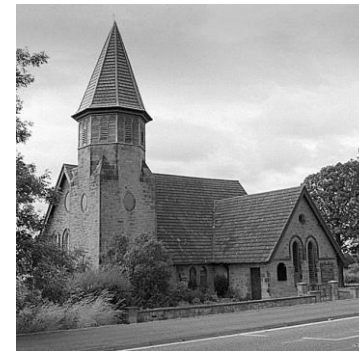


St George's, Widdrington
& Great Bavington
United Reformed Churches
Newsletter



Website: stgeorgesurcmorpeth.org

A Message from our Minister, Revd Julian Sanders

Dear Friends,

**“Too long a sacrifice,
can make a stone of a heart.
O when may it suffice?”** -*W.B. Yeats from “Easter 1916”*

Despite its title, the sacrifice Yeats speaks of in this poem is not a religious one, but a political one, as he remembers the lives of those who were killed in the Easter Rising of 1916. It recalls a week in Ireland’s history where ordinary people stepped out of their everyday lives and took up arms to fight for an independent Ireland. Over a period of six days from 24 April 1916, more than 450 people died and 2600 injured in the battles that ensued on the streets of Dublin.

Yeats in his poem questions whether the sacrifice of those who lost their lives was worth it in the end. He asks the question “was it needless death after all?” And that for us is surely a question that hovers around our lips in this Easter period.

Certainly some of the followers of Jesus were hoping that he would be a Messiah who would rise up and gain independence for Israel from Roman rule. But when questioned by Pilate, Jesus insists that his Kingdom is not of this world, and the Kingdom that is established by his death will have no political or geographical borders. His will be a kingdom of peace where the citizens will no longer be ruled by the power of sin and death.

When we, like those first disciples, look for signs of this Kingdom, but see only more bloodshed and greater division in our world today, we surely have to ask ourselves “was it needless death after all?”

In the poem Yeats takes us from the streets of Dublin, to an idyllic country scene that is supposed to remind us of the peacefulness of the natural world – a stream, a horse and rider and “birds that range from cloud to tumbling cloud”. But instead of the changeless peace of the countryside, Yeats throws up a landscape in which nature is full of movement and transformation. And in the midst of the stream, in the midst of all this movement stands a stone, whose presence does little to make an impact on this landscape. Ange Mlinko, commenting on this poem says “There is no definitive end to sacrifices that may be made because change is constant, peace cannot ever be a steady state, and more sacrifice is always a possibility.” We are reminded that there is more to the Easter story. We are disciples and followers of Jesus, and his instruction to his disciples is “take up your cross *daily* and follow me” (Luke 9:23). Jesus invites us not to be crucified, but each day to pick up our cross and carry it.

We cannot accept Jesus’ sacrifice and think that that’s enough. We are each called to continue to take up our cross again and again every day – we might get

fed up, or bored, or despondent – but it doesn’t happen any other way. Peace cannot ever be a steady state there is always more to be done.

We celebrate this Easter the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross, and the Kingdom he established. Let us also consider the daily sacrifices that we are called to make again and again in order to bring ever closer that Kingdom of Peace.

With every blessing, **Julian**

An update, thanks and a challenge, by Sue Rutherford

Hello to those who think I’ve faded away somewhere or just disappeared because I have been quiet of late, certainly for me.

In July of last year John Johnson, my first husband, father of my children, was sent home after a six week stint in hospital with a terminal diagnosis. John and I became friends again sometime in 2005 and over these last 15 years we have been supportive of each other whenever necessary. From October 2019 I accompanied John to hospital appointments while the medical staff were trying to get full diagnoses. It transpired that John had another cancer, his 4th, with some spread to his lungs. However John also had chronic kidney disease caused by severe high blood pressure first discovered and treated when he was 32 years old. The kidney failure caused heart failure and these meant that the new cancer could not be removed because John was too frail. He was sent home on 3rd July with the proviso there was someone to take care of him. Our daughter Sally and I started to take turns to stay with John, every 2 or 3 days. It soon was clear it would be much easier for one person to stay there permanently so on the 3rd August 2020 I moved into the spare bedroom of John’s house at Stobhill Manor, Morpeth. I took my little dog Roxy with me. John did enjoy having her around and Roxy was very protective towards him especially when he became more unwell.

John did improve in strength a little in the late summer and early autumn so I started to wonder if some degree of independent living with help might be possible. This was not to be.

From his discharge in July John had to attend Freeman hospital three times each week for kidney dialysis.

This really took its toll on John and eventually he became weaker and weaker. Our son Adam, who lives with me in Ellington and had been working from home

since last March came to stay at John's on 29th November. Our GP said this was necessary so Covid restrictions could be crossed. It was a huge benefit to me to have Adam there to help and John loved having our son there to chat to and to watch cricket with. Adam also brought one of his guitars with him and John loved evenings when Adam played to us both. These were special times. John's dialysis sessions were my times off duty. I am in a bubble with Adele Elkin whom many of you know. Adele and I would go out after the ambulance had collected John for dialysis. We'd usually take Roxy out for walks in these occasions. This was really important for me, it was my break.

John once said he didn't think he'd see Christmas. He did. He actually was fairly animated for some of the day. Sally, her husband Dec and their daughter Lydia visited John on Christmas morning. Lydia and her Granda pulled a cracker together, Lydia got the gift, Granda John got the paper hat! That was the last time they saw each other but I think, I hope that Lydia will always have a happy memory of Granda John's last Christmas. Lydia is six years old. John also saw in the New Year, small glass of whisky in hand. Adam and I were ready for bed long before John seemed to be. I realise now why he was hanging on to the moment, the event.

