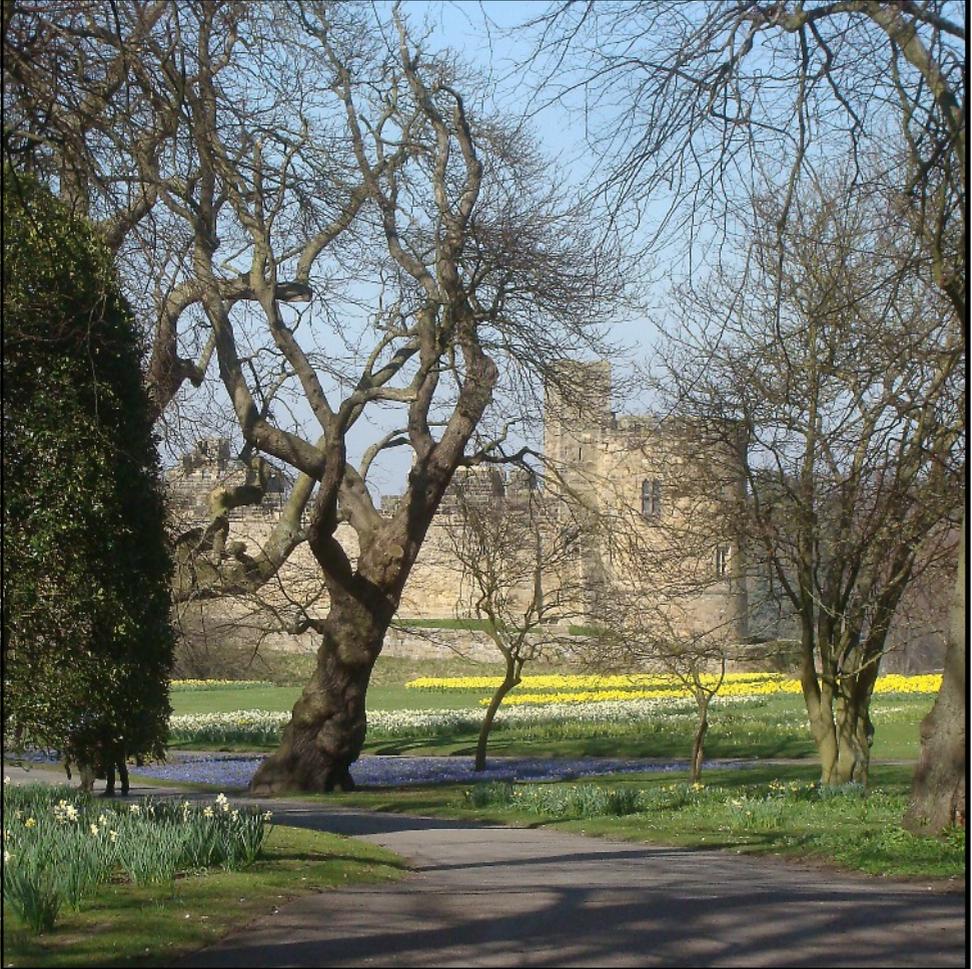




Gateway

March 2022



St Michael's, Alnwick

The magazine for the people of the Church and the Town



WEEKLY WORSHIP

SUNDAYS AT ST. MICHAEL'S

8.30am HOLY COMMUNION (Said)

A quiet celebration of Holy Communion with a sermon. Using Common Worship except for the third Sunday of the month when the Book of Common prayer is used.

10.00am THE PARISH COMMUNION

Usually sung with hymns and a sermon and using Common Worship. The main service of the day followed by tea/coffee and the chance to meet up with others. On the first Sunday of the month the worship will be more informal, using a variety of resources and 'thinking outside the box'.

This service will be live-streamed on YouTube each week.

4.00pm 'SUNDAY PLUS'

Monthly. An informal time of worship and reflection with a particular theme each month. Usually available to watch live on Zoom.

6.00pm EVENING WORSHIP

On the first Sunday of the month a traditional Sung Evensong according to the Book of Common Prayer with sermon.

On other Sundays a variety of worship including Compline and worship in the style of the Iona Community.

WEDNESDAYS ST. MICHAEL'S

10.15am HOLY COMMUNION

A said service followed by tea/coffee and the opportunity for fellowship. Once a month, in term time, we are joined by a class from St. Michael's Church of England Primary School and once a term the service takes place in the school.

DENWICK CHAPEL

A small chapel-of-ease built by the Duke of Northumberland in 1872. Usually a service of matins or Holy Communion once a month. Following the pandemic the provision of services is under review.

Thought for the Month

Looking Forward

MANY CHURCH congregations and church ministers are concerned about low numbers of those attending church, especially since the era of the Covid-19 pandemic. They have been asking themselves the same question: “When will all the missing people come back?”

