

Bridges Group News
Date: 23rd June 2024
Sunday: Trinity 4



News from Priors Hardwick

This year there are 26 Sundays after Trinity before we begin Advent again, which covers the four Sundays before Christmas! These twenty six weeks – half of the the year are commonly know as “Ordinary Time” – presumably because there are no important festivals – except the last Sunday before Advent which is known as Christ the King when we celebrate what we’ve been studying throughout those 25 Sundays.

In Priors Hardwick we brighten up Ordinary Time with the annual Pet Service in July, our Patronal Festival in September, Harvest Festival in October; and in November there is Remembrance Sunday.

But as Christians, there is so much of the *extraordinary* in our lives if we can but see it. I’ve been watching the branches of a Horse Chestnut tree where its wonderful flowers bloomed in spring and then died and fell off. First of all there was just a tiny swelling on the branch which grew into a tiny ball and then... it grew tiny prickles which cover the thick skin which will grow to protect the conker until it’s ripe enough for a game of conkers – or to fall into the ground and produce another tree.

But we also find extraordinary things as we go about our daily lives – surprise meetings and adventures and opportunities to help and bring happiness to others. Especially in the countryside as we see so much of nature. There was a rainbow as I looked out of the window last evening. It is often said that we should not pray so much for miracles but for the grace to have the eyes to see them when they are, all around us, just waiting for us to see them and be thankful.

“Lord who has given us eyes to see and love this sight so fair,

Give us a heart to find out thee and read thee everywhere.” John Keble 1792 – 1866

Rectory reflection from Rev Andy

Well if the forecasts are to be believed Summer could finally be arriving at last! I’m sure we are all fed up of cold nights, miserable days, and incessant rain. Summer reminds us of the glory and creativity of God. The majesty of the summer constellations on balmy nights, the explosion of plant life in all its diversity, the crops ripening in the fields, the warm long days, and the opportunity to take time out to relax and enjoy the company of family and friends. The Summer solstice this year took place on Thursday, often known as ‘the longest day of the year’. Traditionally, the summer solstice has been a time of celebration, bonfires, and revelry—inspiring stories like Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and even the placement of architectural wonders like Stonehenge and the Great Pyramid of Giza. Today we all recognise the importance of looking after the Earth and moderating human influence on the atmosphere, but despite the predictions of the climate catastrophists, Genesis reminds us that, ‘As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease’. When we feel the warmth of the sun on our faces, when we rest under its lengthening rays, we remember that our lives are sustained by its energy in very real and practical ways. When self-reliance and ingratitude tempt us to forget the source of life we pray that God’s kindness will, like the sun, continue to shine on us and lead us to a new recognition of his goodness and generosity.

Prayer

Creator God, who breathed this world into being, thank you for all you have created. Thank you for summer sun, which reminds us that your creative breath is still alive and active. Thank you for the warmth of your love, sustaining this world, your garden, and all dependant upon it.

Looking ahead...

- Afternoon Teas at Lower Shuckburgh, every Saturday afternoon up to 17th August
- Celebration of Midsummer followed by a strawberry tea at Priors Marston, 23rd June at 3pm
- Sunday 30th June The Napton Bike Ride
- Funeral for the late Hazel Grey in Stockton, 25th June at 2pm
- Sunday 30th June THE NAPTON BIKE RIDE

- Friday 5th July – Closing date for applications for potential new Priests-in-charge
- Wednesday 10th July – Priors Marston PCC meeting
- Monday 22nd July - Priors Hardwick PCC meeting
- Tuesday 23rd July - Lower Shuckburgh PCC meeting
- Monday 29th July – Steering Group Meeting

<p align="center">Services this Sunday: 23rd June Trinity 4</p>	<p align="center">Services next Sunday: 30th June Trinity 5</p>
<p>9.00am BCP Holy Communion at Lower Shuckburgh 10.30am Morning Worship at Wormleighton 10.30am Holy Communion at Stockton 3.00pm “4th Sunday” at Priors Marston</p> <p>Bible readings for the week are: Job 38: 1-11, Mark 4:35-end</p>	<p>10.30am “The Gathering” at Priors Marston Holy Communion CW Rev David Herbert Celebrating the Anniversary of his Ordination</p> <p>Bible readings for the week are: Wisdom 1:13-15; 2;23-24, Mark 5:21-end</p>

(For more details of events and diary dates, see our website: www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk or the parish magazines)

Next Week’s Bridges Group News will be hosted by Lower Shuckburgh.