

The Essington **Connection**

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February 2021

50p

Dear Readers,

I have been trying to use the lockdown hours usefully by 'rationalising' my filing cabinet - ok, what I really mean is that I'm throwing away a huge amount of paper accumulated over the years.....

I keep looking at things and have absolutely no idea why I've kept them. But then, occasionally, I come upon something that I am really pleased to find.

One of these things was "The Beloved Disciple - The Story of St. John's Church Essington", compiled and edited by Ralph Tomkinson in 1992, to celebrate the first 60 years of the church. The Foundation Stone was laid on 30th September 1932, although of course the consecration and official opening did not take place until December 1933.

I've so enjoyed looking through the book and then, coincidentally, I received the St. John's Bulletin for inclusion in this issue. This contains the words, "Your church....is there because a lot of people wanted it so much they gave money and time to make it happen. Time and again over the years this has been repeated."

"The Beloved Disciple" makes this abundantly clear. The section on "People" begins, "For as long as there has been a church in Essington, there have been Essington people who have worked for it. Their numbers over the years run into hundreds.....(they have) probably grumbled a bit and laughed a lot."

Dare I mention that the total cost of the church was £6,186. 17s. 6d?! A grant of £1,000 was received from the Bishop's Appeal Fund and the rest was raised by Essington parishioners. No surprise there, then.

Kate Rissbrook.

Services at Essington and Shareshill.....

.....are suspended until further notice due to the Coronavirus, and any changes will be notified via the notice boards etc.

The St. John's Team

For enquiries regarding:

Weddings	Mrs Mary White	01922 478853
Christenings	Mrs Delphine Hipkiss	01902 828064
Funerals	Mrs Joy Burrows	01922 407698
Use of WEB Annex	Mrs Kath Grantham	01902 732041
Safeguarding	Mrs Sue Davenport	01922 495516
Patronage & Stewardship (collecting money)	Mrs Sue Davenport	01922 495516
Reader	Mrs Delphine Hipkiss	01902 828064
Secretary	Mrs Hilary Southern	01922 445265
Verger	Mrs Joy Burrows	01922 407698
Church Warden	Mr John Peterken	01902 723157

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Parish Letter

Lockdown is more difficult second time around. The weather is miserable, the daily Covid stats are frightening, and I feel the need to be useful. When I know very well the best use I can be is to stay at home.

I was a nurse many years ago, but my skills are long out of date.

Before retirement I was a church pastor, therefore, surely, my usefulness lies in prayer.

A lot of people find prayer difficult. Perhaps, like me, the mind wanders all too easily. Perhaps, for some, it is difficult to find the right words, and this is the reason why Jesus gave us a simple prayer, that covers everything. We call it the Lord's prayer.

In the days of the early church, new believers would be baptized and receive communion, then they were taught the Lord's prayer. It was like a precious gift, a secret treasure known only to the early followers of The Way. They felt privileged to be able to say it.

Nowadays, of course, it is so familiar that it's hard to actually concentrate on its meaning. I could probably recite it while at the same time doing other things, so how have I managed to overcome its familiarity? I have learned to focus on one sentence or phrase or word from the prayer, that has meaning. This week I have been praying '*Thy kingdom come*'.

Jesus said he had come to inaugurate a kingdom that has nothing to do with geographical boundaries; it is the kingdom of heaven, a kingdom of love.

I was very interested to read about a German priest called Helmut Thielicke. In his book (*The prayer that spans the world*) he said that, when his city of Stuttgart was being pounded by allied bombers in WW2, he stood before the

remnant of his terrified cathedral congregation and declared: "This prayer can be spoken by everybody, in every situation. In this world of death, in this empire of ruins and shell-torn fields, we pray *Thy kingdom come.*"

He wasn't praying for the kingdom of the third Reich. Indeed, at just the same time, British Christians who were also being bombed, were praying *Thy kingdom come.*

I began to imagine God hearing these prayers; it fascinates me to think about the other side of prayer, as it is heard in heaven. On that occasion, enemies were killing each other, but praying for the same thing: the kingdom of love and peace and reconciliation.

In our day and age, the prayer is being prayed in geographical kingdoms around the world. In the far east, the middle east, the warring nations in Africa and eastern Europe, the divided communities of the USA, if we say the Lord's prayer we are all praying for the same thing: love and peace and reconciliation.

There is a very beautiful, very old, hymn that has been recreated many times, that says: *I lift my eyes, the cloud goes dim, I see the blue above it ...*

When we see the news clips from inside Intensive Care units, the riots on Capitol Hill, the suffering of the Syrian people, the thousands in refugee camps, yet another teenager murdered on the streets, we lift our eyes when we pray, and we see the blue sky of hope, even certainty, that one day the kingdom of love will prevail.

