

ST GUTHLAC'S COMMUNITY NEWS



CHURCH OF ST GUTHLAC

Holbrook Rd, Knighton, Leicester LE2 3LF

Minister: Revd Richard Bonney 2125677

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Churchwardens:

David Hunt

Tina Jarvis

27 July 2014

Sixth Sunday after Trinity

10.30 am All Age Communion

WELCOME TO ANY OF YOU VISITING US FOR THE FIRST TIME!

Please announce yourself to one of our welcomers and sign in the welcome book so that we get to know you by name! Also, please introduce yourself to Revd Richard or one of the Churchwardens. St Guthlac's is YOUR local church. We feel part of the local community and we hope that you will feel part of the church community. **We have a welcome sheet:** please ask for one if it is not handed to you on arrival.

Newsletter No 114

FORTHCOMING SERVICES AND MEETINGS

Wednesday 23 July, 7.30 pm

Choir Practice & summer party

Thursday 24 July, 9.30 am

Holy Communion

Sunday 27 July, 10.30 am

All Age Communion

For more information about St Guthlac's, **please consult the notice board** or our website
<http://www.stguthlac-knighton.co.uk/>

REVITALISATION OF HOLBROOK MEMORIAL HALL. The first phase of work on the internal refurbishment is complete. Phase 2, which includes rewiring and replacing the ceiling tiles in the main hall, began on Monday 14th July. This will be followed by replacement of the main hall floor at a cost of about £13,000 and will give us a new floor made of similar timber to the current floor, which will hopefully last another 100 years. There will be some fund raising events to help pay for this. **We have been successful in obtaining a grant of £3,500 from Leicester City Council, Knighton Ward.** Finally, we are planning a "Grand Opening" on Remembrance Sunday 9 November when all the work is completed (Bishop Christopher and the City Mayor Peter Soulsby are coming). There's a lot going on! Our thanks to Steve Bowyer, Gary Ogg and the team working on the project.

PRAYERS FOR THE FAITHFUL. We have been asked to keep **Julia Burns, Rachel Stevens, Liz Singleton, Janet Hubbard, Ray Wood** and **Jean Abbott** in our prayers. For other prayer requests, please speak to the Revd Richard.

Please hold Aidan, Calum and Edwin in your prayers on their journey of faith after admission to Holy Communion.

Cover image: <http://www.iwmprints.org.uk/image/1100354/brooks-e-lt-a-padre-gives-a-drink-to-a-badly-wounded-soldier-near-potijze>

THE REVD RICHARD WRITES In the last newsletter, as part of a series looking at the challenges to the faith in World War I, we looked at the work of some of the army chaplains or padres. The English journalist C.E. Montague in his memoir *Disenchantment* (1922) concluded in a chapter entitled 'the sheep that were not fed' that the church missed out on a massive opportunity during World War I. **'The men came under their hands at the time of the most drastic experience in most of [their] lives, immersed in a new and strange life of sensations at once simple and intense, shaken roughly out of the world of mechanical habit... living always among swiftly dying friends and knowing their own death at any time to be as probable as anyone's... Imagine the religious revival that there might have been if some man of apostolic genius had had the fishing in the troubled waters, the ploughing and sowing of broken soil... Nothing perceptible came of it all.'**

An almost unimaginable amount of religious literature was circulated to the troops in World War I. By the end of the war, the Scripture Gift Mission (SGM) had distributed 43 million items of literature. Every soldier who enlisted received a free *'Active Service' Gospel according to St John* with a message from Lord Roberts

dated 25 August 1914: 'I ask you to put your trust in God. He will watch over you and strengthen you. You will find in this little book guidance when you are in health, comfort when you are in sickness and strength when you are in adversity.' The gospels were made to fit in the top pocket of a uniform, with rounded edges to prevent creasing. They had a selection of four hymns at the back so that chaplains could use them to lead church services, and (at the request of chaplains), a decision form so that soldiers could sign an individual declaration of faith: 'Being convinced that I am a sinner, and believing that Christ died for me, I now receive Him as my personal Saviour, and with His help I intend to confess Him before men.' In many cases, the name and address of the soldier helped with identification after death, although there were official 'dog tags' as well. There is no doubt that in the early stages of the war there were significant collective commitments and signings of the decision cards ('the number of men [who] signed [is] 163'; 'one day's work alone has witnessed seventy men definitely yielding to Christ'). The sad reality is that the death rate was so high among the troops in 1914-16 that few of those who had made this commitment in the early months survived to the end of the war.

