



MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE
PARISH CHURCH OF
St MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, RUNCORN.
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ISSUE 174

JULY/AUGUST 2024

GROWING TOGETHER



In **GROWING TOGETHER** THIS MONTH:
HUMOUR

NEWS

PUZZLE PAGE

**SERVICES FOR JULY/AUGUST
CELEBRATIONS**

Vicars Message

Spiritual Warfare !

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms ~ Ephesians 6: 12.



This edition of the Vicars message I want to ask you to think about the subject of spiritual warfare. Why spiritual warfare? Well simply put, it is vitally important for all Christians, in all areas of life that we are aware of spiritual warfare and of the fight against spiritual forces, both within the world around and in the life of our church. Certainly as St Michaels begins to grow and continues to share the Gospel message in the community, we will inevitably become a target for those spirits who do not wish us to move forward.

The world around us is changing, society is changing and the safe space of our spiritual communities within the area around us is not the local parish church any longer. It is a pick and mix of different religions and spiritualities leading people into many other areas away from Jesus Christ.

My concern here in Runcorn is not any of the mainstream religions, rather the growing rise in I interest of alternative spiritualities, wiccan, pagan, occult practices and all things related. At best a lot of these things come to nothing. At worst some of them can cause issues for people who are more spiritually and emotionally vulnerable and susceptible to influence. Certainly the more darker elements of these practices which I have had dealings with in the past have done so. Interestingly, it was not long ago I was asked to dispose of a OUIJA board from a property here in Runcorn. Can I advise very strongly that you avoid all occult practices regardless of how they are buttered up. Christians should not be engaging with Boards, psychic readings, cards, witches or anything of the like.

Ultimately, even though a lot of these practices are in my eyes completely powerless, yet I accept there are some darker elements out in the mix. Those who play about with these things ultimately send a message to God which says "I don't need you for my answers or protection". After all, why turn to God when you have a friend who has that power too...apparently.

Regarding alternative spiritual practices, and the spiritual warfare we all engage in at times from intense doubts of the faith to unexplained desires not to pray or go to church. We must be fully aware we have Jesus on our side and the battle is already won. We have but to be patient and pray intensely. The saints come to mind here, specifically St Benedict or Nursia and St Michael the Archangel, the latter who is patron to our church.

Finally, our Ephesians reading clearly states that our battle is not against flesh and blood, but rather spiritual forces and evil in the heavenly realms. In other words, don't just look to the physical world and its people around, but be aware of the root cause of all that is going wrong in society, in the world and even in our own lives. Here we will find the battle ground.

My prayer to you all is that whatever you are going through spiritually, you will find peace and assistance in your walk with Jesus Christ.

Amen

Picture above credit to pngtree

With every blessing, *Rev'd George*



JULY CHURCH SERVICES

Wednesday 3rd July
10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 7th July (6th Sunday after Trinity)
8.30am Holy Communion
10.30am Café Style Church



Wednesday 10th July
10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 14th July (Sea Sunday)
10.30am Holy Communion



Wednesday 17th July
10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 21st July (8th Sunday after Trinity)
10.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 24th July
10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 28th July (9th Sunday after Trinity)
10.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 31st July
10.00am Holy Communion



Bereavement Café

Do you or anyone you know have a friend or family member who has died? You are warmly invited to our monthly Bereavement Cafe here at St Michaels [first Friday of the Month at 12.00noon](#)
Come and join others who are on the same journey and talk with professional who are of faith or no faith at all. A safe space with cake and refreshments provided. Our Pastoral team can be contacted via the Vicar on 01928 832734.

BIBLE READINGS FOR JULY & AUGUST

Sunday 7th July
2 Samuel 5: 1-5, 9-10
Mark 6: 1-13

Sunday 14th July
Colossians 1: 1-14
Luke 10: 25-37

Sunday 21st July
2 Samuel 7: 1-14a
Mark 6: 30-34, 53-end

Sunday 28th July
2 Samuel 11: 1-15
John 6: 1-21



AUGUST

Sunday 4th August
Daniel 7: 9-10,13-14
Luke 9: 28-36

Sunday 11th August
Psalm 130
John 6: 35, 41-51

Sunday 18th August
Psalm 111
John 6: 51-58

Sunday 25th August
Psalm 84
John 6: 56-69

AUGUST CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 4th August (10th Sunday after Trinity)
8.30am Holy Communion
10.30am Café Style Church