On Friday 8th January 2021 John was placed on the End of Life Pathway. He had, a few days before, agreed to having a hospital bed put into his room. John's own bed was a king size, very difficult to nurse someone on a bed like that so the hospital bed was a blessing; it actually arrived on that Friday. John's life with us ended just after 3am on Thursday 14th January. Adam and I were with him. His brother Alan and our daughter Sally were on their way. The end came very quickly, quietly and peacefully.

John's main wish was to die at home, not in hospital. I had promised him in July last year I would do everything in my power to see that happened. Thank God I was given the strength to do that. Thank God for Adam being able to be there as a support for both his parents. Thank God for family, both John's and mine, my siblings always saw John as their brother-in-law and friend.

Thank God for Adele, my bubble person, my support, my friend and my rock. John often told Adele she was a brick. Thank God for Church, always in the background of my life. I did feel awful that I couldn't attend services when Church reopened for that short time and that I had to stop being involved in the midweek service, WOW. I also dropped out of the eldership for a while.

I want to say thank you to Julian for conducting John's funeral service on 28th January and the burial at Felton. John is buried in the village he came from, where his parents and the brother he never knew are buried. John had requested his service to be at St. George's Church as that is where we were married, where our children were baptised and went to Sunday school .

John said that even after our divorce he was always made welcome by Church members when he attended Church events. Thank you all for that. Thank you to Ken for the music at the service, John had selected the hymns, the entrance and exit songs and the reading. He was an organised man. Thank you to Teresa Benkabeb-House and Margaret Brock for stewarding on the day. Special thanks to Margaret as my elder who supported me throughout this time and took over organising the Wednesday services.

I thank you all and I thank God for you all, you are my Church family. I am going to start getting involved again in Church life. You may be wondering about my call to ministry. I still feel called by God however it may be that my ministry will be along a different path than the one I first intended to follow. When life is more settled again I will know more of what is to be. One thing I have definitely decided to do is to raise money for Macmillan nurses. John had requested donations in lieu of flowers to go to cancer research uk. That was understandable. We had such a wonderful MacMillan nurse assigned to us. Their contact continues as long as we need it, it is a reassuring thing to know. I want to put something back. MacMillan have a big fundraising initiative this year. The MightyHike. I have decided I want to take part in the Northumberland Coastal Hike in July. Adele is going to join me in this endeavour. I/we will be looking for sponsors. So to sum up. I am still here. I will re-emerge in time. I am grateful, thankful to everyone and to our loving God for all that is provided for us.

God's blessings to you all. ***Sue Rutherford***

NOTES OF NORTHERN SYNOD MEETING HELD ON 13 MARCH, 2021

Synod met online via Zoom (Standing Orders having constituted it as a Meeting in the current Covid situation.) on 13 March, 2021.

The Moderator, David Herbert, welcomed everyone, especially our ecumenical visitors, and explained that the theme for the day was 'Listening and Waiting'.

Revd Julian Sanders conducted our opening worship.

Revd Joan Grindrod-Helms spoke of the comings and goings of ministers and retirements plus news of Northern Synod's students, which included our own Louise Sanders. Condolences were expressed to Alison Mills for her mother, Freda Pagan. Amongst this year's birthdays mentioned were Julian (50), Stuart and Ron (70).

Zoom counted 69 participants for the Synod meeting and we were allowed 'break out' rooms of five or six people. The feedback from these discussions on such questions as "How is your church listening and waiting?" may be seen in the Meeting's minutes on the Northern Synod website.

Sandy Ogilvie, Convener for Children and Youth Work Committee, spoke of handing on the light to the next generations, using the illustration of the Old Testament story of Eli and Samuel. The Committee are working towards a five year development plan to help churches engage with children and young people.

Revd Ron Forster, Ministries and Development Committee Convener, emphasized that there is a great need for a Learning and Development Officer and it was now proposed to make a full-time lay appointment.

Revd David Grosch-Miller (Trust Convener) said that investment income had held up reasonably well over the last year and the Trust could help congregations which were struggling because of loss of income.

Synod supports the Trust to commit to meet the long-term funding required for the Ministers' Pension Fund as part of a whole church solution.

Carried unanimously.

There was much discussion regarding the proposal for a "Redcar Missional Community House" – a radical new approach to church in the community. Some members expressed excitement at this proposal, others queried the expense.

Alison Mills asked where the support was for Amble. Resolution: Synod affirms the proposal to establish a residential missional community in Redcar.

Carried 39 in favour, 8 abstentions.

We were reminded that anyone can join in the 9.00 am prayers each weekday.

Children's and Youth Work Advisers, Hannah Middleton and John Stephenson spoke of their Heroes and Villains pack, of the safe environment for parents and carers - feed, sleep, play, change. They are hoping to run training for children's and youth work volunteers in the Autumn.

The Youth Assembly was unable to go ahead and they are planning a Holy Week mini podcast series aimed at 11-14 year olds. Resolution carried: Synod endorses the creation of up to four part-time Pioneer Youth Workers for an initial period of two years.

Speaking for the Synod Executive, the Moderator said that General Assembly would be held online this year, 9-12 July. Synod will be held on 16 October, either online or physically at St John's, Kingston Park (to be confirmed).

Synod concurred with the decision of the SENE Area Meeting, accepting the oversight ministry of Revd Paul Golightly, Methodist, at Elsdon Avenue LEP, Seaton Delaval, whilst the pastorate is in vacancy.

A day in the life of a Church Related Community Work Minister (CRCW) was described by Alison Dalton, who said that God calls the right person for the right place at the right time!

