

TO THE BRIDGE

ST BRIDGET'S WITH CALDY PARISH MAGAZINE

stbridgetschurch.org.uk caldychurch.org.uk

August 2026 (Vol. 16: No 7)

£1

Do you want to keep your children happily busy and away from their screens? Families are welcome to join us at the Summer Link, No booking required.

Summer Link

Free drop-in craft and activity sessions for Families

Every Wednesday during the
Summer Holidays

9.30-11.00am

St. Bridget's Centre
West Kirby

Info: 625 2739

Coffee, toast and cakes will be available
from the Link Cafe.

Letter from Alex



Gatekeeper

For most of my childhood I lived in Riversdale Road, West Kirby. During this time I don't think that I really gave my surroundings very much

thought. The sand and the sea were simply there, occasionally it was very windy, and the tide came up the road – much to our delight and my mum's despair because the salt and sand was blasted over all the windows. Even more infrequently the sun shone brightly and we might walk out to Little Eye or Hilbre. I went sailing on the Marine Lake and occasionally wandered the Wirral Way or walked with my friend and her dog across Grange Hill. I simply took my surroundings for granted.

It wasn't until I moved to live in Manchester where it seemed mostly grey and when it was windy I wondered why there wasn't the smell of salt that I realised what a treasure I had left behind. Since moving back from Warwickshire to West Kirby, I have appreciated even more the beauty around me - or perhaps it's just my age!

As Christians, we are called to be stewards of the earth. In Genesis we read that God gives the earth into the care of humanity. Increasingly we realise what a bad job we have made of that. The crisis affecting nature is as great as the climate crisis and as a church community we have taken action over the past few years. During the month of August we have a focus in the parish on nurturing wildlife which begins right outside our doors, in our homes, and on our church grounds.

Churchyards and burial grounds are some of the most undisturbed, wildlife-rich spaces in the country. Because our historic spaces are free from agricultural chemicals and development, they provide crucial refuges for birds, insects, and mammals. Thankfully, the Church has increasingly

become involved in helping these havens of biodiversity thrive. In both Caldy church grounds and St Bridget's churchyard we work within eco-church guidelines to achieve this. We are creating wildflower meadows and leaving areas of grass unmown during the spring and summer to allow native wildflowers to bloom, providing vital nectar for bees and butterflies. We are piling deadwood and fallen leaves to provide natural habitats and hibernation spots for hedgehogs, amphibians, and insects and we are planting flowers shrubs and trees to support the struggling bee and butterfly populations.

One of the most joyful ways to care for nature is to observe, appreciate, and gather as a community. During our Churches Count on Nature event volunteers gathered in St Bridget's churchyard and recorded a list of 87 named wild plants, flowers, grasses, and trees, 12 different varieties of birds and 6 varieties of butterflies including gatekeepers, meadow browns, speckled wood, red admiral and large and small whites.

Creation is a gift from God. As a church community we believe that supporting the earth and all who inhabit it is our responsibility, called to be faithful stewards of every living thing entrusted into our care to the best of our ability.

The smallest beginning can grow into something amazing, so let's begin by noticing what is around us and committing ourselves to actively participate in its preservation.

Alex

**** THANK YOU ** THANK YOU ** THANK YOU ****

Jean Pilling retires this month as magazine distribution organiser, a job she has done for many years, since she took over from the late Pat Price. Jean keeps track of the subscriptions (yes, a whole year of *The Bridge* is cheaper than buying it each month!) and sorts out the bundles for delivery. These bundles are then collected for delivery by yet more volunteers. Thank you also to **Heather South** for taking on this job.

SUMMER FAIR

This year's Summer Fair on 4th July, organised by St Bridget's school and church, was a happy and well-attended event. Although the weather wasn't as sunny as we hoped, it wasn't so hot that the candyfloss, cakes and Maypole dancers melted.

The grand total was a shade over £9,000, meaning that the school and the church each received about £4,500. This is quite incredible and a real credit to all those who helped in any way, from the organising committee to the 'gatekeepers', the stallholders and tea and cake servers, the candyfloss makers and all.

The Rector avoided the indignity of the wet sponge this year



Highlights of the organising team



Cake stall bakers (2 of 3!) / helpers



A fire engine is always a popular attraction - and less nervous than ponies

Foxhill Diocesan Retreat Centre



FOXHILL is a wonderful resource for all of us but often people in our churches don't know enough about it to make the most of what it offers...

This is what is said on the website:

'Nestled within serene woodlands and picturesque lawns, Foxhill offers the

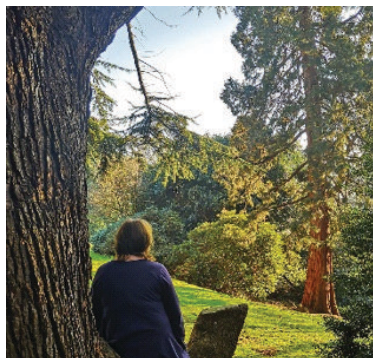
perfect setting for relaxation, reflection, and renewal. Our warm and inviting house provides a peaceful atmosphere for both day visitors and overnight guests. Foxhill is renowned for its prayerful hospitality and inclusive environment welcoming churches, organisations, and individuals from all backgrounds.'