Wednesday 7th August
10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 11th August (11th Sunday after Trinity)
10.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 14th August
10.00am Holy Communion



Sunday 18th August (12th Sunday after Trinity)
10.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 21st August
10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 25th August (13th Sunday after Trinity)
10.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 28th August
10.00am Holy Communion

We have welcomed the following into the Church Family through Baptism



Recently we welcomed 2 children **Charlie Comer, Carter Jack Bird (9th June)**, into the Church Family. Please pray for Charlie and Carter that they may grow up to love and follow Christ. Please pray for their parents and Godparents, and pray that they may seek to know Christ and to worship.

The baptism of Carter Jack Bird on 9th June



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



July & August Birthdays

Congratulations to Shelagh Goffin whose birthday is on **July 12th**, also to Bob Browne whose birthday is on **July 22nd**, to Sheila Rose whose birthday is on **August 4th** and to Robert Littler whose birthday is on **August 5th**, to Margaret Batters whose birthday is on **August 6th**.

26th July - Anne and Joachim, parents of Blessed Virgin Mary

One thing is certain – Mary the mother of Jesus must have had parents. Beyond that, nothing is certain – but church tradition offers some details. The first mention of Anne and Joachim as being Mary's parents was found in the apocryphal Gospel of James (second century) which has no historical validity. James says that after years of childlessness, Joachim was praying in the desert one day when an angel appeared to Anne to tell her that she would conceive. Anne then promised to dedicate the child to God, as Hannah had done with Samuel. Certainly Anne, mother of Mary, has been honoured from as early as the sixth century, when a church was built in her honour in Constantinople. Other relics and pictures of her found in Rome date from the 8th century. The sad truth is that, as the Bible is silent on the subject, we will never really know about Mary's parents. But one thing we can assume, because it is based on the character of Mary herself. Her gentle humility and graciousness and informed knowledge about her faith point to a childhood spent among devout believers in God.



- **Activities at St Michael's Church**
- **St Michael's Maintenance Appeal Committee**
- **Tea & Toast in the Meeting Room**
- **Next Tea & Toast is on 7th September & 5th October**
- **@ 10.00am to 12.00 noon**
- **Admission: £2.00**
- **Crafters Group**
- **Crafters Group meets in the Meeting Room every Tuesday from 10.00am to 12noon.**
- **Everyone welcome, especially newcomers.**
- **VML**
- **Sing-along sessions on Tuesday nights @ 7.00pm in the Meeting Room. So come along have a cuppa and a sing-along for just £2.**



CONGRATULATIONS



to
Jim & Shelagh Goffin
who are celebrating their
Wedding Anniversary
on
6th July

Peter & Elsie Ackerley
who are celebrating
their
Wedding Anniversary
on
25th July

to
Brian & Rosemary Lunt
who are celebrating
their
Wedding Anniversary
on
16th August

to
Bob & Helen Browne
who are celebrating
their
Wedding Anniversary
on
18th August



St Michael and All Angels Church
Summer Fair Funday
Saturday 20th July 12 - 4pm
Enjoy lots of fun for all the family



BRINGING OUR COMMUNITY TOGETHER
Entrance Greenway Road main gate. Exit Fox Street side gate.

Men of the Sea

Your first disciples, Lord, were men of the sea:
Hardy fishermen from the shores of Galilee.
They knew from experience the perils of the deep...
They also knew Your presence with them in their darkest hours.
We pray for those who face like hazards today...
Lord of the sea, be near to guard them in every danger...
And let them hear Your voice above the tempest,
'It is I, be not afraid'
So bring them to their haven in peace.

From a prayer by Frank Colquhoun



Prayer for July 2024

Father,
Thank you for summertime, when thoughts turn to holidays and relaxation.
July is a month of endings for many; the ending of the school or college year and for some a moving on to the next stage of education or work. Often, there is uncertainty or trepidation about the future.
Whatever stage of life we are at, whatever season of the year it is, we can feel uncertain and concerned in a world which seems increasingly secular and confusing.
Remind us Lord, of Your promise to be with us always, every step of every way, when we put our trust in You, through Jesus.
Thank you that in the ups and downs of life, You never change. You are the rock on which we stand securely, eternally. Help us to move forward confidently, trusting in that truth.
Thank you, Lord.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

What's the Big Idea?