Joyce Calcraft

CHRISTIAN AID

This year's Christian Aid Week will be 10 – 16 May. Some of you are regular collectors, but were not able to do so last year due to lockdown. This year we still have last year's envelopes and the date will be the same this year. The envelopes WILL be delivered this year, but NOT collected. The envelopes have CA's web- site address on them, so that money can be donated online. There is also a blank space on the envelope where an address can be given for those wanting to pay by cash, and they can deliver their envelopes there. We have not decided yet where the delivery areas will be, but one possibility is that the person delivering might do the area around their own home and put their address on the envelope so that the donor doesn't have far to go to give money. If they gave online it would be better, but not everyone would do that. If you are willing to deliver envelopes, please let me know and we can discuss the possibility of using your house as a drop-off point. You can contact me by phone (01670 514610) or by email jared-marg@hotmail.com

Margaret Johnson

Saving Robin's Waistline --Fundraiser

Sarah and I would like to thank everyone who supported our fundraising effort, we have raised about £200.

Joan

Memories of Min

Minnie Watson Pollard Brown

10 January 1934 - 20 February 2021

A dear friend to me and to many in the present congregation she truly was an exceptional lady, an "old fashioned" ministers wife who had her finger on the pulse of the church quietly knowing everyone and making everyone feel special.

We were all young then, (if not in age, at heart) or so it seemed, the church was full of children when we arrived in Morpeth in 1974 and St. Georges welcomed us in.

Min was an Anaesthetist by Profession, who managed her work, family and church activities with amazing calm and a twinkle in her eye, always ready to bake and swap recipes, some of which I still use.

Min's hobbies were Spinning, Weaving, the most beautiful Knitting, also Music. My thoughts and prayers are with her family, I know they have lots of very special memories to see them through this sad time.



Joan Cooper

Min

Outgoing, warm and welcoming, Min was there and ready to bring members and friends into St. George's life.

Perceptive, insightful and active she was the very person to bring folks together and contribute leadership to thought and action - the Coffee Club still alive and active was Min's baby. She broke the mold of Minister's wives running "ladies groups" and Work parties (for The Sale)

She gave much time and energy to the life and energy of St. George's - all this on top of a demanding career and bringing up a young family.

Min was a life enhancer, definitely not a life-denier and as such enriched the life of St. George's and Morpeth.

A personal note!

Min and I were in constant contention. I met her sister Laura through Min mentioning that Laura was a Soroptimist (an International women's organisation.) in Norway. We met, we got on, we had common concerns. She took part in S I Morpeth things and came to our 50th Anniversary in full Norwegian Gear. Lovely. Min would make a perfect Soroptimist, Yes, she found the organisation quite tempting, but -- the Coffee Club is my creation. Why don't you join the Coffee Club? You would really enjoy it ---yes but S I has my heart. Min: we meet on Tuesday. Lis: We meet on Tuesday. Irresistible force meets Immovable object --and many a laughing sparing match ensued.

Lis Elders



I first met Min Brown more than 50 years ago when I came to Morpeth and joined St. George's Presbyterian Church, as it was in those days. I used to see her at Parents' Evenings at Goosehill School, although I never taught any of the Brown children, and at the Mid Northumberland Chorus under Michael Doswell,

where we gave concerts all over the area. She was unfailingly charming, gentle, kind and always had a smile and encouraging word. Our son Richard, and I enjoyed some friendly lunches at Churchburn Drive when we were having a sad time. She was Chairman of the Coffee Club for many years and an enthusiastic cook and baker for our events. We had Elders meetings in the Manse at Riverview and Min always provided delicious rock buns for our coffee break! I remember her with deep affection and feel privileged to have known her.

Vivien Bennett

PLANT SALE UPDATE

Following last month's item regarding the plant sale, here are further details to help you decide your requirements for this year.

Plants will be available in early to mid May from Gillian and Ken and Mary.

Please phone ahead with your orders which, depending upon COVID restrictions, can be collected from your supplier or the church car park or delivered to homes within the immediate area.

Final details will be in the May magazine.

Costs are anticipated to be as last year or by donation.



Available from Gillian and Ken - (01670 515870)

Compact alyssum, compact and trailing lobelia, marigolds, petunias, impatiens, small begonias, geraniums, cineraria, Nicotiana, Gazania

Other plants may be available at the time.

Available from Mary - (01670 829656)

various vegetables i.e. cabbage, onions, cauliflower, turnip, beans etc.

Also petunias, geraniums, violas, large marigolds, upright and trailing lobelia.

Other plants may be available at the time.

We are prepared to start taking orders from now and will operate on a 'first come, first served' basis. If you have any further queries please contact Gillian by email or on the above phone number

Gillian Irvine, Email: kdirvine@sky.com

True story My curate friend had to preach his first-ever Easter sermon, and was very nervous about it. However, he prepared hard, and when Easter day came, he strode into the pulpit and thundered through his sermon, only to crash at the closing line. He pounded the pulpit and shouted: "Yes...it is all true! Jesus rose...and then He died again! Hallelujah!"

Wordsearch for April

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! April brings us to Easter – the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ – the triumphant highlight of the Christian year. As St Paul pointed out, unless Jesus really did rise again, our faith is useless, and we may as well forget any hope of heaven or eternal life.

