

The Bridge

ST BRIDGET'S WITH CALDY PARISH MAGAZINE



£1

stbridgetschurch.org.uk

caldychurch.org.uk

July 2026 (Vol. 16: No 6)

Admitting children to Holy Communion

On a hot and sunny day 28 children from Year 4 at St Bridget's school were admitted to Holy Communion. All the children in Year 4 had spent the last couple of months learning about the sacrament of Holy Communion with sessions led by their teachers, our ordinand Fred and our Rector, Reverend Alex. Those who then went on to choose to receive communion shared in a service in St Bridget's church during the school day. It was a wonderful



celebration with children from years 3, 4 and 5 as well as family and friends coming along to support them and, of course, the service was followed by cake!

All Together at Caldý

We have recently introduced *A Service of the Word* once a month at 10am on a Sunday morning at Caldý. This provides an opportunity for lay people to lead the worship and introduces a mixture of style and content. Once a term, one of these services takes the form of All Together Worship when we particularly invite our toddler group and families along to share in a time of prayer, song and storytelling. Our Summer term service was led by Andrew Gibb, one of our Children and Families workers, and the Autumn service will have a focus on Harvest.

Letter from Alex



This month our parish focus is on social justice and Fairtrade. If you know about our 'tree' you may have seen a new branch appear with this same focus.

Social justice is quite simply the practical outworking of the greatest commandment given by Jesus to love our neighbours as ourselves. This is the mission statement of St Bridget's school and the children are confident in responding to the question 'who is my neighbour?' with a loud shout of 'EVERYONE'. But what does loving our neighbour really look like, especially when it isn't just the people who live next door, or those we meet and find easy to get on with? How do we love our neighbours in other parts of the world or our neighbours who live in very different ways to ourselves?

Social justice is deeply rooted in the biblical command to defend the vulnerable, champion human dignity and seek the flourishing of our local communities. For those of us who follow Jesus, social justice is not an optional add-on or a distraction from our spiritual mission. It is the natural, undeniable heartbeat of the Gospel. Jesus' ministry prioritised the marginalised, showing us that justice is a core spiritual discipline rather than just a political concept. It is part of how we walk humbly with God every day.

There is a risk that we might confuse charity with justice and think that donating money or food is all that we can or need to do. Charity is giving a hungry person a meal but justice is asking why they are hungry in the first place and then working to fix the system. Authentic social action calls us to move beyond temporary relief toward true empowerment locally, nationally and internationally. It means advocating for fair and affordable housing, decent work, fair pay, access to food, clean water, medical care and education that give every person the dignity of flourishing.

Being a good neighbour in West Kirby, Caldy and wider Wirral means taking an active interest in the struggles faced by those around us, standing alongside the vulnerable and seeking to address the root causes of hardship, rather than just treating the symptoms. This may mean making some personal sacrifices, where and how we shop, what we believe we are entitled to, who we vote for, what we speak out against and how we respond when we come face to face with the marginalised, rejected and vulnerable. How we look at them, what we say and what we do.

Social justice is an everyday calling and challenge which should extend into our relationships, our work, our care of the environment and summarised by the prophet Micah to 'act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God'. Our pursuit of social justice is the tangible expression of God's extravagant love and mercy toward us and when we actively stand against prejudice, challenge systemic inequalities, and welcome the stranger, we are embodying the Kingdom of God here on earth .

As a church family our goal is to build relationships where we recognise that everyone is gifted in some way and that we can all learn from one other. If our social action is to be truly transformative then we need to work to help people find dignity, self-respect and a purpose.

As we navigate the complexities of our local communities, let's remember that doing justice is a way of life, not just a one-off project. May our churches be true communities of sanctuary, where the love of God is felt not only in our prayers, but in our pursuit of a fairer, more compassionate world.

Alex

In next month's issue of 'The Bridge', look out for an exciting report of the St Bridget's school and church Summer Fair on 4th July. As we write, we're keeping our fingers crossed (not easy when you're writing!) for good weather.

no ordinary ordination !