The fact is that, for most churches, many church members who were attending before the pandemic will never return. Anecdotal conversations with church members and church leaders indicate that somewhere between 20 and 30 percent of the members will not return to church. So that’s 20 to 30 members out of 100 never coming back!

So, who are these non-returning church members – and why are they not returning? I’m going to suggest who might have dropped out – and although you may think this is controversial, it may offer some food for thought and a challenge to us all as we consider the future and how to grow our congregation. So here are five possible drop-out groups:-

1. ***The decreasing attendance members.*** These were your members who, at one time, attended church just about every week. Before the pandemic, their frequency of attendance declined to twice a month or even once a month. Covid accelerated their trends. They are now attending zero times a month.

2. ***The disconnected church members.*** If someone is a member of a small group connected with the church, their likelihood of returning is high. If they attend worship only, their likelihood of attendance is much lower. This reality should be a strong motivation to emphasize in-person small groups once everyone feels safe to return.

3. ***The ‘church-is-another-activity’ church members.*** These church members see gathered attendance as just another activity on a par with, or lower than, other activities. They were the church members who let inclement weather keep them from church but not from their gatherings with family or friends. Commitment to the church was a low priority before the pandemic. They have no commitment in the post-quarantine era.

4. ***The constant-critic church members.*** These church members always had some complaints for the vicar and churchwardens. They are likely still

Continued on page 5

Principal Sunday Readings

Sunday	Holy Communion	Evensong
6th March 1st of Lent	Deuteronomy 26.1-11 Romans 10.8b-13 Luke 4.1-13	Jonah 3 Luke 18.9-14
13th 2nd of Lent	Genesis 15.1-12, 17-18 Philippians 3.17-4.1 Luke 13.31-end	Jeremiah 22.1-9,17 Luke 14.27-33
20th 3rd of Lent	Isaiah 55.1-9 1 Corinthians 10.1-13 Luke 13.1-9	Genesis 28.10-19a John 1.25-end
27th 4th of Lent	Joshua 5.9-12 2 Corinthians 5.16-end Luke 15.1-3,11b-end	Isaiah 40.27-41.13 2 Timothy 4.1-18
<i>For Mothering Sunday</i>	Exodus 2.1-10 2 Corinthians 1.3-7 Luke 2.33-35	

From the Registers

Baptisms

15.1..22	Romy Jane Percy
22.2.22	Lilah Erin Scott

Funerals

11.2.22	Vera Middleton
25.2.22	Helen Richardson

complaining even though they have not returned to in-person services. Many of them will not return at all.

5. **The cultural Christian church members.** They were part of a declining group well before the pandemic. They were those church members who likely were not Christians but came to church to be accepted culturally or just because it was the ‘done thing’. Today, there are few cultural expectations for people to attend church. These cultural Christians learned during the pandemic that it was no big deal to miss church. It will be no big deal for them never to return.

Despite the above, we should not fret about these losses. Our church has the opportunity to write its future on a blank slate. We may feel the pain of the losses – that is normal. But God has a plan for St Michael’s to embrace the new reality into which we are heading together, and under the guidance of a new Vicar who will be with us before too long.

So let us head into the future and look forward with confidence. God’s got our church – and God’s got you and me!

Philip Bourne

O Lord, support us all the day long of this troublous life, until the shades lengthen, and the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work done.

Then Lord, in your mercy grant us safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Climate Change and Earth

Changing Together

Some about thoughts about cooking

- **Passive Cooking.** American Colonists would put a pot of beans in the dying embers of a fire overnight, to cook them without the need for more fuel – ‘passive cooking’ at it’s best! While we may not be able to be quite so efficient, we can perhaps think ahead and try to cook two things at once. If this requires little more organisation than it is possible to muster, (as it does for a lot of us!) why not have a go at simply popping a tray of tomatoes , sprinkled with garlic, oil, herbs etc, into the oven with whatever else is in and enjoy roast tomato soup or a pasta sauce. Similarly, a tray of any veg roasted like this, onions, carrots, peppers etc. can be used in a number of ways. (A quick search on the internet will bring up lots of lovely roast vegetable soup recipes.)

- **Microwave v cooker.** This is a complex one, depending on whether you are cooking from scratch, heating a ready meal, boiling in water (eg frozen peas) or simply reheating. Sometimes it’s obvious – cooking a potato for 6 mins in the microwave is bound to use a fraction of the energy used in having the oven on for an hour (unless the oven is already on for something else). The same is true if one is heating a frozen ready meal. According to research quoted on the website confusedaboutenergy.co.uk a basic rule to apply is, if the time difference between the two cooking methods is great then there will be a significant difference in the amount of energy used. This seems very obvious but perhaps it saves us getting bogged down with ‘is it better to heat my baked beans on the hob or in the microwave’ !