Passover	bread
Wine	body
Blood	betrayal
Jerusalem	Pilate
Judas	Gethsemane
Trial	crucifixion

Soldiers cross	
Nails	vinegar
Temple curtain	

Tomb	angel
Stone	risen
Gardener	Mary

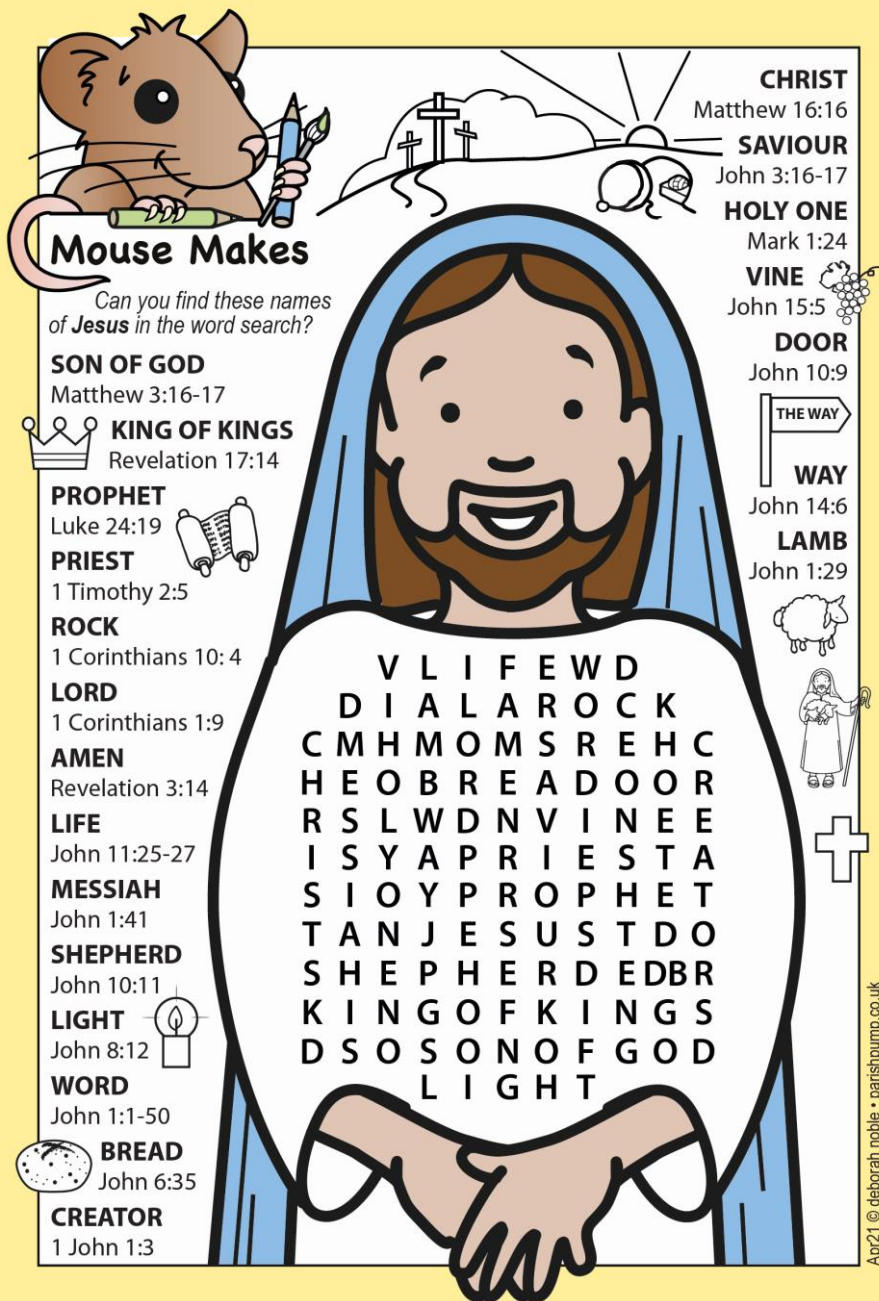
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P	M	E	E	R	U	T	A	L	N	O	N	T
A	A	R	P	A	G	A	R	D	E	N	E	R
C	R	U	C	I	F	I	X	I	O	N	E	A
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L	S	N	E	A	P	B	O	D	Y	E	T	E
E	A	T	C	R	O	S	S	N	A	I	L	S

Solution on page 20

Saying good-bye...

An inexperienced curate was sent to do a graveside burial for a homeless man with no family or friends. Not knowing where the cemetery was, he made several wrong turns and got lost. When he eventually arrived, the hearse was nowhere in sight, the backhoe was next to the open hole, and the workmen were sitting under a tree eating lunch.

When the curate looked into the open grave and even found the vault lid was already in place, he felt very guilty. The homeless man deserved something, even though it was late. And so, the curate delivered an impassioned burial service, sending the deceased into the great beyond in some style. The workmen looked on in silence, but as the curate returned to his car, he overheard one of the workmen remark: 'I've been putting in septic tanks for 20 years and I never seen anything like that!'



Ode to the Spell Checker

Eye have a spelling checker, it came with my pea sea
It plainly marques four my revue, miss steaks eye kin knot sea.
Eye strike a key and type a word and weight 4 it 2 say
Weather eye am wrong oar write it shows me strait a weigh
As soon as a mist ache is maid it nose bee fore two long
And eye can put the error rite, its rare lea ever wrong
Eye have run this poem threw it, I am shore your pleased two no
Its letter perfect awl the weigh, my chequer tolled me sew!

90 years ago, on 14th April 1931 that the first edition of the Highway Code was published in the UK.

70 years ago, on 17th April 1951 that the Peak District National Park was established. It was Britain's first national park.

Divine Intervention?

A little boy was playing outside with his mother's broom in the garden. That night his mother realised her broom was still missing and asked her son to go out and bring it in.

When the little boy confessed he was afraid of the dark, his mother tried to comfort him: 'The Lord is out there too, don't be afraid.'

Hesitantly, the little boy opened the back door and peered out. He called softly: 'Lord, please will you pass me the broom?'



A bright April morning,
A brisk April breeze,
It hops through the hedgerows,
It tickles the trees.
It dusts down the alleys,
Through houses in rows.
It whispers, it teases
where ever it goes.