If you go on the website – www.foxhillchester.co.uk – you will discover what's on their programme.

There are 'Encounter Days' entitled 'Breathe With the Seasons'. One-day events, intended to provide a breathing-space. There are also week-end retreats, of different kinds. Some encourage creativity, others are connected to a particular season of the year (e.g. Advent).

You are strongly encouraged to look at the programme and see if there is something that attracts you. Talk to Alex, or Anne Samuels with any concerns. You might ask a friend or family member or church member to go with you. It is about 50 minutes' drive from West Kirby.

Contact details: Foxhill House and Woodlands, Tarvin Road, Frodsham
Tel: 01928 733777
Email: foxhill@chester.anglican.org



August 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 2nd August NINTH 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	Evening Prayer – St Bridget

Sunday 9th August TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

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

Sunday 16th August ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

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

Sunday 23rd August TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

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

Sunday 30th August THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8am	Holy Communion – St Bridget
10am	Holy Communion – St Bridget
10 am	Holy Communion with Baptism – 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 - check weekly news sheet for summer updates

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

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 (from 9.30am out of term)
	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)

FROM THE REGISTERS...

HOLY BAPTISM

"May they grow in the faith in which they have been baptised"

28th June Mollie Rose Elizabeth Clegg (St Bridget)

5th July Harry George Morgan (St Bridget)

HOLY MATRIMONY

"May they grow together in love and peace"

11th July Cameron James Neil Arrowsmith & Emma Sydney Szabo
(St Bridget)

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Green Salon Collective



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and Sunday

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Theology Discussion Group @ the Ring O' Bells

The next meeting after the 'summer recess' is on September 8th at 7 pm in the Ring O' Bells. The theme will be *End of Life*, reflecting debates over assisted dying.

Dave Chester

Thie dy vea retreat house, isle of man: finding god in plan b

Those of us who experienced the hospitality of the Retreat House were very sad to hear the news that it had closed. Now we are pleased to be able to pass on some exciting news from Judith Ley and the Trustees.

When we were offered the chance to convert Ballawattleworth House in Peel into a residential retreat house, we believed it was the answer to the prayers we'd been offering for the past 20 years! We always believed that the Isle of Man was the perfect location to create Thie Dy Veä (a House of Life) So we signed a 5-year lease, and set to work. Little did we know, when we signed the documents in December 2019 that COVID was just around the corner. But we pressed on and eventually (much later than planned) we opened. Due to the faithfulness, hard work and prayer of volunteers and a small number of staff, many lives were touched through the events we offered, and we thank God for that.

However, despite our best efforts, Thie de Veä faced constant challenges to adequately utilise the residential capacity of the house, and maintain the necessary staffing levels. Then, just as the lease was due for renewal in December 2025,



two staff members resigned, to take up a new ministry in Cyprus, and our Warden, Rev'd David Shirtliff was diagnosed with bowel cancer. In these circumstances, it would not have been sensible to renew the lease. So, if that was the end of Plan A - could there be a Plan B?

After we moved out of Ballawattleworth House, we 'rested' our programme of events but continued to pray. Then, in March this year, a wonderful Christian lady living in a beautiful house in 4 acres of glorious grounds, invited us to make her home, The Old Coach House, just outside Ramsey into the new home for Thie Dy Vea!

The Old Coach House isn't residential - but it's perfect place to offer all the things we know people find helpful - full-day and half-day talks, courses, mini-retreats, quiet days and days to just come and relax and do nothing!! The house has a beautifully peaceful, prayerful atmosphere. We've already had our first gathering, and the large lounge accommodated 25 people with ease. The big conservatory overlooking the garden is a comfortable space in all weathers - and the grounds defy description! Our 5 years in Ballawattleworth House taught us so many valuable lessons. Some of you reading this now were part of that Plan A, and we are so deeply grateful to you.

So, where is God in Plan B? God is in the joy and enthusiasm we've felt, as details of our new home have become known. God in David Shirtliff's steady recovery which is enabling him to return, in due course, as a Spiritual Director and retreat leader. And God is in the people coming forward to lead their own groups in The Old Coach House. If you would like to see how God's Plan B grows in prayer, keep an eye on our website <https://www.retreathouse.im/> and you can follow us on Facebook too <https://www.facebook.com/thiedyvearetreathouse>

Bannaghtyn! Judith, Richard, Philip and Sheila - Trustees - Thie Dy Vea

(A note from Rev'd Mary: Translated from Manx Gaelic to English Bannaghtyn means blessings or greetings)

"Be comforted little dog. Thou too in the
Resurrection shall have a tail of gold."

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

Meeting: July 14th 2026

The meeting was opened by Carole Steel, who explained about the arrangements for joining in prayer on Mary Sumner Day. Plans were made for our Strawberry Tea on August 11th. Following prayer, we heard a very interesting talk by Rod Tann of the Wirral Society, illustrated with pictures of planned developments for the area.