An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament: 1 & 2 Samuel

1 & 2 Samuel was originally a single work, which focuses on Samuel, Saul and David, around 1,000 BC, mid-way between Abraham and Jesus. It was Samuel who established the monarchy in Israel after the period of the judges. He was commanded by God to give the people a king, although their request is seen as a rejection of God's rule over Israel (8:7). The people simply wanted to be like other nations, however their king was still subject to God's law and the word of the prophet. Although Samuel anointed Saul, he soon showed an unwillingness to submit to these requirements, leading to his rejection as king (15:23). God chose David as Saul's successor, and 1 Samuel depicts David's years of waiting until the right time arrived to claim the throne.

2 Samuel depicts David's rule, in which the nation prospers and its enemies are defeated. The promise of the perfect king is fulfilled in Jesus Himself, as David's descendant. The second half of the book depicts the darker side of David's reign, describing his weaknesses and failures, including his adultery with Bathsheba and the rebellion of his son Absalom.

Nevertheless, David remained a man after God's own heart: *'The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.'* (1 Samuel 16:7). The characters in this book are not always great examples of faith, however, *'They do not show us how we should live but how in fact we do live, authenticating the reality of our daily experience as the stuff that God uses to work his purposes of salvation in us and in the world.'* (Eugene Peterson).

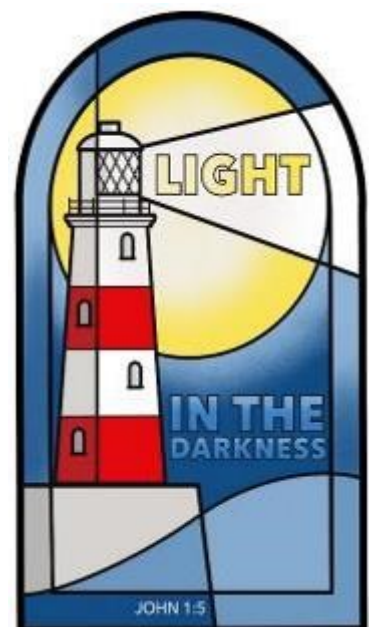


Weekly Church attendance up five per cent in third year of consecutive growth

Average weekly attendance at Church of England services rose by almost five per cent in 2023 - the third year of consecutive growth, preliminary figures show. Meanwhile weekly attendance by children was up by almost six per cent last year, according to an early snapshot of the annual Statistics for Mission findings. While total attendance is still below 2019 levels, the analysis suggests in-person attendance is drawing closer to the pre-pandemic trend. In 2021 all-age Sunday attendance was 22.3 per cent below the projected pre-pandemic trend, but the new figures reveal that the gap had narrowed to 6.7 per cent last year. All-age weekly attendance rose to within 8.3 per cent of the trend last year, compared with 24.1 per cent in 2021. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said "This is very welcome news and I hope it encourages churches across the country."

Demand for foodbanks increases

The demand for emergency food parcels distributed by the Trussell Trust's foodbank network has nearly doubled in five years, with a record amount being handed out over the past 12 months alone. **Between April 2023 and March 2024, 3.1 million food parcels were given out; 65 per cent of which went to families with children.** Now the chief executive of the Trussell Trust, Emma Revie, has called on political leaders to set out policies that ensure that foodbank use will become obsolete in the UK. She urges: "We must not let foodbanks become the new norm. A supportive social-security system is the bedrock on which we end hunger for good. Building on this, we need much more effective employment and financial support for parents, carers and disabled people. And action to ensure everyone can have the security we all need to access opportunities and have hope for the future." Families with children and working-age adults are among the most frequent users of foodbanks, but there has been a 27-per cent increase in the number of pensioners needing emergency food in the past year.



Going Spanish for God

Welcome to the world of "Cursillo" (pronounced "Kurseeyo") If you were hoping for tortillas, sangria and sun-drenched beaches, think again! Cursillo is a Christian movement which was born in the aftermath of the vicious Spanish Civil War: shocked by the communal violence which had racked the Catholic country of Spain, some leading lights in the church – lay and ordained – resolved to work together for the renewal of both church and society. And so, Cursillo, (which means 'short course') was born; Christians were to be invited to a weekend course of talks, worship, fellowship, eating & drinking, and silence. And each weekend course would be upheld mightily in prayer – that God would use the weekends to renew, refresh and re-envision the faith of the participants; and it is exciting to see those prayers answered. At the end of the weekends, they would be invited to become part of the growing movement, in which, through meeting up in small groups with other local "Cursillistas", they would find the encouragement, love, support and discipline to keep going in their new-found faith. So, the church and society would be blessed and renewed.