Washing machines

- **Daily usage.** As far as possible, wait until you have a full load and wash at the lowest temperature you can. The UK’s consumer watchdog discovered that washing at 30° produces similar results to washing at 40° but uses about 40% of the energy.

- **Maintenance.** For a washing machine that has been in use for 10 years, 80% of its carbon footprint was produced before it did its first wash in your home, ie in its manufacture and transportation. So, it’s good to take care of your machine and makes it last as long as possible. The energy saving trust (energysavingtrust.org.uk) has several tips:

1. Don't overload (while bearing in mind the above!). Some advice suggest only filling $\frac{3}{4}$ of the drum, while instructions on other appliances allow leaving just a hands width at the top of the load.

2. Clean the machine's filter every month .

3. They also recommend doing a monthly service wash, hot without clothes - hard to do after trying to be energy efficient! Perhaps a short, hotish cycle once every few months would suffice...?

Buying a new machine? When a new machine is unavoidable, bear in mind two things:

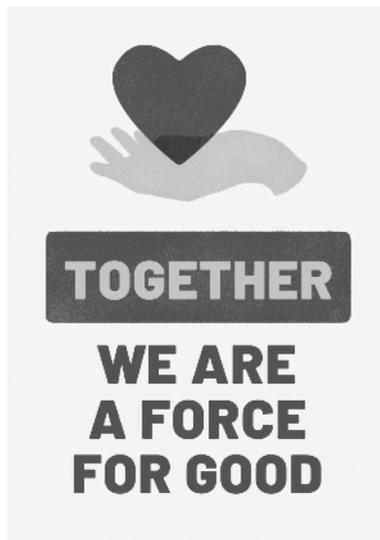
1. The energy rating, A through to G, with A being the most efficient.

2. Water usage. Our hotter, dryer weather is putting pressure on water supplies, so the less water used the better.

Tip. The women's magazine 'Good housekeeping' often comments on 'best buys' with regard to household goods, and the information is free on line, unlike 'Which?' where a subscription is required.

Useful website, recyclenow.com offers a comprehensive guide on recycling including white goods.

It's not always easy being green! Do what you can when you can, let's all keep chipping away together. It is impossible for us *not* to be making a difference if we do.



God's Word



ONE DAY, Sani who used to be a Muslim and is now involved in Bible translation in West Africa received a phone call from a Muslim man. This man said that he and four of his friends had recently experienced something extraordinary.

The five men were leaders of a militant group, and while taking 2,500 to launch an attack, the group had been confronted five times by a vision of a man in brilliant white.

The group returned to their camp, where the man in white came to the man on the phone again. The man in white held out his hands and proclaimed: 'I am Jesus; I have come that you might have salvation and bring salvation to others.' The militant leader immediately accepted Jesus as his Lord and Saviour. Incredibly, simultaneously the other leaders had also been visited by the man in white.

They discussed what they should do next, and remembered hearing about Sani, a man who talked about Jesus in their own language.

So here was this man, inviting Sani to visit this militant group. After much prayer and thought, Sani went to the camp.

There, he spoke to the 2,500 militants. Instead of preaching, Sani simply read Scripture, as the New Testament had been translated into

his (and their) language a few years earlier. After reading four chapters, Sani invited the men to accept Jesus and, amazingly, all 2,500 responded.

What a remarkable story! More and more stories of people coming to faith are emerging from translation projects around the world. Not just from Sani and his people, not just from the Flame people, but from many peoples and languages.

But these stories are only made possible through the prayers and generous support of people like you who have a passion to see lives transformed by the power of God's word..

There's no better way to mark Easter than to help others understand the life-giving message of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus. As Paul says Romans 10:14

'How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?'

This is why Bible translation is still so important. So may I encourage you to pray and support the work of Bible translators so that many more people can read about Jesus and discover the life-changing message of Easter.

James Poole

*Executive Director, Wycliffe Bible Translators
(contributed by Jennifer Friend)*

Holy Days in March

MARCH BEGINS with St David's day, the patron saint of Wales, and this year it is immediately followed by Ash Wednesday on the 2nd. The 1st is therefore Pancake Tuesday, although its proper name is Shrove Tuesday, from the old custom of confessing sins on that day before Lent, and being shriven – absolved.