And folk in the city
Lift hopeful heads high
To breath in it's freshness,
To feel it dance by.
They hear it's glad message,
The promise is clear:
The blue sky's are coming,
Springtime is here.

By Margaret Ingall.

Submitted by Patricia Gatherum

On Facebook with God

God, I'm glad you've asked to be my friend.
I can get in touch with you at any time -
Day or night, well or ill, far away or at home,
Knowing you will get my message immediately.
I can post my thoughts and my joys
And look for your reply or comment.

Thank you for adding me to your list of contacts,
Along with Jesus and the Holy Spirit,
My spiritual Facebook friends,
Connected to you always.

Lol

Submitted by Carol Dixon

				5	7		3	
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					8			3
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Sudoku Solution on page 20

Miscellaneous observations on daily life...

Marathon runners with bad footwear suffer the agony of defeat.
If you think nobody cares whether you're alive or dead, try missing a couple of mortgage payments.
In order to keep a true perspective of one's importance, everyone should have a dog to worship him and a cat to ignore him.

The trouble with doing something right the first time is that nobody appreciates how difficult it was.
The most effective way to remember your wife's birthday is to forget it once.
I ate a kid's meal at McDonald's today. His mum got really angry.

Signs found outside churches....

* Free Trip to heaven. Details Inside!
* Searching for a new look? Have your faith lifted here!
* Come work for the Lord. The work is hard, the hours are long and the pay is low. But the retirement benefits are out of this world.

P.R.E.S.S

TOTAL ELECTRICAL SOLUTIONS

- » Part & Full Rewires
- » Extra Sockets & Lights
- » Intruder Alarms
- » Security Lighting
- » Electrical Repairs-
- » Fault finding -Maintenance
- » Testing & Inspection
- » CAT 5E Data Installtions
- » CCTV Systems
- » Intruder Alarms

24hr CALL OUT

No Job to Small from Extra Socket to Rewire

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The good news about your forgetfulness

You know the scenario – you go into the lounge, and then wonder what you wanted. Or you need to make a phone call but can't find the phone. You go to the cash point and forget your pin number. Or your car keys are lost in the kitchen, but even when you find them and go shopping, you forget stuff on the list.

If at times you find yourself living in an annoying brain-fog, the good news is that it is not because you are ill or getting old. To varying extents, everyone does it.

A recent study at the University of Edinburgh has found that forgetfulness is as common in people in their 20s as it is in people in their 50s. Although some of the people in the study were worried about getting dementia, a neuropsychiatrist at the university reassured them: "People think that if you are starting to forget things – something like misplacing your keys – that is something to worry about. But it is normal."

Good reasons for forgetting things range from the fact that too much was happening in your life at the time, you were stressed about something, not paying attention to what you were doing, or just too busy thinking about something else entirely.

In praise of the afternoon nap

A short nap in the afternoon improves your memory and keeps your brain more agile. People who naps tend to speak more fluently, have greater mental agility, and remember things better than those who do not break up their day with sleep. Even a five-minute nap can offer your brain a chance to down-time and replenish itself, so that it is 'good to go' again.

If you want longer than five minutes, try to stop at 40 minutes, before you enter the deepest stage of sleep. If you do carry on, sleep for two hours, which is a full sleep-cycle. The study was published in the British Medical Journal.

We are reading more books

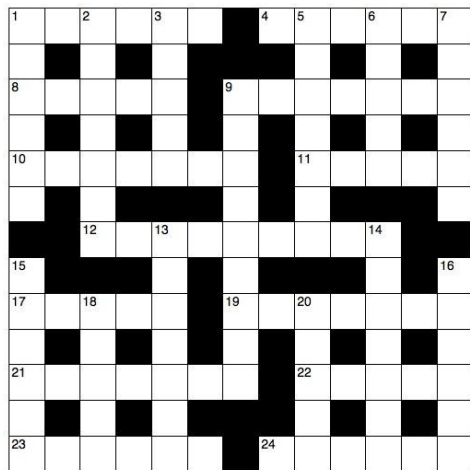
More than 200 million print books were sold in the UK last year, according to an estimate from the official book sales monitor Nielsen BookScan.

It was the first time since 2012 that the volume of physical books sold has exceeded 200million, and it was the biggest volume rise in the books market since 2007, says The Bookseller magazine.



Crossword for April

Across: 1 Relating to the whole universe (6) 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6) 8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3) 9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7) 10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7) 11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36)



(5) 12 Repossessed (Gen 14:16) (9) 17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3-4) (5) 19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Ex 34:29) (7) 21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7) 22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5) 23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6) 24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6) **Down:** 1 Coastal rock faces (Psalm 141:6) (6) 2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7) 3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5) 5 For example, the Crusades (4,3) 6 11 Across is certainly this (5) 7 He reps (anag.) (6) 9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9) 13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7) 14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7) 15 The human mind or soul (6) 16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6) 18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5) 20 Bared (anag.) (5). *Solution on page 20*

Lot's wife.....A father was reading Bible stories to his young son. 'The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city, but his wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt.'

His son looked up, concerned. 'What happened to the flea?'

