

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Thank you to all who joined us online on Tuesday this week for our APCM and all those who have been praying for the evening.

Hazel was re-elected as our church warden. Unfortunately there was no other nomination for the role so she is still continuing on her own as your sole church warden.

Please support her with your prayers, and pray others will come forward to help when and where necessary to share something of the responsibility for the workload.

Audrey was reappointed as a PCC representative for three years. There is still room for someone else to come forward and be co-opted onto the PCC.

Your PCC representatives are now Richard and Audrey Akers, Sheila Pink, Pat Kibbler and Suzanne Wilkinson.

Again we also had no volunteers to serve as lay representatives on the Deanery Synod.
Jonathan.

Post box

The front of the church is still covered in scaffolding as part of the essential works that need to be carried out as part of the quinquennial.

Work is still on track and is expected to finish on June 18.

Please be aware the post box has been covered by the scaffolding and therefore it cannot be used.

Sheila has very kindly offered to collect the post from the post office while the scaffolding is obscuring the box.

Foodbank

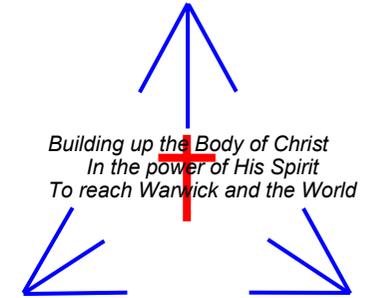
We welcome donations to the Warwick Foodbank. Please put any toiletries and/or dry, non-perishable food in the Foodbank collection box. If you need a voucher please email the office to arrange collection as the Church is still not fully re-open.

The Foodbank is open on Fridays between 1pm and 3pm at Saltisford Church in Albert Street.



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Building up the Body of Christ
In the power of His Spirit
To reach Warwick and the World

May 2 2021
Easter 5

Rev Jonathan Hearn

Today's 10am Service - Holy Communion

If you are a newcomer to our Church, or a visitor to the area, please introduce yourself to one of the welcomers, or to the clergy.

This week - May 2

Next Week - May 9

10am Holy Communion

10am Holy Communion

Readings

May 2

Acts 8: 26-end
John 15: 1-8

May 9

Acts 10: 44-end
John 15: 9-17

Our Bible verse for the year

Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own.

Listen for GOD's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; He's the one who will keep you on track. Don't assume that you know it all. Run to GOD! Run from evil!

Your body will glow with health, your very bones will vibrate with life!
Proverbs 3: 5-8 (from The Message)

St Paul's Church, Warwick

Praying for the Persecuted Church

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has added Azerbaijan and Turkey to its special watch list (SWL) for “engaging in or tolerating severe violations of religious freedom”.

The 2021 USCIRF annual report raised concerns about the desecration and destruction of churches, monasteries and other Christian sites by Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The report cites the shelling of the Ghazanchetsots Cathedral in Shusha on October 8, 2020 as a probable war crime, adding there were concerns about the “various Armenian churches, monasteries, and cemeteries lost or subsequently ceded to Azerbaijani control”.

In March 2021 the Armenian National Commission for UNESCO condemned as “another act of cultural crime by Azerbaijan” the alleged demolition of a church building in Mekhakavan, Nagorno-Karabakh.

Azerbaijan’s invasion of Nagorno-Karabakh, an ethnic-Armenian enclave within the Muslim-majority Republic of Azerbaijan, began at the end of September 2020. The conflict ended in November with Azerbaijan having taken significant territories which had formerly been held by the Armenian community.

Nagorno-Karabakh (mountainous Karabakh) is part of the historic homeland of the Armenian people, who around 301 AD became the first Christian nation, and the region still contains many ancient churches and monasteries. Karabakh was placed within Azerbaijan by the USSR in 1923.

The Azerbaijan offensive was supported politically and militarily by Turkey as confirmed by the US State Department in April 2021.

Turkey was also added to the SWL, the report noting the July 2020 reconversion into a mosque of Istanbul’s former cathedral Hagia Sophia which had been a museum since 1935, as well as the failure of the government to prosecute crimes such as the vandalism of an Armenian church in Bakirköy in May 2020. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan has opened a Military Trophy Park in the capital city Baku which celebrates the Azerbaijani invasion of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The park includes a tunnel lined with hundreds of helmets from killed Armenian soldiers, and waxworks of Armenians with exaggerated racial features, some of which are chained in replica Azerbaijani prison cells.

Turkey is number 25 on the Open Doors’ World Watch List of most dangerous places in which to be a Christian. Azerbaijan is not currently on the list.

There are just 171,000 Christians in Turkey. The country’s population is 83.8 million and the majority are Muslim.

Religious nationalism is very strong in the country, putting enormous pressure on Christians. Converting to Christianity from Islam is not illegal but converts are likely to face opposition from their family and the local community. The dangers mean some believers hide their conversion.

Christians in Turkey have limited access to state employment, and experience discrimination in the private sector, especially where employers have ties to the government.

Since religious affiliation is still recorded on old identity cards and the electronic chip of new identity cards, it is easy to discriminate against Christian applicants.

Source: *Barnabas Fund and Open Doors UK*

Thought for the Week - elections

On Thursday our hall will again be used for the elections for Warwickshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

It can be easy to take our democratic processes for granted and also the opportunities we have to take part in elections.

For many people in other countries these privileges don’t exist or are prone to corruption and intimidation. Admittedly we do not always have much information to go on when it comes to help us make our decisions and there may be many occasions when we are unsure who really to vote for.

However as followers of Christ we can pray for wisdom and the right person will be elected. Whether that person is our choice or not, we can pray God will guide them and help them grow in their role, make wise choices and decisions, and for any who are Christians that they may be salt and light in all they say and do.

St Paul, lived at a time when oppressive government was the norm. He wrote to Timothy saying “*Here then is my*

charge: First, supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings should be made on behalf of all people: for kings and rulers in positions of responsibility, so that our common life may be lived in peace and quiet, with a proper sense of God and of our responsibility to him for what we do with our lives.

In the sight of God our saviour this is undoubtedly the right thing to pray for; for his purpose is that all people should be saved and come to realise the truth.

And that is, that there is only one God, and only one intermediary between God and men, Jesus Christ the man. He gave himself as a ransom for us all - an act of redemption which happened once, but which stands for all times as a witness to what he is.”

So however you vote, or whether you vote or not on Thursday, do pray for all involved in the elections and the election process. Pray God’s will is done – whether we feel he’s got it right or not – remembering his ways are not necessarily our ways! Jonathan.

CTW events

On Monday, May 10 between 5pm and 7pm CTW is hosting a Space to Remember at Warwick Methodist Church. Please wear a mask and bring your own pen.

A reminder HOTS still can’t take place due to the current Covid restrictions. Email warwickhots@gmail.com if you or anyone you know would like or needs a prayer.

Sundays in May

This Sunday we are celebrating by being back in Church for our morning Service.

However, next week, May 9, we are back on zoom and Jonathan will send out the link in good time.

On May 16 and 23 we are back in Church with a Baptism on 23rd and then on May 30 we will be back on Zoom.