On Saturday June 20, 2026, the first ever ordination of a priest took place in St Bridget's Church. Our curate, Ruth Abbott, who has been part of our church family since she was ordained Deacon 12 months' ago, was ordained as priest by Bishop Julie, the Bishop of Birkenhead.

At 4pm, St Bridget's was thronged with Ruth's family and friends, Diocesan visitors, and members of the congregations of Caldy and St Bridget's churches. Dr Colin Porter was organist for the service (sadly, the St Bridget's organ was still in the Henry Willis workshop) and there was hearty singing from the congregation. The newly sworn-in churchwardens carried their 'wands of office' with aplomb.

The worship, music, and prayer, involving several of the church family, all enabled us to share in an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As the service finished, the Tower team began to ring a quarter peal of Plain Bob Triples (1260 changes, with all 8 bells being rung) in celebration.

Well done to Ruth for smiling throughout and to everyone who worked for weeks to bring everything together. It was indeed a blessing to share in this as a whole community.

After the service, we walked in the sunshine to the church centre where bubbly of



L to R: The Very Revd Dr Tim Stratford, Dean of Chester;
the Revd Jenny Bridgman, Bishop's Chaplain;
the Revd Ruth Abbott; Bishop Julie, Bishop of Birkenhead;
The Venerable Dr Michael Gilbertson,
Archdeacon of Chester.
(photo by Diocesan photographer)

various colours and alcohol content was served and Ruth, we expect, heaved a sigh of relief!

But the excitement was not yet over: on Sunday, Ruth presided at her first Eucharist service, in a joint service for St Bridget's and Caldy people. The music group provided the music, with a chancel full of adult choir, the robed Sing Aloud choir and members of St Bridget's school choir. The church was full again, on a glorious Midsummer's day.



After this service, once again, we retired to the centre where, after a mammoth coffee brewing and serving challenge, the tables were filled with food of every description and we enjoyed a delicious bring-and-share lunch. There were some speeches (but not too many!) and it was such a happy occasion.

So many people were involved in the hard work to organise and execute such a fulfilling and enjoyable weekend of celebration: the list included those who channelled their inner 'bar staff' and 'barista'; the Mary Berrys and Jamie Olivers who provided culinary delights; the washers and driers in Heaven's Kitchen; those with decorative talents and who created beautiful floral displays; our photographer and our audio-visual

team; the furniture removers who have mastered the dark arts of collapsing the tables without trapping their fingers; and everyone who took part in the worship.

To each and every one of you, a huge thank you.

(More photos of the Sunday celebrations on Pages 15 and 16)



July 2026 Diary

Our churches are open for visitors and as places of prayer & stillness
St Bridget's daily until 5pm, Caldý Church every day

**The Parish Office in St Bridget's Centre is open
Monday to Friday mornings, 9.30am–12.30pm**

The Rector's day off is a Monday
*For additional information about our activities, including occasional services
and events, please consult our website*

(www.stbridgetschurch.org.uk),

A Church Near You

www.achurchnearyou.com/St-Bridget-West-Kirby

www.achurchnearyou.com/All-Saints-Caldy

or the weekly newsletter, or phone the office (0151 625 2739)

Sunday 5th July FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8am	Holy Communion – St Bridget
10am	Holy Communion – St Bridget
10am	Holy Communion – Caldý
12 noon	Holy Baptism – S Bridget
6.30pm	Prayers for Healing and Wholeness – St Bridget

Sunday 12th July SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8am	Holy Communion – St Bridget
10am	All Together Worship – St Bridget
10am	Holy Communion – Caldý
12 noon	Holy Baptism – St Bridget
6.30pm	Evening Prayer – St Bridget

Sunday 19th July SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8am	Holy Communion – St Bridget
10am	Holy Communion – St Bridget
10am	Holy Communion – Caldý
6.30pm	Compline – St Bridget

Sunday 26th July EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8am	Holy Communion – St Bridget
10am	Holy Communion – St Bridget
10am	Service of the Word – Caldý
6.30pm	Evening Prayer – St Bridget

Regular weekday services

Tuesday	10am	Holy Communion at Caldý Church
Wednesday	8.30am	Morning prayer at St Bridget's
Wednesday	11.30am	Holy Communion at St Bridget's
Thursday	9am	Morning Prayer on Zoom
Friday	9am	Morning Prayer streamed on Facebook

Other regular activities

2nd Tuesday of month	2pm	Mothers' Union in the Centre
3rd Wednesday of month	12 noon	Men's Shed Lunch in the Centre
1st Tuesday of month	7pm	Theology Discussion group at the Ring O' Bells
One Saturday per month	9.30–12 noon	Churchyard Working Party St Bridget's

FROM THE REGISTERS...