Well, the movement grew...and spread.....to America....and Britain...and now to many countries. And it spread beyond the Catholic church....to Anglicans....and Methodists. So, in the Church of England, many dioceses here now have an active Cursillo movement. We operate under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop; and share with her/him in a concern for the welfare of the church and our communities. We usually hold our weekend courses at Foxhill, our Diocesan Retreat Centre. In our own parishes, we seek to serve God in whatever way He leads us, as far as we are able. We are a mixed-age, mixed-ability, ordained and lay, community, working together for the glory of God in Chester Diocese. Does that sound good? Are you seeking to deepen your own faith in God, and your experience of his love? Do you share a concern for the health of your local church, and its mission to your community? Do you feel you would benefit from greater fellowship, discipline and accountability in your Christian life? If so, Cursillo may be for you!! We would encourage you to "dip your toes in the pool" and see how it feels. You may want to come to a local small group meeting (without any expectation that you would come back again). Or come to one of our bigger Diocesan gatherings. And then think and pray about a weekend course.

Our national website is: www.anglicancursillo.co.uk.

My email is spiritual.director@chestercursillo.org.uk. And, at the bottom of this piece, there is probably a contact for a local Cursillista.

Well, there we are. Spain - and God - awaits!

With thanks,
Tony Rablen.

Indeed, there is Tony! If you want further information please email me at joan_clare@hotmail.com

I've also put some relevant leaflets at the back of church for you to take should you wish.

I've been a Cursillo member since 2010 and find the love and fellowship in the movement so supportive in my faith journey. **Our next weekend at Foxhill is October 25th – 27th**. It starts on Friday evening and finishes about tea time on Sunday after a final Eucharist service.

Well, there we are, (as Tony says).

Every Blessing
Joan

British children rank among the world's worst for taking exercising and eating properly

In a recent World Health Organisation (WHO) study covering 44 countries, children in England, Wales and Scotland performed badly when it came to brisk walking and daily consistent exercise. Too many youngsters are also missing breakfast, and not eating enough vegetables. The survey looked at the exercise levels of children aged 11, 13 and 15 who are living in Europe, Central Asia and Canada. Children in England and Wales are near the bottom of the global table, below Romania, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Norway and Croatia. Dr Jo Inchley, from the University of Glasgow, said: "In the UK, we're consistently low on physical activity. And by age 15, just 35 per cent of girls and 51 per cent of boys eat breakfast daily. There are also big differences due to affluence. It was found that almost twice as many young people from high socio-economic groups are eating vegetables, for example, compared with lower socio-economic groups.

A Prayer for August 2024

Lord, in a year of changes in our country and in the world, we thank You for the regular rhythm of each year. We thank You for August, the month of holidays and rest for many, especially for families and those tied to termly timetables. We pray for Your blessing and restoration for all. As we take time out of normal routines, help us to still make space for You; to be refreshed spiritually as well as physically. Feed us, Lord, by Your Word; revive us by Your Holy Spirit; encourage us by Your indwelling presence, so that we might naturally reflect Your love to all we meet, on holiday or at home or at work.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching.