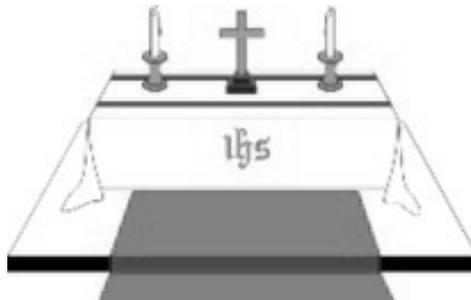
The patron saint of Ireland, Patrick, is celebrated on 17th. St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland. If you've ever been in New York on St Patrick's Day, you'd think he was the patron saint of New York as well... the flamboyant parade is full of American/Irish razzmatazz. Patrick remains the most popular of the Irish saints. The principal cathedral of New York is dedicated to him, as, of course, is the Anglican cathedral of Dublin.

Joseph of Nazareth is commemorated on 19th and the 25th, nine months before Christmas, is the Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Mid-Lent Sunday – Mothering Sunday – is on 27th.

I have written before about our northern saints, , and this month we remember Chad, 672 who was educated on Lindisfarne before becoming Bishop of Lichfield, and Cuthbert, 687 who was Bishop of Lindisfarne and on his death buried there. But subsequently to avoid Danish invaders, Cuthbert's body was deposited in various monasteries around the north of England and southwest Scotland. Finally, in 999, Cuthbert was allowed to rest in Durham, where a Saxon church was built over his shrine.

Colin Perkins



The night sky

THERE ARE places in the world where the night sky is so dark and the air so transparent, stars shine with a special brilliance all the way down to the horizon. The dome of the sky becomes very apparent and the Milky Way is immediately obvious. In our damp and cloudy climate it is not so easy to see the Milky Way so instead of the splendour of the heavens we talk about the weather which is perhaps understandably a British obsession. However, for many of us it is not the weather but artificial lighting that prevents us from seeing the Milky Way and how many of us have actually seen it?

Yes, of course lighting is useful but do we need so much? And how often is it badly directed. For example, a light that shines in all directions and particularly from the direction we want to see just dazzles. Our pupils shrink and all grows darker. And what good is that? A badly directed light can be worse than no light at all, energy is wasted and we are blinded too and so much light goes up into the sky consigning the stars to oblivion.

However, the council in Alnwick should be congratulated for having the old sodium lamps which

illuminated so indiscriminately replaced with the new LED lamps which are not only more efficient at converting electricity into light but direct it exclusively downwards where it is needed. We can now see the road beneath our feet so much better. One can see very nicely the difference from the air. If we ever get the chance to fly again we may notice how many urban roads are traced out by ribbons of yellow sodium lights while the road itself remains quite invisible. On the other hand with modern LED lamps, it is only the road that stands out. Is it not absurd that we can see the sodium street lamps from the air?

Since the installation of the LED lamps and to my great satisfaction I have indeed noticed how much darker the sky above our house has become. Nevertheless, in Alnwick as elsewhere the remaining problem is badly designed or merely badly directed security lighting. For example, sometimes I am on High Hobberlaw late in the evening looking towards the Lionheart trading estate. What I see is a blaze of light shining at straight at me. So what good is a security light in the Lionheart trading estate lighting up High Hobberlaw? And it is not only a problem with commercial properties.

How often have you been out walking or driving when you are badly dazzled by someone's outside light shining right in your face. I sometimes think that the best place a crook can hide is underneath a security light, anyone looking in their direction will just see is a bright light surrounded by blackness. So please, anyone with outside lighting think about where it is pointing and do your bit to keep the night sky dark. This will also benefit wildlife. People tell me they have heard birdsong in the middle of the night. Why are birds singing at night? Proper sleep is vitally important for all of us including animals. Especially damaging is the very white light provided by LED lamps and also the bluer light from screens so no screens before bed. So do employ LED lamps; they are indeed more efficient but switch them off if they are not needed. One of the unfortunate consequence of lighting that is cheaper to run is that more is wasted. I suppose that is true for a lot of things. For this reason it is suggested that more efficient lighting does not actually save electricity in practice.

To end I just want to mention the recent talk by the astronomer and science writer Stuart Clark. He talked about his early childhood challenge which was to see the Great Nebula in Andromeda. This was after learning that it was the most distant object visible to the unaided eye. Eventually he succeeded, a galaxy two and a half million light years away. That is the light has taken two and a half million years to reach us. Perhaps some of you might try this, I can see it from my back garden in Alnwick so you should be able to too (spectacles allowed!) so let us keep the sky dark if we can. It would be a shame if the light travelled all this way and nobody could see it.

A note on fluorescent lamps. They generally give a slightly warmer glow than LED lamps but are not quite as efficient. More importantly is the need to dispose of them carefully so that the mercury vapour they contain is not released into the air. The recycling centre has a bin specially reserved for them.

Stanley Trafford



St. Michael's C of E Primary School

Head Teacher: Mr G Johnston MEd NPQH
01665 602850

Howling Lane
Alnwick



Colegio Español del Año

British Values

What does 'British values' mean?