There are no entries for marriages, baptisms or deaths this month

Do you feel welcomed?

One of the newer members of our church family, **Deborah Huthwaite**, has written about what it is like to be a 'newbie' and how we can help to make the experience less daunting.

Since joining St Bridget's a year ago, I am already in danger of forgetting what it felt like on our first Sunday. It was rather like a first day at school!

Would anyone speak to us?

Would we know what to do in an unfamiliar service?

Might we get it wrong?

How will we get to know people and make friends?

Shall we join in the coffee time after the service?

Which table shall we sit at?

Fortunately, after an anxious start, we found some very nice people who welcomed us kindly, and made a real effort to help us settle down.

It's a joy to enter our beautiful church building and find many people we know and count as friends. We are so grateful for this and thank God for each one of you.

It's still pretty daunting going across to coffee though!

I realise now that it's hard work being new, but also hard work trying to welcome new people, especially important as the church is growing and more people need support in finding their feet. Or actually taking the weight OFF their feet. Maybe not enough chairs???

Now I find myself wanting to sit and talk to my friends and not make the effort with folk I don't know - this must change!

It's been good for me to feel what it's like to be new, and I'm trying not to forget it's a pretty scary process, and would be even worse for someone unfamiliar with church.

The clergy do a great job, but they need us as well to play our part.

[Please wear your name badges - it is SO helpful! Ed.]

Regular weekday activities

Tuesday	3.30pm	Toasty Tuesday in St Bridget's (term time)
	4.45pm	Sing Aloud junior choir practice (term time)
	6.00pm	Choir practice
	7.30pm	Bell ringing practice
Wednesday	8.30–11.30am	The Link Café – Centre
	10am	Knit & Natter, craft and chat group – Centre
Thursday	10am	Caldy Baby & Toddler Group (term time)
Friday	10am	St Bridget's Baby Group – Centre (term time)

contemplative prayer

The next gathering for contemplative prayer is at midday on Thursday 23rd July at the back of St Bridget's church (inside!).

The hour together, guided by Deborah Huthwaite, is a helpful introduction into silence which many people find draws them closer to experiencing the love of God. Come along and try it for yourself.



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Theology Discussion Group @ the Ring O' Bells

Tuesday 7th July

Dear All,

As we discussed at the last meeting, the next meeting **will be a service of Holy Communion at St Bridget's at 7.15 pm** followed by a social drink at the *Ring of Bells*. We have had an excellent and stimulating year and communion will mark a fitting end to the season.

With best wishes,

Dave

A still place in the market

"Be still and acknowledge that I am God" (Psalm 46.10)

These are words to take with us in our busy lives. We may think about stillness in contrast to our noisy world. But perhaps we can go further and keep an inner stillness even while we carry on business, teach, work in construction, make music, or organise meetings.

It is important to keep a still place in the "marketplace". This still place is where God can dwell and speak to us. It is also the place from which we can speak in a healing way to all the people we meet in our busy days. Without that still space we start spinning. We become driven people, running all over the place without much direction. But with that stillness God can be our gentle guide in everything we think, say or do.

Henri J.M. Nouwen, Dutch priest and writer 1932–1996

From *Bread for the Journey, Reflections for Every Day of the Year*. First published 1996.

Carole Steel writes:

We met in June for a Bring and Share lunch. We all enjoyed good food and good company.

Our next meeting is at 2pm on Tuesday 14th July when Rod Tann will be giving an illustrated talk on 'WIRRAL MATTERS'. A good time to hear what is happening around our area. Visitors are very welcome to come along.