What's the Big Idea? An Introduction to the Books of 1 & 2 Kings

1 & 2 Kings is a single literary work telling the history of Israel's monarchy from the end of David's reign until the Babylonian exile following the fall of Jerusalem (586 BC). After Solomon's reign, Israel was divided into two kingdoms: Israel to the north and Judah in the south. In the north 20 rulers reigned over 210 years until the fall of Samaria (722 BC). In the southern kingdom there were also 20 rulers, spanning a period of 345 years. This account is not like reading a modern history book. The author views the story through the lens of God's relationship with His people. The welfare of Israel depended on their leaders' trust and obedience in God, e.g. Solomon building the Temple, as well as listening to the prophets e.g. Elijah and Elisha. The kings who receive the most attention are those whose disobedience is greatest (e.g. Ahab and Manasseh) or those who truly follow God (eg. Hezekiah and Josiah). The book ends with exile in Babylon, fulfilling God's warning of the consequences of disobedience for both kingdoms (cf Dt 28:64-68). However, this doesn't mean that there is no hope for the future. At the end of the book, Jehoiachin is released from prison in Babylon, and he is given a place of honour (2Ki 25:27-30). The future remains open for God to fulfill His promises to the house of David. 'We begin to realise that if God's sovereignty is never cancelled out by the so deeply sin-flawed leaders ('kings') in both our culture and our church, we can quite cheerfully exult in God's sovereignty as it is being exercised in all the circumstantial details of the actual present.' (E Peterson).



4th August Sithney - the saint who preferred mad dogs to women

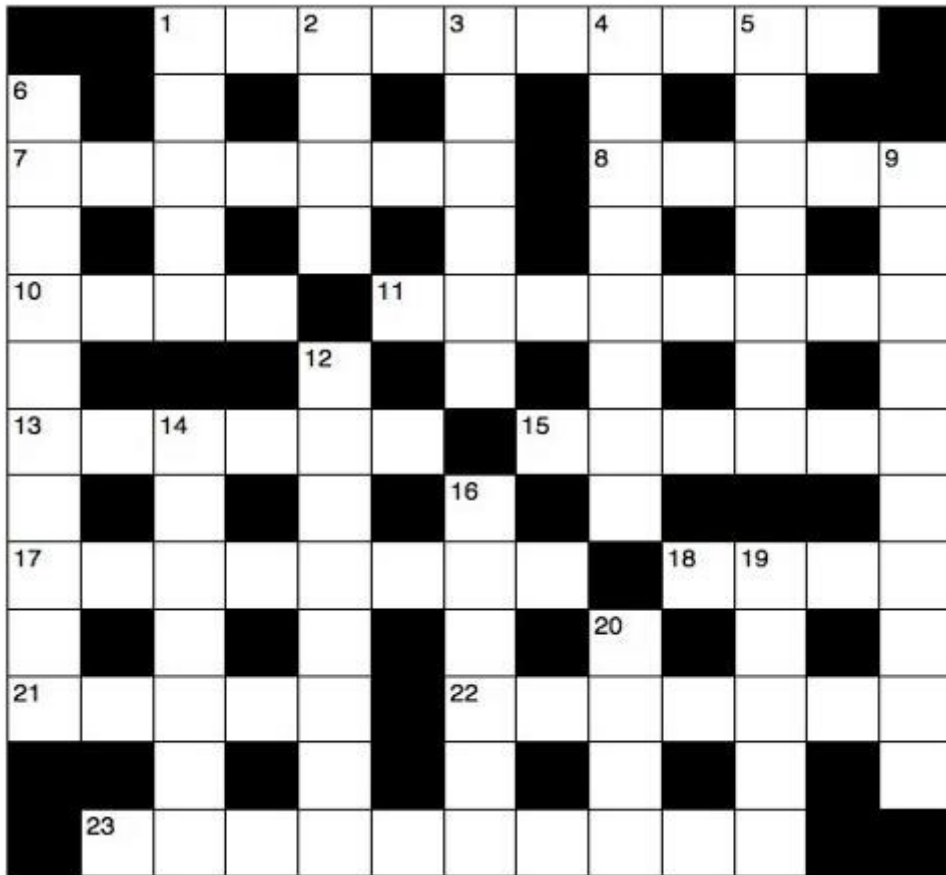
You know how some men find women's interest in romance and clothes hard to cope with? Well, Sithney (or Sezni) should be the patron saint of all such men. According to a Breton folk legend, Sithney was a hermit of long ago, minding his own business, when one day God told him that he was going to make him the patron saint of girls. Sithney was horrified. He foresaw a future where thousands of young women were forever plaguing him to find them good husbands and fine clothes... the thought of it appalled him. So Sithney begged God for some other job, something more peaceful, than dealing with young women. "Very well," said God. "You can look after mad dogs, instead." Sithney replied cheerfully: "I'd rather have mad dogs than women, any day." And so it was. Since that time, young women have pestered other saints to bring them husbands and fine clothes, while sick and mad dogs have been taken to drink water from the well of St Sezni, patron of Sithney, near Helston in Cornwall.