The hymn goes on: *No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that rock I'm clinging. Since Love is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing.*

I pray for you to know this inmost calm, this vision of peace. As you simply wait for the pandemic to be over, remember this: God is in the waiting.

As you pray, say: *Thy kingdom come.* You don't need long flowing speeches, only the simple words given to us, that encompass every need this world has.

There is no vaccine to make us immune from the struggles of life, but through it all, we have the promise of a new creation, a kingdom of love, and peace.

Rosemary Till.

In addition to the names in the St John's Team list, here are a couple of other numbers you can ring as a first point of contact:

Rev Rosemary Biddle	01922 419032
Sue Hinks-Caldwell	01922 516450

Essington Wood Wives Club

It is with great sadness that I have to announce the passing of one of our founder members, Mrs Kath Newell, after a long illness. She was a key member of the Club who, along with Mrs Elsie Horton, held the position of Social Secretary for over twenty-five years.

She will be greatly missed by all. Our condolences are sent to David, Sue, Andrew and all the family at this sad time.

Hopefully everyone is staying safe and that, some time in 2021, we will be able to meet up and resume our meetings. Take care!

Regards,

Margaret Derry (Chair).

ESSINGTON BRANCH RBL POPPY APPEAL 2020

It has been an incredibly challenging year that has made it exceedingly difficult for our local members to raise funding for this important cause.

However, with your support, the Essington RBL Branch has currently raised a total on £5,348.53.

What is more, this figure should rise as soon as we have access to the local pubs and clubs to recover our collection cans.

Thanks again for your support.

Adrian Nicklin
Chairman, RBL Essington Branch.



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NEWS FROM ESSINGTON WOOD

February 2021

Unfortunately, due to this ongoing Covid crisis, there is little news from Essington Wood.

We were all sad to hear of the death of Kath Newell in January. She was the mother of our Treasurer, Sue Newell Pedley, and a long-time supporter of our Chapel, often to be found on the cake stall at our Christmas and Spring Fairs. She will be much missed and we offer our condolences to Sue and the family.

A little more of the history of Essington Wood:

In the 1851 Religious Census, the Chapel at Essington Wood was stated to have 90 free sittings and 40 others, and the congregations on 30th March 1851 were 40 in the morning and 38 in the evening, with 42 scholars in the morning and 25 in the evening.

Mr William Whitehouse, Chapel Steward, who signed the Census Form, also stated that the average congregations were 50 at both afternoon and evening services.

At that time the village had 644 inhabitants.

In accordance with a law passed in 1855 to amend the law relating to certifying and registering Places of Worship of Protestant Dissenters, the Wesleyan School Room at Essington Wood was licensed to be used as a Place of Meeting for Religious Worship by a congregation or assembly of the denomination called Wesleyan Methodists.

J.C.



Friends of Essington

Social Events - FoE Virtual Pub Quiz

Due to the continued Covid-19 lockdown, all quizzes are taking place “virtually” on a fortnightly basis.

Date: Every Wednesday

Venue: Essington FoE Quiz Page

Time: 7.30 pm

2022 Friends of Essington Calendar

The committee would like once again to extend an invitation to the community to submit photos of Essington. Seasonal variations would be welcomed for the 2022 Calendar.

Please continue to submit pictures to the following email address: foessington@gmail.com

Any pictures submitted will be assumed to be copyright free. We aim to place photos into a selection process by the end of August 2021.

Environmental

We would again like to take the opportunity to thank the anonymous members of the village who assist in keeping the area clean and tidy. Keep up the good work!

Become a Member?

We are always looking for new members and would welcome anyone who would like to help maintain and improve our village environment. If you are interested, please contact us by email foessington@gmail.com, on Twitter [@FoEssington](https://twitter.com/FoEssington) or via our website: <http://friendsofessington.com>

News Bulletin from St. John's Church

I expect you all realise by now that the church services have been suspended. The PCC took that decision with a heavy heart, but unanimously, after the service on 3rd January. Services will start up again as soon as it becomes safe to do so. We will keep the noticeboard up to date and put news on the website and Facebook page.

The church is allowed to be used. We could open for private prayer; but the enormous job of cleaning after people visit, to keep it a safe place, is just too much of a risk with this more easily caught variety that is around now.

On the website and Facebook pages there are links to online services at St. John's. We are in the process of recording more of these, so keep an eye open.

It is 15 months now that we have been vicarless. What a wonderful job so many people have done to keep the church going during such a challenging time. The process of finding a new vicar has now been interrupted twice, but we are in the final stages of preparing an advert. This is to attract a new vicar who may well know nothing of the area.