150th CELEBRATIONS of the MU

On Sunday August 9th, all members around the country are asked to light a candle at 11 am and read out two prayers for the 150th Anniversary, one from Diocese of Chester and the Provincial Prayer for the Province of York. Later in the afternoon, at Evensong at 3 pm in Chester Cathedral, MU will be part of the service.

Each group around the country has been asked to hold a special event to raise funds this year for the Work of the Mothers Union around the World. Our group is holding a '**STRAWBERRY TEA**' on **TUESDAY, 11TH AUGUST 2-4 pm** in the centre as our contribution. Tickets priced at £5 will be on sale at our next meeting. Please support us if you can. Everyone is welcome including children.

AN ORGAN UPDATE

Sad to say, after our hopeful report about the imminent reinstatement of the St Bridget's organ and the final work in church, we have heard nothing further from Henry Willis & Sons Ltd.

PARISH BOOK CLUB

The next session of the Book Club is at 5pm on Sunday 26 July in St Bridget's Centre for one hour.

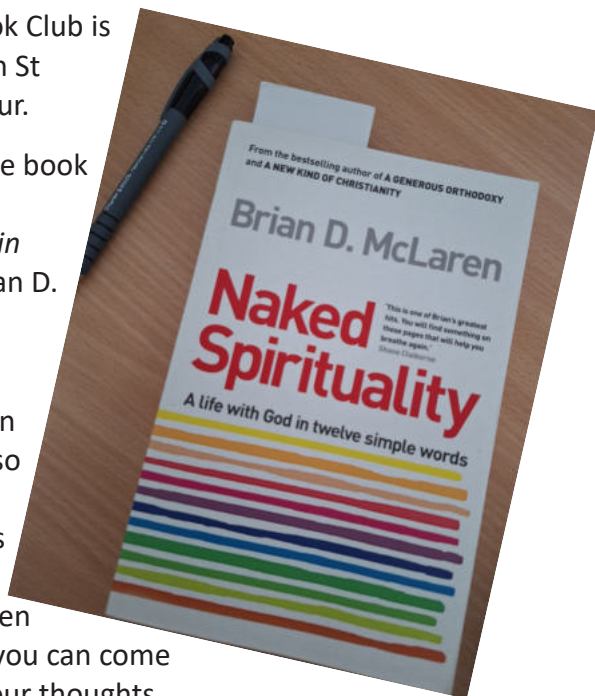
In case you've forgotten, the book we're reading is ***Naked Spirituality*** *A life with God in twelve simple words* by Brian D. McLaren.

We know for some the thought of reading a book in a month is overwhelming, so we're reading two chapters a month (only 16 pages this month!) Each chapter focuses on a word – and even if all you read is that word you can come along and listen or share your thoughts.

Third word... 'Thanks'.

Come along and give it a try - don't let the fact that one-third of this month's 'Book Clubbers' were ordained ministers deter you!

The book is widely available both new (from <https://blackwells.co.uk/> for £12.99 including delivery) and second-hand and on Kindle. If you would like to shop local, *West Kirby Bookshop* can supply the book and will give you a 10% book club discount.





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no ordinary ordination !

The bring-and-share lunch in the church centre followed Ruth's first service of Holy Communion, Sunday June 21.





Endpiece

A happy life consists not in the absence,
but in the mastery of hardships.
Helen Keller

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SAFEGUARDING

St Bridget's West Kirby and Caldy Church take the safety of everyone within our churches very seriously, and expect that everyone will work within the **safeguarding policy** of the parish, a copy of which can be found on our noticeboards.

If you are concerned about someone's safety or well-being contact:

- The Rector, Reverend Alex Williams, 0151 625 1052 rectorwestkirby@gmail.com
- The Parish Safeguarding Officer Rosemary Morgan 0782 1672232
safeguardingwestkirby@gmail.com
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Team 01928 718834 (option 4)
safeguarding@chester.anglican.org

IF SOMEONE IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER OR HARM, **CALL 999** AND ASK FOR THE POLICE.