CROSSWORD CHALLENGE

See how you get on with this crossword. There is no prize, but whoever gets it back to the Editor by August 22nd will be entered on a Roll of Honour in the next edition of *Growing Together*.



Across

- 1 Relating to the Jewish day of rest (10)
- 7 Point of view (Matthew 22:17) (7)
- 8 20th-century Brethren philanthropist whose construction company became one of the UK's biggest, Sir John — (5)
- 10 Girl's name (4)
- 11 Peter was accused of being one in the courtyard of the high priest's house (Luke 22:59) (8)
- 13 The fifth of the 'seven churches' (Revelation 3:1-6) (6)
- 15 'Now the famine was — in Samaria' (1 Kings 18:2) (6)
- 17 Banned by the seventh Commandment (Exodus 20:14) (8)
- 18 Insect most closely associated with itching (1 Samuel 24:14) (4)
- 21 Bantu tribe which gives its name to tiny landlocked country in southern Africa (5)
- 22 Familiar material in churches that use an overhead projector (7)
- 23 Last book of the Bible (10)

Down

- 1 The young David's favourite weapon (1 Samuel 17:40) (5)
- 2 'Your vats will — over with new wine' (Proverbs 3:10) (4)
- 3 Once yearly (Exodus 30:10) (6)
- 4 Milled it (anag.) (3-5)
- 5 Region north of Damascus of which Lysanias was tetrarch (Luke 3:1) (7)
- 6 Comes between Philippians and 1 Thessalonians (10)
- 9 Lake where the first disciples were called (Luke 5:1-11) (10)
- 12 Abusive outburst (8)
- 14 Are loud (anag.) (7)
- 16 Printing errors (6)
- 19 'Take my yoke upon you and — from me' (Matthew 11:29) (5)
- 20 Jacob's third son (Genesis 29:34) (4)

A	M	B	U	S	H	S	C	H	O	O	L		
T		I	I						W		U		
T	I	R	E	D		F	A	M	I	N	E	S	
A		E		E		A		P		E		T	
C	I	T	A	D	E	L		E	N	D	O	R	
H		T				S		T				E	
			A	T	O	N	E	M	E	N	T		
F				S		H				A		A	
A	V	E	R	T		O	R	A	C	L	E	S	
R		A		R		O		L		E		L	
M	A	R	R	I	E	D		L	A	N	C	E	
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R	H	Y	T	H	M			H	Y	S	S	O	P

June
Crossword answer

ROLL OF HONOUR

Three people got the crossword answer and they were

Jim & Shelagh Goffin,
Wendy Sefton
and
Margaret Myers



July &
August 2024



Please Pray



Please remember the following people in your prayers throughout this month.

Graham & Nicola Aylett George Done

Gerald Cook Helen Browne

Also please remember in your prayers anyone that you know who are home housebound or in hospital.

If you would like us to pray for someone close to you let the Pastoral Care Team know and they could visit someone at home don't hesitate to let them know.

....and the recently bereaved, especially any families known to you

Eric Bradbury

David Miller Gary Shaw

Malcolm Dimelow James Dobie

Rita McCubbin



International Bat Night - 24th August

August is the perfect month to look out for bats, when our soft, warm twilight evenings are full of the tiny flying insects that attract them. But these days bats need our help, and so this annual celebration will include a good few 'bat events' this month. If you like bats, you may enjoy one of the events being arranged by local bat groups, wildlife trusts, countryside rangers and other organisations across the country.



To help you get started, the website, <https://www.bats.org.uk/support-bats/international-bat-night>, is full of useful information. It explains the natural environment that bats need, and how you might help to conserve their dwindling numbers.

INFORMATION

Revd George Roach
01928 832734

Email: vicar.smaaruncorn@gmail.com
Not on a Friday

Churchwardens

Robbie Littler 07722 470940
Rosemary Lunt 01928 569863

e-mail:

warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk

If you want to book a wedding, baptism or funeral please phone this number **07722470940** and ask for Robbie

VML



If you have some time to yourself on a Tuesday afternoon, why not tune into the VML Radio Show on HCR 92.3 FM.

Upcoming Shows

Something different at Norton Priory Museum & Gardens Sunday 21st & Sunday 28th July



At The Brindley Monday 30th September @ 7.30pm. Tickets : £16.50