'Fundamental British values' comprise:

democracy

the rule of law

individual liberty

mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs,
and for those without faith.

At St Michael's we:

- enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- enable students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of Britain
- encourage students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely
- enable students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in Britain
- further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation for and respect for their own and other cultures
- encourage respect for other people
- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in Britain
- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

We are proud of our British Values work displayed around school.



Real Easter Eggs

FOR THE first time since the pandemic began, churches and communities across the UK will be coming together to celebrate Easter as restrictions are relaxed. So, no wonder that the theme for the Real Easter Egg this year is 'Let's Celebrate'!

The Real Easter Egg was created in 2010 as a way for churches, groups and individuals to share the Easter story while supporting Fairtrade. 12 years on, it has a network of thousands of churches and supports. More than three million people have read the Easter Stories it produces, and it has raised more than £320,000 for good causes.

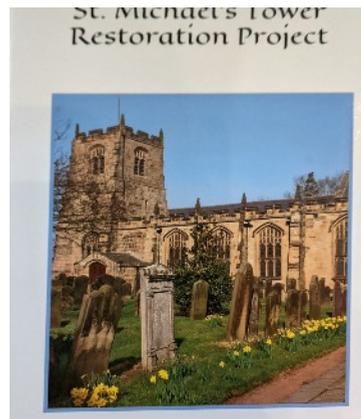


This year, you can also reach out to UK families facing hardship by donating to food banks through the Real Easter Egg's new foodbank scheme.

All Real Easter Eggs are made of Fairtrade chocolate and come with an Easter story in the box. The stories range from simple guides to 24-page activity book versions with a prize competition worth £200. They are Palm oil free and plastic free.

Because of the continued effects of the pandemic, it is more important than ever that we find ways to share the Easter story in 2022 and support producers. The Real Easter Egg is a proven way to do this. More details at www.realeasteregg.co.uk

ST. MICHAEL'S TOWER AND RESTORATION PROJECT is an A4 hardbacked book illustrating the project and listing the names of the donors and trusts that supported it. The 1st edition of ten was rapidly spoken for and because of concessions made by the printers raised £75 + Gift Aid for the project. It is available to order for £25 before the end of March. There is a specimen copy in church and an order form. Orders can also be made by contacting Jean Darby on 07975501596.



Christians Together In Alnwick



“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Psalm 133 v1).

In Alnwick we are blessed to have a well established sense of fellowship and cooperation between the various churches in our town, under the banner of Christians Together in Alnwick. Here’s a brief resume of events and activities over the past year, provided by CTiA chair Ruth Bull:

Lent Lunches were online due to Covid, but well attended, and £546 was raised and divided between Christian Aid, CAFOD and Ignite. *This year’s lunches are back in St James’s Centre, starting on Thursday 3rd March – open to all, not just church members!*

Christian Aid Week was also different from usual but included a successful plant stall in Alnwick market, and a total of £2948.65 was raised from this and other activities in the community. *In 2022, Christian Aid Week will take place from 15th to 21st May.*

A 24 Hour Prayer rota was held over Pentecost weekend, including opening and closing prayer events online. **Prayer for Alnwick** has continued as a regular shared ecumenical expression of prayer throughout the year.

Ignite was successfully launched, as the new working name for ‘Contagious’ youth work, supported by CTiA and individual donors. Around 20 young people take part in youth ‘cell’ groups – online during restrictions, but now happily meeting in person. *More activities are planned for 2022.*

Church Stalls in the Market Place was a new initiative, with several of our churches taking turns to host the charity stall with great success, and information leaflets about all the churches in the town were available. It has been good to have a Christian presence in the Market Square enabling us to be able to talk with locals and visitors alike.

Churches and Heritage Open Days was a great success with the Baptist, Methodist, St Pauls, St James’s and St Michael’s churches all open. The

footfall was good, with a mix of local residents and visitors. *New for 2022: an updated edition of the 'Inspired Alnwick' churches heritage trail leaflet – copies will be available via the Tourist Information Centre.*

Spanish Walkers on their way to COP26 in Glasgow were hosted at St James's for breakfast and the Methodist and St Michael's churches provided packed lunches.

Remembrance Day was coordinated as usual by the Town Council and supported by our churches and other community organisations. A wreath was laid at the War Memorial on behalf of Christians Together in Alnwick.

Christmas was again an opportunity for a great collective effort. This included: over 750 stars made with various craft materials, packed and distributed round the town; Nativity cribs placed in at least 20 shops, promotion of information about Christmas services in the Cryer and a greetings card handout; and Christmas market stall, which raised £208 for HospiceCare Northumberland. *Advance notice: our next Christmas theme will be 'doves' – and all will be welcome to take part.*

Alnwick Food Bank continues to be supported by all churches, with increased need throughout the year our efforts are greatly required and appreciated.