He told us that the Government is allowing incursion of the Green Belt, which could result in house building in Pensby, and of the plan to build 38 houses on the Sheep Field (Highways Department to be consulted regarding access and egress).

The Carbon Capture pipeline and the proposed solar farm at Thurstaston were also topics of concern for the environment; both plans are being monitored.

Members appreciated being given the information about the Wirral Society's careful vigilance.

150th CELEBRATIONS of the MU

On Sunday 8th August, it is Mary Sumner Day. The Mothers' Union was started by Mary 150 years ago. The MU members in Chester Diocese have each received a packet containing two prayers and a night light. These prayers have been put in a time capsule for the 150-year celebrations, one is the Chester Diocesan Prayer and the other the York Provincial Prayer. We have been asked to light the candle and read the prayers at 11 am on that day.

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**. Tickets only **£5** from Carole Steel (0151 625 1115). Please support us if you can. Everyone is welcome, including children.

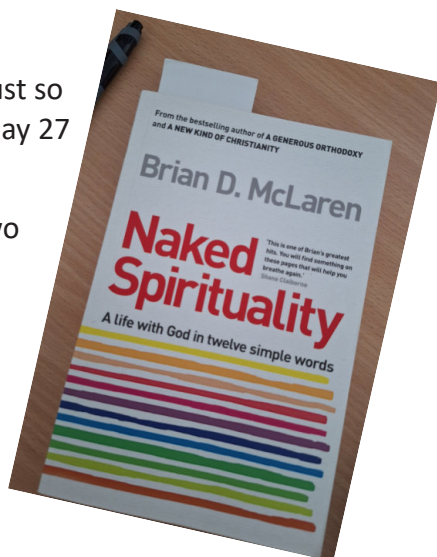
PARISH BOOK CLUB

The Book Club is having a break in August so the next session will be 5–6pm on Sunday 27 September in St Bridget's Centre.

For this session—for which you have two whole months to prepare—we'll be looking at Chapters 8 and 9 in ***Naked Spirituality*** *A life with God in twelve simple words* by Brian D. McLaren.

The fourth word is 'O!' (Practising Jubilation and Not Just a Word - a Way of Life)

Come along and give it a try - don't let presence of several ordained ministers intimidate you!



A date for your diary



Wirral Earth Festival: Saturday 19th September, 11am - 4.30pm
St Bridget's Field, Church Road, West Kirby, CH48 7HL

Wirral Earth Festival returns in September for a day of music, storytelling, earth-friendly stalls, food and drink, and poetry.



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HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Saturday 12 September, 10.00 am and 4.00 pm



The interior of Caldby church

Heritage Open Days is a country wide festival which runs from 11th to 20th September 2026. In Wirral, over 80 participants are opening up their properties or organising walks, talks or special events.

Both our parish churches will be part of the programme, welcoming visitors on Saturday 12 September between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm. At Caldby, it will be an opportunity to admire the lovely Arts and Crafts interior while at St Bridget's it is hoped that local artisans will be demonstrating church-related crafts, such as church embroidery and calligraphy. Tours of tower and ringing chamber may also be available. At the same time the Museum will be open with a new display on '*Transport through the Ages*' plus displays on the Grange Road Shops, Wirral Archaeology, the Cheshire Home Front and Calday Grange Grammar School.

Refreshments will be available in St Bridget's Centre.

A HIGHLAND WEDDING

Simon Trout, who many of you will know from St Bridget's (and from Summer Fair organisation and Bereavement Journey courses), celebrated the wedding of his daughter in June and has sent this report of the joy-filled day.

This year, instead of being all-consumed by the Summer Fair, I was away up North in Aberdeen, joining with my extended family and that of my dear late wife, Ruth. Members of our family travelled from as far as Dubai and Melbourne to celebrate the marriage of our youngest daughter, Lois, to Emma Magee on 28th June.



Donning full highland dress, one very proud Dad walked Lois down the aisle, as a Piper played "The Skye Boat song", to be joined in matrimony with Emma in a very emotional and moving ceremony, including the "Sharing of the Quaich".

The two beautiful and ecstatically happy brides then laid on full Scottish celebrations for their guests including Ceilidh dancing in the evening. It was a truly mesmerising and joy-filled day to remember!

For those of you who are not familiar with the Sharing of the Quaich, this explanation is given at <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/>

The Quaich is a traditional two-handled cup, often referred to as the love cup, as each partner takes a handle of the cup to take a drink, showing that they trust each other to share the cup. The cup can be filled with the drink of choice (usually whisky, but rhubarb gin for Lois and Emma) or two drinks can be combined, symbolising two becoming one. The Quaich may also be used at the reception for the bridal couple's first toast together. Historically, the Quaich would have then been passed round by the leaders of each family or clan.



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Wed	9.30 – 4.30
Thu	9.30 – 4.30
Fri	9.30 – 4.30
Sat	9.30 – 1.00



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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.