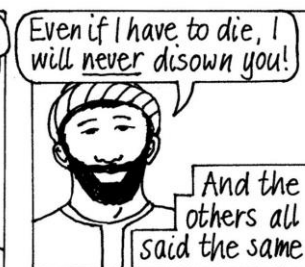
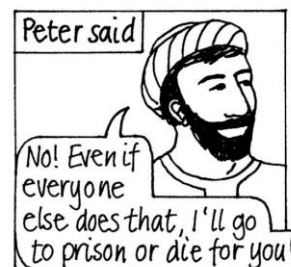
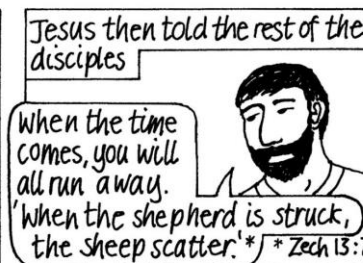
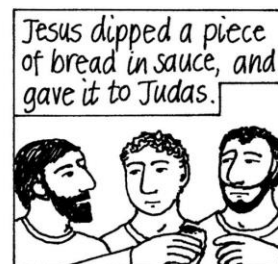
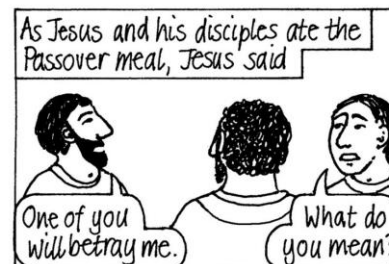
Red light ...A woman was found guilty in traffic court and when asked for her occupation she said she was a schoolteacher. The judge rose from the bench. 'Madam, I have waited years for a schoolteacher to appear before this court.' He then smiled with delight. 'Now sit down at that table and write "I will not run a red light" one hundred times.'

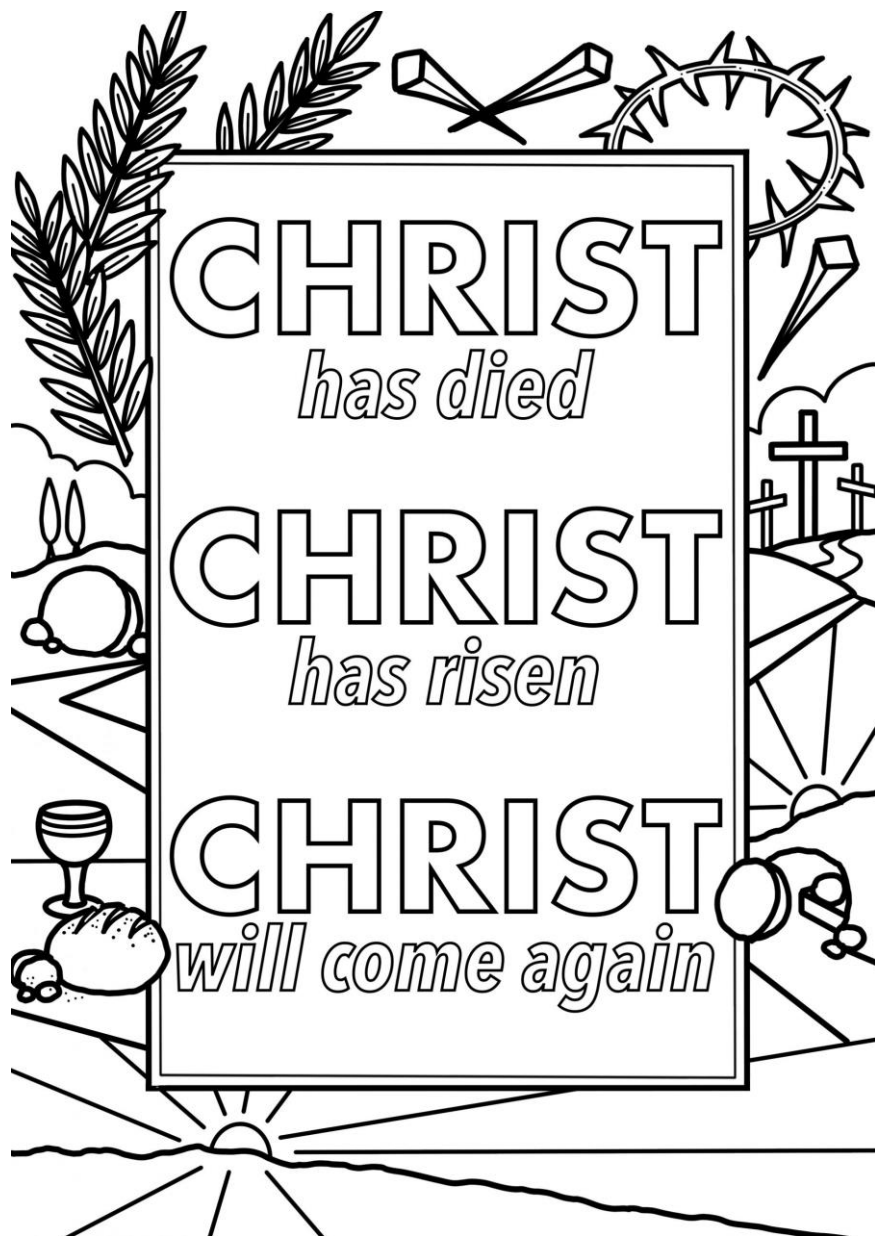
Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Matthew 26:20-25, 31-35, Mark 14:17-21, 27-31
Luke 22:22, 31-34, John 13:21-30, 36-38

The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus. One of Jesus' disciples, Judas, had accepted money from them to betray him.





Justice and Peace Refugee Project

Dear Supporter of the Justice and Peace Refugee Project

Thank you for your on-going support for the Refugee Project. The generosity of parishes like yours is what makes it possible for the Project to continue its work to support Asylum Seekers and Refugees – some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Since lockdown last summer, we have experienced a surge in registrations from Asylum Seekers across the Diocese and now that the project has reopened at the St Vincent's Support Centre in Newcastle we are supporting an increased number of clients each month who are attending for food bags. As many parishes have not yet been able to resume food collections we are finding it difficult to meet the demand for food from existing stock and are having to purchase many additional items. We understand the difficulties in collecting food items in parishes at present but anything that you can do in this direction would be very much appreciated. Some parishes have developed 'non-contact' drop off arrangements that are working well. Some have asked for a 'starting point' for an item for their parish newsletter – and a form of words for this is offered at the end of this e-mail which you may wish to alter to reflect local circumstances.