Week for the Prayer of Christian Unity was a very successful time of shared prayer between the churches.

Despite the constraints of COVID we have managed to accomplish so much together. We look forward to working together in unity in these and other ways during 2022!

CTIA has a website: <https://www.christianstogetherinalnwick.co.uk/> and is also on Facebook.

Andrew Duff

Your sacrifices have saved lives

THE BISHOP of London, Sarah Mullally, thanked front line workers, parish-
es, and all who have made sacrifices to help protect one another from
Covid-19, as England recently began to move away from ‘plan B’ restric-
tions.

Bishop Sarah, who chairs the Church of England’s Covid Recovery
Group, said: “When the first measures to curb the spread of Covid-19 were
introduced in March 2020, few would have imagined that we would still be
making adaptations to the way we live our lives – including our worship – two
years on. It has been a very challenging time.

“People have made huge sacrifices to protect one another – not only
those they know and love but strangers they might never meet. We’ve learnt
again as society something of what it means to love our neighbour, as Jesus
taught.”

The Computer Swallowed Grandad!

The computer swallowed Grandad!
Yes! Honestly! It’s true!
He pressed Control and Enter –
And disappeared from view!

I went to Mr Google
My searches to refine
His reply was in the negative,
‘Nothing found’ was Google’s line.

It devoured him completely
The thought just makes me squirm!
He must have caught a virus
Or been swallowed by a worm!

So, if inside your inbox
My Grandad you should see –
Please copy, scan, and paste him
And send him back to me!

I’ve searched through the recycle bin
And files of every kind;
I’ve even searched the internet
But nothing did I find.

By Nigel Beeton

Look at You

LENT ENCOURAGES us to examine how we're getting on. It's especially useful for people who have been practising Christians for some time. We're used to saying prayers, going to church and trying to express our faith in action, but the routine may have become a bit jaded. We would like to beef it up, but the very busyness of living gets in the way.

Self-examination doesn't demand grovelling or self-abasement or flagellation. It means going into the open space of the wilderness with Jesus and trying to imagine what He was facing, as He prepared Himself "in the power of the Spirit" to embark on His life's work.

What might His temptations mean for us here and now? They offered Him short cuts. Turning stones into bread could solve the world's poverty gap in a stroke. It would relieve us of our responsibility to combine generosity with ingenuity and put right the world's grotesque inequalities. Jesus responded to that temptation by quoting scripture, "Human beings cannot live on bread alone". It speaks volumes for the 21st Century.

Then Jesus was tempted to do a deal with the devil, on the pretext that collaboration would deliver results. "God alone is due our homage", was His rebuff, quoting scripture again. Since everyone worships something or someone, it would be a valuable exercise to consider carefully what or who takes pride of place in our schedule. It's a tough one. What do we love most, and do we need to adjust our priorities?

Magic was the next option. Jump off the temple roof and you'll be OK. Jesus dismissed this offer with the words, "Don't put God to the test". While that stunt wouldn't appeal to many Christians, there's a breed of phoney preachers today who promise financial success and perfect health to their followers.

Others reduce the Gospel to the single word, 'love', as though acquiring a sunny disposition could solve humanity's problems. The definition of love in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13, suggests something quite different. That Chapter could provide the whole agenda for Lent and beyond.

The Ven John Barton

Bookish memories!

ISN'T IT strange how some new experiences can bring back the past as if it was just yesterday?

Recently, I was interested to see a TV programme advertised about Jay Blades (In case you don't know, Jay is the Foreman of the Repair Shop) and his target of becoming able to read a bedtime story to his daughter. I watched that and it was quite something to discover that this highly skilled and likeable person went to square one in order to learn to read.

That took me way back (about 40 years I think) to my flat in North Shields when I had some time on my hands in the evenings. I volunteered to be trained as an adult literacy tutor, and embarked on the road to help people.

Just as an aside, the scheme was started because educational authorities believed that the War (WWII) had affected youngsters whose learning was interrupted by them being sent to safety in rural areas, so they missed out on being taught to read. Well, they were totally taken aback when the 'flood gates opened' and a pretty big number of people were found to be lacking in literacy skills. That's where I and my fellow tutors came in.

I remember in particular one training session where we were

introduced to an experienced tutor and another man – when they walked into the room, we were impressed by the smart appearance of one of the two, and warmed to the friendly personality of the other. We had judged wrongly! The smart fellow was the one who had needed help, and the other was his tutor. The 'smart' one was astonished when we said that we thought he was the tutor; he had worked for many years in a local shipbuilding firm, and was well-thought-of as being sensible and fair so got elected to the Union Committee. BIG PROBLEM –he couldn't read, so needed to get help in order to understand the written word –much Trades Union business is confidential so he couldn't ask workmates for help. A hard row to hoe – but he did it!

