although the academic year has ended Fr Julian is continuing to be active within the Chaplaincy team of Nottingham University. The Sixth Hour is still being served in the Portland Chapel and plans are in progress for a further bereavement course when the new term begins.

We congratulate and pray for our brother and former parish member Andrew/James, as he leaves his teaching post in the USA to take up a new post of teaching drama in China! We look forward to hearing more from James about this new venture soon.

Please remember, in your prayers, all our parish members and friends who are involved in education, in whatever capacity, as the new academic year begins.

Choir

We give thanks to all who contribute to our worship by singing in the choir. We have some beautiful Hymns sung by beautiful voices. If you would like to consider contributing and supporting the choir, please contact Fr Julian or Vera

Congratulations...

... To Christine and Tony Clapp as they celebrate 55 years of marriage and welcome great nephew, baby Max, into their family.

...Rada Pote for raising approximately £200 for the Little Princess Trust and donating the hair she has had cut off to make a wig for a child undergoing chemotherapy.

From James/Andrew who was with us whilst he was studying at Nottingham Univ, returned home to the USA and is now in China.

Hello everyone and many happy returns from China and the gorgeous city of Chengdu, home of the panda sanctuary. I landed in Shanghai on 26 July (17 hours direct from Dallas!) where I spent 10 days in

quarantine at a government hotel. I arrived in Chengdu on 6 August, making for a very memorable Transfiguration feast as I got set up in my apartment. As of this writing on 11 August I've only just now got to a place where I feel more or less settled, as last several days have involved an endless set of tasks like getting bank account and mobile number set up (my Chinese number is +86 191 3617 9289), health screenings, daily covid tests, setting up various Chinese apps on my phone and of course shopping trips. Onboarding begins Monday the 15th and I officially start teaching on 5 September, so the next few weeks will be fairly busy for me. I am hoping to visit Nottingham again and celebrate Nativity with you all at St Aidan, but that depends entirely on whether or not the government will lift quarantine and relax other regulations before then. Whether I end up seeing everyone around Christmas or not, I wish you the best and trust that at some point in the near or distant future I will be able to make it over to that side of the world again. Until then, many blessings to you all!

Yours in Christ'

James

Blessing of the spring in Stoney Middleton

Springs and wells have always been venerated. It is now a thanksgiving for a good supply of water, a commodity on which our lives depend, but its roots lie back in ancient times. In today's world I felt that we had forgotten this connection and we were more focused on the here and now rather than giving due thanks to our Creator. Hence why we hold a liturgy in Stoney Middleton village church and then Blessing of the warm water spring.

God gave us "dominion" over creation (Gen 1:26) and we can either rape and pillage it or care for it as a gift and blessing from God. In the words of Leontius of Cyprus

"... through all creation visible and invisible, I offer veneration to the Creator and Master and Maker of all things. For the creation does not venerate the Master directly and by itself, but it is through me that the heavens declare the glory of God ... through me the waters and showers of rain, the dews and all creation, venerate God and give Him glory."

A further connection with water is the Virgin Mary as the Life-Giving Spring. The Life-Giving Spring is also a title of honour given to Mary, the Mother of God, for example in the Canon of the Akathist:

HAIL, Sovereign Lady, never failing spring of the living Water

The living Water is, of course, Christ Himself and the line is a reference to the Old Testament, when Moses in the wilderness struck the rock "and [God] brought water out of the rock, and caused waters to flow down as rivers" (Psalm 78:16; also Exodus 17). Jesus, referring to this miracle, said: "*If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believes on me, according to the Scriptures, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*" (John 7:38)

Chris Tsielepi

Hidden Secrets of Stoney Middleton

Stoney Middleton offers very high-quality **rock climbing!!** Chris Bonington, mountaineer and conqueror of Everest found it one of the most challenging climbs in the world.

The small octagonal, toll house on the main road is now a chip shop - the only Grade II listed fish and chip shop in Britain!

Harry Heginbotham, of Stoney Middleton invented the 'steel toe capped boot' in 1933. This was a boon for the miners who worked down the local lead mines and to all workers in heavy industry.