Following is the current list of items we are looking to collect. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at all. Thank you so much for your generosity.

Yours sincerely,

Sara

Sara Harris, Refugee Project Co-ordinator

Vicariate for Caritas, Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Starting point for Parish Newsletter item

The Diocesan Refugee Project reopened in December at St Vincent's Support Centre in Newcastle to provide food and other support to over 400 Asylum Seekers and Refugees each month. The project is struggling to meet the demand for food at present and is asking that parishes do what they can to assist.

For full details about the project and how you can support it please visit http://www.rcdhn.org.uk/social_concerns/justice_and_peace_refugee_new.php

or contact Sara Harris, Project Co-ordinator – sara.harris@diocesehn.org.uk

Items needed:

Tinned Tomatoes, Chickpeas (now replace tinned meat), Tinned Fish (e.g. Tuna), Biscuits (Single packets), Rice (Not microwavable, Standard sized rice bags ideally). Sugar, Other Food items (We are no longer collecting baked beans or tinned meat at the present time). Toilet rolls, Toiletries (shampoo, shower gel, soap, deodorant, and toothpaste in particular). Clothing/Footwear, Blankets and bedding sheets/covers. (trainers and coats in small men's are particularly needed). We are unable to accept duvets and pillowcases (only covers and cases). We are unable to accept these items temporarily – resuming in May. If you can spare any strong 'bags for life' or wheeled shopping bags, these are also a great help to the project and its clients! Thank you for your continued support.

Great Bavington United Reformed Church

At the time of writing (mid-March), we don't know yet when services will resume at Great Bavington URC. It may be at Easter (4 April) – possibly with an outdoor service – or it may not be until later in May. Look out for posts on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/GreatBavingtonURC> for what's happening when.

In the meantime, services continue on YouTube on Sundays from 10.30am – search for Morpeth and Area URC on YouTube to find them, or find the link on our Facebook page. Our minister, Rev Julian Sanders, can be contacted on 01670 225539, or sanders.julian@talk21.com

Nicola Bell

Solutions:

ACROSS: 1, Cosmic. 4, Thomas. 8, In his. 9, Delilah. 10, Falwell. 11, Water.

12, Recovered. 17, Sidon. 19, Radiant. 21, Centaur. 22, Broil. 23, Eleven. 24, Prison.

DOWN: 1, Cliffs. 2, Scholar. 3, Issue. 5, Holy war. 6, Moist. 7, Sphere. 9, Deliverer.

13, Candace. 14, Deacons. 15, Psyche. 16, Stolen. 18, Dance. 20, Debar.

T	O	M	B	R	Y	C	R	I	S	E	N	G
I	E	C	S	A	I	U	O	S	T	A	W	B
C	U	J	R	A	I	R	R	O	O	Y	I	E
P	M	E	E	R	U	T	A	L	N	O	N	T
A	A	R	P	A	G	A	R	D	E	N	E	R
C	R	U	C	I	F	I	X	I	O	N	E	A
A	O	S	A	V	L	N	B	E	A	V	U	Y
T	J	A	E	I	Y	A	A	R	O	L	R	A
E	U	L	G	N	L	N	T	S	E	A	O	L
M	D	E	G	E	T	H	S	E	M	A	N	E
P	A	M	G	G	T	A	B	L	O	O	D	R
L	S	N	E	A	P	B	O	D	Y	E	T	E
E	A	T	C	R	O	S	S	N	A	I	L	S

9	6	4	1	5	7	2	3	8
3	7	1	2	8	6	4	5	9
2	8	5	3	9	4	1	7	6
1	5	8	4	6	2	3	9	7
4	9	3	8	7	1	5	6	2
6	2	7	5	3	9	8	1	4
8	3	6	9	2	5	7	4	1
5	1	9	7	4	8	6	2	3
7	4	2	6	1	3	9	8	5

Widdrington United Reformed Church

PRAYING TOGETHER

During April please pray for:

People in war zones and refugees

Those suffering religious persecution (of any faith)

Victims of natural disasters

The work of relief agencies

Those suffering from Covid19 throughout the world, especially in countries where health services are less advanced. That vaccines may be fairly distributed.

Health workers, shop workers, delivery drivers, postmen and anyone else doing essential work at this time

As 'non-essential' retail and hospitality etc begin to reopen, pray for those facing the public, and for those who have lost their jobs.

Farmers and farm workers: especially those busy with lambing. Pray for a successful lambing

Researchers working on covid19 vaccine and treatments and teams working to deliver the vaccines

The elderly and those who may be particularly vulnerable to the virus. That those who have received the vaccine are now successfully protected.

The homeless

Your neighbours

"Prayer, the Churches banquet, Angels age,
God's breath in man, returning to his birth,
The soul in paradise, heart in pilgrimage,
The Christian plummet, sounding heav'n and earth" (George Herbert)

Seven days without prayer makes one weak

WIDDRINGTON CHURCH NEWS

I'd like to invite everybody to contribute information that they think might be of interest. Just give me the details **in writing** either on a piece of paper or by email to **elliemist@gmail.com** and I'll do the rest. (I'd still welcome articles though).

Perhaps you have some reflections on our situation which you'd like to share? The

Copy Date for each magazine is the Sunday prior to the 20th of the month before the next issue. If you miss the deadline your contribution may have to be held over to the next issue.

The Newsletter is being delivered by email to those whose email address we have.

If you have received a paper copy, and you have an email address, please contact me as above. As well as saving printing and posting costs, it will enable us to send you other relevant information, and links to worship resources.