Whether or not the Gospel according to St John was the most appropriate resource for the troops, the military chaplains were faced with a huge task. There were 3,030 Anglican chaplains commissioned during the war, but the number of soldiers mobilized from Britain alone in this period was 5.4 million: the number of men per chaplain was far too numerous to allow for personal contact with the majority. Two of the most famous army chaplains were GA Studdert Kennedy ('Woodbine Willie') and Philip Thomas Byard ('Tubby') Clayton, the founder of Toc H, both of whom in their different ways formed a memorable relationship with the troops. But the opportunities for such contact were few in the intensity of fighting: 'We generally fight or march on Sundays!', one army chaplain reported back home in October 1914.

Moreover, the military hierarchy had its own expectations. From at least 1916, Douglas Haig and other senior military figures felt that padres should play an active role in interpreting the war for soldiers and in outlining British war aims to the troops. Few wartime sermons were published, however, and even private, unpublished notes on sermons are relatively hard to come by, so it is difficult to judge how and to what extent chaplains realized Haig's vision. Throughout the war, army chaplains had to double up as censors of the post sent home by the troops,¹ which would have scarcely endeared them to the men.

¹ 'Censoring mail was frequently the responsibility of army chaplains. In 1915, Fitzgerald told of a padre who, went through 1,600 letters a day, and among them found four letters from a soldier to as many different girls – all in the same strain, all with the same endearments, thanking the donors for parcels, and suggesting more with all the fullness of experience. 'On this occasion', the chaplain feared, 'the censor's work was made the more awkward owing to the need for great care in getting the letters back into the right envelopes.' <http://www.worldwar1postcards.com/the-field-service-post-card.php>

HOMEMADE JAMS & CHUTNEY will be needed to sell at the Christmas Fayre on December 6th. If you can make any for church it will be gratefully appreciated. If you require jars please speak to Lesley, Jane or Ann Swanson. Thank you.

BUBBLES COMPETITION. Two competitions will be held for Bubbles children and friends, at the barn dance on Saturday 20th September. There will be prizes for the best harvest collage (maximum paper size A3) and the best garden constructed on a dinner plate. Entries should be completed at home and brought along to the barn dance for judging. Further information from Lesley or Jane.

PIANO in Holbrook Hall and old wooden 'Bubbles' tables are to be disposed of. If anyone would like them please contact Jane Wright on administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk or Mark & Steph on kpcbookings@btinternet.com as soon as possible. Thank you

KNIGHTON ROWED THE BOAT ASHORE On Sunday 6th July at 2.30pm, the parish walk visited Knighton Spinney, which opens from Knighton Park. We posed for a photo in the outdoor "Knighton classroom". The spinney was planted by Squire Hartopp Cradock in 1840 to grow oaks for warships and he grew ash trees between so that the oaks would grow tall. Oaks take a while to grow, and many are still there. By the 1870s steel ships were in production so it seems unlikely



that much if any of the oaks in Knighton Spinney were used for ships. It takes 5000 oaks to build a flagship like HMS Victory and 2000 oaks to build a standard 74-gun ship-of-the-line. 5000 oaks are about the size of a Winnie-the-Pooh hundred acre wood. Ian Fraser discovered that the Spinney is 5.7 acres according to the OS map or 8.6 acres via the metric system according to the internet. Enough for a rowboat?

LEGACIES We welcome all legacies, and we promise to use your gift to make a difference in our parish. Please consider leaving a proportion of your estate as a gift in your Will to our parish. For confidential advice to anyone at St Guthlac's, please contact Mark Wyatt <http://www.parishresources.org.uk/legacies/resources-on-legacies/>

TO ALL INTERCESSORS Please remember to keep a watch on the rota for your turn to prepare intercessions. If you swap with someone else, please let Jane and the Revd Richard know by email to avoid any possible confusion. Thank you.

INFORMATION FOR THE NEWSLETTER Please contact us at the latest by 9 am Friday for material to be included in the next weekly newsletter. administrator@stguthlac-knighton.co.uk