In 1666 Stoney Middleton villagers helped their neighbours in the plague village of Eyam which was just down the road. Food and

supplies were left at the Boundary Stone and payment was in money soaked in vinegar.

Community spirit is important!

Since pagan times springs and wells have always been venerated as pure water (sometimes hot) is such a valuable commodity. Derbyshire Well Dressing took this to a new level with the large boards wonderfully decorated with flowers fastened into some putty like substance. These are generally displayed by the well or church or around the village.

A well dressing is a community event with many hands and minds required. With more village houses becoming holiday lets, community cohesion is breaking down and it is getting more difficult to organise and execute with fewer willing people. The largest of the three well dressings in Stoney Middleton takes about 600 man-hours to create. That's the equivalent of one person working 12 hours per day for 50 days!

Well dressing is an old custom which still survives in many villages in the Peak District of Derbyshire. Long may it continue! You never know what you've got till it has gone.

Pay Attention!

This was one of my mother's favourite phrases, and it echoed down my childhood years. 'I'm talking to you', would come the cry, as I dragged myself out of the depths of whatever book into which my nose was firmly inserted. 'Pay attention!'

You can imagine that I didn't, really, as I was more interested in what I was doing than in what chores I ought to have been doing.

But as I think about this now, I realise how right she was.

One practical result of this is well illustrated in the film ‘A Beautiful Mind’, which follows the story of the brilliant mathematician John Nash. He was diagnosed with schizophrenia and was constantly followed about by a hallucinatory couple, a young man and a little girl, visible to no one but himself. He was a man of great courage and insight, and he eventually realised that they could not be real because they were not ageing over the years in any way as he was, even though they were, as characterised in the film, very convincing.

He learned to ignore them, to not Pay Attention. In the last scene of the film, he is receiving a prestigious award, and spots them in the audience. His wife says, ‘What’s the matter?’, and he just smiles and says, ‘Oh, nothing, dear’, and they fade away.

In the same way, if thoughts arise in our minds that we don’t like and don’t want, we do not have to go along with them. We do not have to feed and enlarge them. Both neurologically and psychologically, we can choose what to do with our attention - to train it, bridle it and use it to our spiritual benefit.

Barbara Bates

THE VOICE OF SOCIETY SPEAKS:

Weddings: the times they are a-changing.

As a bellringer in a church where the ringing is performed from a balcony, I have a very good view of what is going on in the church. This means that I have seen more weddings than most. The local custom is that the bells are rung after the service when the bride and groom are about to leave the church. Of course, there is a feeling of joy, goodwill and hope for a happy marriage, but what actually happens at a typical wedding service is now very different from how things used to be. There is still the traditional wedding but that is rare.

One of the differences is that now, very few people know any hymns, but they are not to blame. If asked when planning the service, ‘Which hymns would you like?’ this can be an awkward question. School assemblies disappeared decades ago and hymns are no longer sung except at church and public schools. At weddings, *All Things Bright and Beautiful* used to be popular and was probably learnt when the bride and groom were at the infants’ school. This has now been replaced with *Lord of the Dance* and *Give me Joy in my Heart, keep me Praising*. – both good tunes but probably the only ones the bride and groom know. Unless the congregation is told ‘we will now stand for the hymn...’ they often remain seated. They don’t know the Lord’s Prayer which is understandable as many are so unfamiliar with churches. Even so, to have chosen a church rather than a secular venue must mean that there is something stirring within.

How have we got into this situation? Where is the religious input?

In schools, the subject *Religious Education* has now changed into learning about the five world religions: Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Christianity. There is no emphasis on Christianity.

Muslims take their religion more seriously and are often seen wearing traditional dress. Men and women are also seen in work places wearing specially adapted uniforms in the corporate colour of their employers. On Fridays, Muslim men are often seen around in long white robes, particularly on Fridays. An assistant in our local library is a case in point. Muslim girls are allowed to wear headscarves in school but usually there is trouble about a Christian wearing a small gold cross on a chain. I know two cases where the cross has been confiscated (and lost) on the rule that no jewellery can be worn at school. At a different school a child was decorating an Easter egg and wanted to add a cross. The teacher said that it was ‘better not to.’