During April we hope to be edging towards 'normality'. Please see below for our worship plans.

Flowers: Flowers for April and May by Kathleen. Easter is April 4th, and we will be again confined to our 'bubble' for decorations. Gifts of spring flowers and greening twigs will be appreciated.

Easy Fund Raising (Easy?) Do you shop online? Have you joined Easy Fund Raising yet? If not, now would be a good time to get busy! The chances are that your vendor will be part of Easy Fund Raising. Amazon and John Lewis are, for instance. This means that if you register for Easy Fund Raising at easyfundraising.org.uk and select Widdrington United Reformed Church as your Good Cause 1 or 2 % of the purchase price of your item will come to us at no extra cost to yourself. Please talk to Fiona about it soon (though you can easily register with no help from me, as all our members have discovered). We have raised over £315 so far with just nine members. I'm expecting a payout soon!

Social: We will let you know when our social programme can recommence. Although we intend to carry forward last year's programme as far as possible, any ideas anyone has for activities would be very welcome.

Last year we lost all our fund raising events. Please continue to put aside your usual weekly collection, by filling up your envelopes, or, if you use online banking, by direct transfer. Or you could set up a standing order. Please contact Kathleen for bank details.

Worship: 'Please note:

We hope to restart worship with a Good Friday service at 3.00pm on April 2nd. This will be conducted by Rev'd Julian Sanders. The Easter Day service will be conducted by Maureen Baker and will include Communion; to be conducted by Rev'd Julian Sanders. (Thank you, Julian for stepping in). Rev'd Julian Sanders will be conducting worship on April 18th, and we'd like to make it a bit special! This will be a rededication service, which has been our custom for some years at the January Communion. Liv's ordination and induction as Elder has been delayed until May. When we reopen, please join us if and when you feel able.

We expect to have to continue with COVID 19 precautions for some weeks, so please wear a face covering if you can. You will be asked to sign in (for track and trace purposes - visitors will be asked for contact details) and to sanitize your hands on entry. Offering plates will be placed at the back of church. Please place your offering in them either when you come in, or before leaving. Please remember that we will not be standing to sing hymns. If you wish to sing quietly into your mask while following a hymn, you may do so.

We are sorry, but while the 'rule of six ' is in place we will not resume serving coffee after the service. Please avoid gathering in groups in the car park when you leave.

If you don't feel ready to return to church, you can continue to watch and listen to Julian's services online.

Preachers scheduled for April

4th. Easter Day: Maureen Baker; Communion: Rev'd Julian Sanders

11th Rev'd Lynda Coulthard

18th Rev'd Julian Sanders: see above for details of this service.

25th Worship Team

Regular events:

1st Tuesday: Coffee Club **will** meet again on the 1st Tuesday in the month - sometime! However, regulations mean that we can't contemplate restarting at the moment. Hopefully it should be possible by late summer. Perhaps July? Or August?

1st Wednesday: Prayer Group: We will continue to meet weekly (via zoom) during March. We are now meeting at 7.30pm. When services are able to resume we will revert to monthly meetings, and look forward to being able to meet in person. If there is anything you would like us to pray about, please let any member of the group know. If you have Zoom and would like to join us, please contact Julian for an invitation.

Facebook: If you are on Facebook, have you checked out our Facebook page yet? Search for Widdrington United Reformed Church. Please like us and let me know if you think I've missed anything that should be on. The page now has 160 likes, with another 5 people 'following '! Any information we have about service arrangements will be published there.

Please note: Sean, our sheep, has his own Facebook page! Search for 'Sean'. Sean now has 23 (+1 following!) page 'likes' but he wants some more, so please tell your friends about him! He loved seeing people again, especially the children, so he has been very disappointed by the new lockdown. He is really looking forward to us coming back.

The website is at: www.widdringtonurc.org.uk

I'd appreciate some help to improve it, as it's very wordy at the moment, partly because I'm happiest with words. I'm still looking for volunteers to be additional site editors. Someone with hardware that can post pictures would be good.

We are now considering a relaunch - watch this space.

New ventures:

We will have more information about our new ventures in future magazines, and on Facebook. The schemes are:

Sight Friendly Church

Breastfeeding Friendly Church

Ecochurch

Child Friendly Church

In relation to Ecochurch, we intend to develop the rough grass areas beside the church into wildflower meadows, with additional trees to form a Memorial Arboretum. Please contact the Elders if you wish to dedicate a tree.

Churches Together in Widdrington and Ulgham

We are happy that our Methodist friends have continued to join us for worship, and hope they will continue to do so when we can resume worshipping, until they can meet in the Community Centre. During the next quarter one service a month will be hosted by the Methodists in our church. The preacher on these occasions will be Rev'd Lynda Coulthard.

The Churches Together group met on Monday March 15th. We discussed things we might do together as restrictions ease.

Traidcraft Big Brew: we are hoping for a fine day before June 7th, but after the May easement of restrictions, when 30 people can meet outside. Diana has offered to host this. More details next month.

Possible joint outdoor picnic/communion: details to be discussed.

We can't hold an event for Christian Aid week this year, (10th-16th May). We would encourage everyone to make a direct donation. Details next month.

If you would like to join the ecumenical team at Widdy Welcomes when it reopens, Rev'd Joanna Dobson would love to hear from you.

FEM

The next joint newsletter with Widdrington & Bavington URC's covers events in May 2021. **The deadline is Sunday 18th April.**

Please do not wait for the deadline if you already have articles ready to be included.

There will be the usual joint newsletter for June/July.

Due to holidays (hopefully) there will be an early deadline which is Sunday 16th May. So if you could think ahead and send me your articles for that issue, then it will be very much appreciated.

Please contact Stephanie. E-mail: **robson-robson@hotmail.co.uk**