It may well be that things are different now, but I don't think so. One of my clients was a lovely young man who worked on the Fish Quay. He wanted to learn to drive but needed to be able to read the highway code. His main outside interest was live theatre so each week we would work together on some words and sentences from 'The Stage'. What I discovered was that he was the youngest in a big family (about 12 children), so there was no time for anyone to sit with him to learn; instead he was read to at bedtime. I later found out that he was the 10th from the family being helped by the scheme.

Some of the ways that people get around it is by buying the same newspaper as the others (photos are best) and joining in with talk about the news. When shopping, its best to buy canned foods with a picture of the contents – maybe some stores could help here by not just labelling stuff as ‘basics’. Imagine planning beans on toast then finding that you’ve opened a tin of potatoes! Something that compounds this is if a person has always struggled because of having ‘word blindness’ or being dyslexic.

I recall one of my groups of new IT trainees; when, during induction. I asked if any had problems I should know about, one lad put his hand up and said ‘yes’ I’m dyslexic. I checked and found that he had been to a

special school for this but, sadly, when he transferred to High School the records got mislaid. As a result, he got no help with this during his teenage years. All ended up well though, he took the electronics route through CGLI and was given dispensation by our external assessor to have spelling errors in written tests. I lost touch but I met him one day and was glad to hear that he had a PhD. Well done, bonny lad.

If you haven’t seen the TV programme, have a look – it may be an eye-opener for you. Please also – think about how maybe you could help to give someone else the pleasure of being able to read for themselves.

JDD

Messy Church at St Michael’s

WE MEET at the church at 11a.m. on the third Saturday of each month. We begin with a Bible-based story, followed by several craft activities, and then have a light lunch together, finishing at about 12.30. Our target age-range is around 2-10, but we are flexible, and younger children especially are catered for.

An adult must stay with all children throughout. If you know a family who might be interested please feel free to invite them to join us.

Dates for 2022 are:

March 19th April 16th May 21st June 18th July 16th August: no meeting
Thereafter to be arranged

Any alterations will be notified on Facebook.



Christian Aid Week 2022

May 15th -21st

We have water! Let's use it well.

ARE YOU a seed planter, a plant grower, a producer of lovely flowers or veg? If the answer is 'yes' please would you plant a few extra seeds or take a few extra cuttings this spring, to sell at this year's Christian Aid plant stall? Every penny we can make is so very much needed.

This year Christian Aid are focusing on areas of the world that are so badly affected by drought, due to changing weather patterns, that growing food is becoming harder and harder. Let's share the water we have to nurture plants in our gardens and on our windowsills so that others are able to produce their most basic needs. Let's grow because they can't, let's grow and sell so that money we make will enable our neighbours abroad to buy seeds which are drought resistant, dig deep wells and pay for teachers who can share knowledge of innovative ways of farming in these new, difficult conditions.

Sue Wiltshire

Lent lunches All are most welcome

Thankfully, we are now able to return once again to meeting up together for lent lunches. We will meet in St James's church hall every Thursday between 12- 1.30pm for soup, bread and cheese and a cup of tea or coffee. Please do come along and enjoy being with friends. (As before, there is a suggested donation of £3.50 or whatever you feel able to afford)

Please see below for dates and host churches .

3rd March: Alnwick Baptist Church

10th March: St Paul's

17th March: St Michael's

24th March: Methodist Church

31st March: St James Shilbottle

7th April: St James's Alnwick

N.B. All sessions take place in St James's church hall, Pottergate.

Christians Together Coffee Mornings

at

St. James's Church Centre
Pottergate, Alnwick, NE66 1JW

We warmly welcome you to join us for coffee, a chat and
'Thought for the day' between 10.00 and 11.30am
on the following dates

1st March

9th May

7th March

23rd May

4th April

25th April

Children Welcome

Could you contribute?

We need more people to write for Gateway, so do you have any stories, memories, jokes, hopes or poems which you could share?

Contributions should be in by halfway through the month for the next issue.

Please send to me at colinbperkins@talktalk.net (don't miss the 'b') or to 6 Ravensmede, NE66 2PX.

Many thanks.

Colin Perkins

Smile

‘It’s a glorious thing’

MANY READERS may have already heard of Mick Fleming having seen him on BBC news in 2020.

Mick, known as Pastor Mick, works with Father Alex Frost on the streets of Burnley with people whose lives and circumstances have resulted in them being in the most desperate of situations; people with drug and alcohol addiction, people in debt, people with no hope or homes, people who, even before the pandemic, were struggling but whose lives have been made so much harder by the isolation that Covid brought with it. Mick Fleming works with them and for them relentlessly. He can be found at night handing out hot meals, food bags and clothing. He helps with debt, directs people to health care, visits homes where basic essentials are needed, such as a freezer or a bed for a child. He can do this because he has been where these people are, he knows what desperate means, he knows what it feels like.