An important part of that advert is how the community appears to be, not just those who attend the church but everyone who lives in the parish. It will be a backhanded bonus of the pandemic that we can tell how well this community has responded to looking after its more vulnerable and isolated members. If you have any further suggestions as to how we can show this parish in a favourable light, please do contact someone on the contact list in this Magazine.

Meanwhile, please do think about the place of the church in the community. Sadly there have been no weddings or baptisms in the past year, but many funerals. Our hearts go out to those who have had to say goodbye to loved ones in such restrictive circumstances. Grief is harder to bear when it is hard to share.

Be assured that they have been received with just as great a love as at any time. Cherished memories can be just as poignant and clear when you pray at home.

For all those who have missed the opportunity to celebrate a loved one's life at a service in church, we will hold services of remembrance for individuals as well as multi-family occasions. Keep in touch and these can be planned for when the time is ripe and we can safely gather again.

Lastly, think about how the church is going to survive during this second lockdown. No services means no collections, so no money. The fees for funerals have been pared to the bone and there are no social events or fund raisers. Your generosity was demonstrated by the contributions to the Memory Tree during Christmas when money was raised for Compton Care. Some people give money to the church by standing order and others give through our Patronage Scheme.

There is an easy to follow explanation for both of these on the website, or you could contact Sue Davenport directly (see the Contact Us page). There is also a link to our Just Giving page. When you follow this link you come to a part where it says the money is collected on behalf of the Lichfield Diocese. Rest assured that all of it comes to St. John's and, if you sign up as a taxpayer, we can claim an extra 25% as Gift Aid.

Your church at St. John's is there because a lot of people wanted it so much, they gave money and time to make it happen. Time and again over the years this has been repeated. It is not just a building for a few people to go and have services in. It is a place where the community can come together to do stuff that's good for others as well as ourselves. That's how the new **W-elcome E-very B-ody** annex came about, and that's how it will flourish in the future. Be part of something good!

See you around when its safe!

Shrove Tuesday

Shrove Tuesday is, of course, the day before Lent begins and, for well over a thousand years, that has meant it was the last chance to enjoy meat, fat and other tasty dishes until Easter Day. Food in the larder wouldn't keep for six weeks, so it had to be eaten! No wonder that the day translates into other languages as Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday!!).

On the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, the church bell would summon Christians to confession, where they would be 'shriven' or absolved from their sins, which is where *Shrove* Tuesday comes from.

Then they would go home and eat up the last eggs and fat - and pancakes would be the easiest way to do this.

Pancakes feature in cookery books as far back as 1439. Today's pancake races are (supposedly!) in remembrance of a woman back in 1445 in Olney, Buckinghamshire, who was making her pancakes when she heard the shriving bell, calling her to confession. Afraid she'd be late, she ran to the church in a panic, still in her apron and still holding the pan. Well, it's a good story!

'Flipping' pancakes is also centuries old. A poem from Pasquil's Palin in 1619 says:
"And every man and maide doe take their
turne, and tosse their Pancakes up for feare
they burne."

It has also been noted that the ingredients of pancakes reflect four significant things about this time of year - eggs stand for creation, flour is the staff of life, salt keeps things wholesome and milk stands for purity.



Hymns for "Seasoned" Citizens

(I do apologise for these, but they just made me laugh, which I think we all need at the moment, don't we? Ed.)

The Old Rugged Face

Precious Lord, Take My Hand, And Help Me Up

It is Well With My Soul, But My Knees Hurt

Nobody Knows the Trouble I Have Seeing

Amazing Grace, Considering My Age

Just a Slower Walk With Thee

Count Your Many Birthdays, Name Them One by One

Go Tell It On The Mountain, But Speak Up

Give Me That Old Timers' Religion

Blessed Insurance

Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah, I've Forgotten Where I
Parked the Car

And finally, just one joke for Valentine's Day:
Two antennae met on a roof, fell in love and got married. Their wedding ceremony wasn't fancy. The reception, however, was excellent.



VILLAGE INFORMATION

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Essington Medical Centre - Patient Participation Group

We are looking for new members.
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DEADLINE DATE FOR THE MARCH 2021 MAGAZINE THURSDAY 18th FEBRUARY 2021

Material received after this date may be held over to the next month. Also, some material may have to be held over if there is not enough space available to print it. All letters, notices of thanks, articles, poems etc. must be accompanied by the full name and address of the sender. *Material received by the Editor without this information will not be published.*

Material for publication in the next issue, please forward to :

Mrs Kate Rissbrook, Blackhalve Farm, Blackhalve Lane, Essington,
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Printed and published by St. John's Church, Essington.