To many people, religion is no longer important and Government restrictions have not helped with the disappearances of school

assemblies. Carol Services are not what they used to be. When did you last have a carol singer at your front door? Very few, if any Christingle services now exist. Christingle services with a lit candle in an orange in the care of the child and a watchful parent are now out of favour as are regarded as a fire hazard.

The Salvation Army Brass Band used to play carols in the shopping centre but I am not sure if the band still exists. Parents often want their child to learn how to play the piano or a musical instrument but the child has different ideas. Sunday schools have fallen right out of favour, partly as families might have planned a better option but also because there are now no free-range children. They have to be escorted everywhere because of the danger of traffic and understandably, parents don't want to be tied down by the drop off and pick up routine.

Society has decided that for many, 'religion' is no longer relevant in the UK. We have great respect for the Muslims and used to have respect for RCs but now less so. This is the scientific age and we don't go along with religion..... Sadly, in some areas, in order to prevent vandalism, churches have to be locked.

But all is not lost.

The Wheel Turns Full Circle

You can kill a man but you can't kill an idea: Sophocles

In Russia in Lenin's era and onwards it was thought that once capitalism was abolished, and society became modernised, religion would wither away. Even so, private prayer and icons remained, but families kept this to themselves.

However, decades later, eventually in Russian society there was a hunger for something spiritual and the State recognised this. They tried to address this problem with a special registration and a medal for a newborn child, a ritual for teenagers aged 16 to receive a passport at

the *Moscow House of Scientific Atheism*; Marriage Registration changed from form filling in an office to a ceremony in a Wedding Palace where the bride was dressed in her full regalia and the guests wore their best clothes. Many couples then went on to have photos taken in local parks and places of interest.

Mikhail Gorbachev welcomed back the Orthodox Church into public life in 1988. Orthodoxy once again became state-sanctioned and atheist institutions began popularizing religious ideas. *The House of Scientific Atheism* became *the House of Spiritual Heritage*. An atheist journal changed its name to *Science and Religion*. Churches were repaired and once again religion flourished.

Now in the UK we live in a society which in many cases is often indifferent to Christianity. People are careful not to offend Muslims as they know that insults might not be taken lying down. Christianity is not given the respect it deserves because Christians are more docile nowadays. Nevertheless, people feel that if we have big state occasion in Westminster Abbey or St Pauls – a funeral, a wedding, or a Jubilee, the general feeling is that with a little help from the church we get things right.

Although we might have to pass through the wilderness there is hope. The first sign is if there has been a tragic event, people will light candles and leave flowers at the site.

Russia has made the journey from Orthodoxy to Atheism and back again so it can be done, but they did have the State on their side.

The only thing for evil to triumph for the is for good men to do nothing.

Frances

COINCIDENCES

About forty years ago, when I was a schoolteacher and in charge of the school library, I was suddenly besieged by pupils all wanting to read the

same book. I think perhaps the story had been televised. The book was called *The Strange Affair of Adelaide Harris*, and the title was to prove curiously appropriate. It was a children's novel, a very good one too, and it concerned the hilarious adventures of two schoolboys called Bostock and Harris. For a period of maybe two months the whole school was gripped with Bostock and Harris fever, and I drew on our library allowance, perhaps more generously than I should have done, to buy further copies of the book. I remember it was winter at the time, for just when demand for the novel was at its most intense, the school heating system began to go wrong. Plumbers were called in, and at the very moment when they arrived I happened to glance out of my classroom window and saw their names on the van: *Bostock & Harris: Heating Engineers*. Not the least remarkable thing about that extraordinary coincidence was that I had lived in Scunthorpe all my life and thought that I knew every plumber in the area. But until that moment I had never heard of a firm called Bostock & Harris!

Some coincidences are famous. In France, about a hundred years ago, a small boy, subsequently known as M. Deschamps, was given a piece of plum pudding by a neighbour, a M. de Fortgibu (plum pudding is very rare in France). About twenty years later M. Deschamps saw a similar piece of plum pudding in a Paris restaurant and tried to order it, only to be told that it had already been ordered – by M. de Fortgibu! Another twenty years passed, and M. Deschamps attended a party at which he was surprised and delighted to be offered – a piece of plum pudding. At that moment an old, old man, in the last stages of senile disorientation, entered the room – M. de Fortgibu, who had set out to visit a friend but had forgotten his address and arrived at the wrong house!