Following two horrible, cruel events in childhood, he turned to drugs and alcohol to drown his pain. Money was needed to finance these habits and so dealing drugs and debt collecting became his way of life. He has twice been arrested for murder and two serious attempts have been made on his life. His home was raided by police on several occasions, looking for drugs and guns. He says that he expected to die young. It seems that God had other plans.

A sudden and dramatic realisation of what he had become led him to point the gun, which had been intended to harm another dealer, at himself but though he fired it, the gun did not go off. The emotional breakdown which followed found him sectioned in Burnley psychiatric unit. Despite the fact that the people he met there were also in their own world of pain, he was shown great kindness by them and felt strangely at home. A visiting priest talked and prayed with him and slowly Mick started to face a new direction. Eventually, a chance meeting led him to university where he achieved a theology degree, overcoming great difficulties due to his dyslexia and dyspraxia as well as his lack of early education.

And so today, this man, who has known and been at the centre of an underworld of drugs and guns, violence and fear, works for the charity ‘Church on the Street Ministries’. He does not feel that the work he does is about penance. ‘It’s the complete opposite’ he says ‘it’s a privilege to serve the people of Burnley, it’s a glorious thing’.

Sue Wiltshire

If you would like to read more about Mick Fleming, please google ‘Pastor Mick BBC news’

Who's Who

VICAR

Vacant

CLERGY WITH PERMISSION TO OFFICIATE

The Rev'd Canon Sue Allen 01665 605361

The Rev'd Canon Dr Philip Bourne
01665 574008

The Rev'd Robert Chavner 01665 574008

The Rev'd Gilly Maude 01665 603460

The Rev'd Colin Perkins 01665 510445

The Rev'd Martin Roff 01665 602207

The Rev'd Natasha Schemanoff
01665 603815

The Rev'd Martin Turner 01665 603815

The Rev'd Canon Dennis Winter
01665 602658

READERS

John Cooke 01665 830419

Annette Playle 01665 606902

READER EMERITUS

Bill Callaghan 01665 602348

CHURCHWARDENS

Anne Blades 01665 602020

Pat Taylor 01665 603811

CHURCHWARDEN EMERITUS

Albert Brown 01665 602700

ASSISTANT CHURCHWARDEN

Pat Tweed 01665 479280

PCC TREASURER

Richard Dale 01665 606804

PCC SECRETARY

Rosie Buxton 01665 604830

ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER

Susan Trafford 01665 606180

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Patty Everitt 07768 869 551

ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER

Vacant

THE PARISH SECRETARY 01665 602797

Lorna Gilroy is in the Office on
Thursday mornings. E-mail
stmichaelandstpaul@btconnect.com

MOTHERS' UNION Branch Leader

Val Hawker 01665 602348

(Mobile) 07732431056

COMMUNION

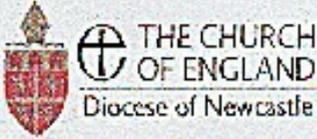
for the SICK and HOUSEBOUND
can be arranged by contacting
Pat Taylor 01665 603811

BAPTISMS and WEDDINGS

Please apply to the Churchwardens

To hire the PARISH HALL

Phone Mariana on 07562 418837 or E-mail bookstmichael@gmail.com



Staying connected during this pandemic

At the Cathedral

<https://www.newcastle.anglican.org/coronavirus/live.streaming>

Newcastle Cathedral ministry team

<https://www.facebook.com/NewcastleCathedral>. Facebook live stream of morning prayer led from home by one of the ministry team daily Monday to Friday at 8.30 am <https://tinyurl.com/NclCathedral>

Subscribe to their channel on YouTube for notifications of the Daily Reflections (also Monday to Friday).

At St Michael's Alnwick

The Church is now open for private prayer from 9 am to 4 pm. Entry through the Duke's Door.

On Sundays at 8.30 am, 10 am and 6 pm, we are able to worship in person in church. The 10 am Eucharist will still be live-streamed for all those joining us from home. On Wednesdays there is a celebration of the Eucharist at 10.15 am.

For other services see page 2.

Copies of **The Gateway** can be obtained from St Michael's Church or ordered for delivery in **small** or **large print**

Phone The Parish Office 602797 leave a message or E-mail
stmichaelandstpaul@btconnect.com

The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Church of England nor of the editorial committee

Gateway is Desktop-Published by St Michael's Magazine Group

For more information on St Michael's Church please visit our website at www.alnwickanglican.com