I can't explain coincidences. Who can? All I know is that they violate every statistical norm. Some of them must involve odds against their occurrence of many millions to one – and yet they happen on an almost daily basis. Even if we postulate some as yet undiscovered organizing principle which facilitates their occurrence, what sort of a principle is it

which concerns itself with things like plum puddings? Sometimes indeed, I have the impression that coincidences are just part of a huge joke. But in that case, who is the Joker?

The poet and essayist G. K. Chesterton is perhaps best remembered for his novel *The Man Who Was Thursday*. The story concerns an anarchist plot to destroy the world, in which the anarchists all turn out to be policemen who have infiltrated the organization in order to betray it. Even the President of the anarchists proves to be a God-like figure who is more benevolent than he seems. When, finally, the pseudo-conspirators turn on him and demand to know who he is, he replies, as God Himself might reply:

“I? What am I?” roared the President, and he rose slowly to an incredible height, like some enormous wave about to arch above them and break. “You want to know what I am, do you? Dr Bull, you are a man of science. Grub in the roots of those trees and find out the truth about them. Syme, you are a poet. Stare at those morning clouds. But I tell you this, that you will have found out the truth of the last tree and the topmost cloud before the truth about me. You will understand the sea, and I shall still be a riddle; you shall know what the stars are, and not know what I am. Since the beginning of the world all men have hunted me like a wolf – kings and sages, and poets and law-givers, all the churches, and all the philosophies. But I have never been caught yet, and the skies will fall in the time I turn to bay

Perhaps, after all, coincidences are merely God’s way of saying, “Catch me if you can!”

Dn Ian Thompson

QDDMENTS



Mouse story 1

Brother Cadfael used to reside in a caravan but had the terrible misfortune to be seriously attacked by mice. He needed very serious spare part surgery. He is now as good as new after these delicate operations by Hilary.

Mouse story 2

My niece Caroline and family live on a converted grain barge moored in



Albert Dock. They have had uninvited mouse visitors. Access must have been quite tricky for the mice as they only way to board ship was by tightrope walking carefully along the mooring cable. On board they took up residence in a cupboard and made a superior mouse nest using a toast rack as a pre-formed structure, insulated it with paper tissues and arranged tea bags

inside for soft furnishing. The ship's cat was in disgrace for dereliction of duties but has since chased them off the premises.

A Happy Dog story

Missing pet returns home with rosette from dog show.

A couple were left stunned when their beagle-cross (Bonnie) escaped from home to return later that day with a rosette from a dog show. When Bonnie disappeared her owners were frantic with worry so phoned the police, vets and a dog warden in an attempt to find her. Little did they know that John, a passing car driver had seen Bonnie endangered by running along the roadside. He stopped, picked her up and put her in his car. John, the car driver posted an appeal on Facebook for the owners to get in touch. They did so and the car driver dispelled their fears and explained that he would deliver Bonnie back on his way home. John had been on his way to a dog show so decided to do a late entry in a competition for the best rescue dog. Bonnie won a third place rosette and was returned to her home wearing it. Her owners said that Bonnie was absolutely fine when she came home and were sure she had enjoyed a great day out! Accidentally the house gate had been left open and Bonnie had run out but her new found freedom ended when John picked her up her. and gave her a lift to the dog show.

A memorable bus ride home.

I found an empty seat next to a young man. He wished me, 'Have a good day'. I said that he looked as though he had been unlucky as he had a black eye, cuts and serious bruising. He said that he had been beaten up and they even took his £90 trainers!' I asked if he had told the Police. He said 'No, I couldn't as I was doing something I shouldn't. He then got out his mobile phone and told someone 'I'm on the bus and will be in Aldi carpark in a few minutes. Have you got the car? I've got the stuff for you. He had two big bags of boxes of something. I don't know what happened as I reached home and got off the bus but don't think he was cut out for a successful life of crime!
Frances



Fr Julian serves the liturgy at Stoney Middleton before the Blessing of the Spring



Fr David and Fr Petroc on Mount Athos.
Another visit had been planned for later this year.