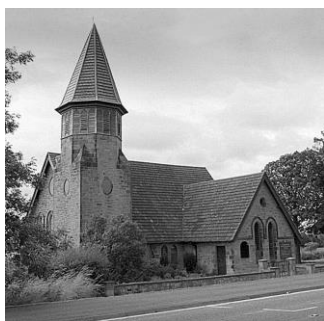


St George's, Widdrington & Great Bavington United Reformed Churches Newsletter



February
2023

Website: stgeorgesurcmorpeth.org

Worship & Events in February at St George's United Reformed Church

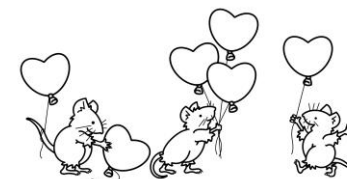
Wed 1st	12.30pm	Midweek Service WOW
Sun 5th	10.30am	Morning Worship with Air Cadet Parade
Mon 6th		Elders meeting
Wed 8th	12.30pm	Midweek Service WOW
Sat 11th	7.30pm	Country Dance Club
Sun 12th	10.30am	Morning Worship with Communion
Wed 15th		Lunchtime Concert (no WOW service)
Sun 19th	10.30am	Morning Worship WOW
Wed 22nd	12.30pm	Midweek Service
Sat 25th	7.30pm	New Tyneside Orchestra Concert
Sun 26th	10.30am	Morning Worship
Sun 26th	6.30pm	Evening Service

Steward's Duties

5	Gillian Irvine and Christine Oakes
12	Joan Cooper and Karen Howe
19	Helen Muckle and John Muckle
26	Katherine Smailes and Gordon Slack

Flower Rotas

5	See Notice Board
12	See Notice Board
19	Moira Mann
26	Maureen Sutherland.
Rep:	Sarah Cleverley



The next joint newsletter with Widdrington & Bavington URC's
covers events in March 2023

The deadline is Sunday 19th February

Please do not wait for the deadline if you already have articles ready to be
included. Please contact Stephanie. E-mail: robson-robson@hotmail.co.uk

What's On at St George's

SUNDAY FAMILY WORSHIP & JUNIOR CHURCH

10.30 am

MON	Age UK Exercise 9.00-12.00 noon Ronka Gbadebo	07952381160
	Age UK Exercise: 3.00 – 4.00pm As above	
TUES	Morning Badminton 10.00am – 12 noon Allen Oakes allen@oakesa.co.uk	
	Rainbows, 5.00pm Liz Kelly 783434 Mobile 07714481089 liz.kelly@jcpce.com	
	Brownies: 6.00pm Susan Fairgrieve . s.fairgrieve21@gmail	
	Guides and Rangers: from 7.00pm Liz Kelly 783434 Mobile 07714481089 liz.kelly@jcpce.com	
	Ladies Coffee Club: 2.00pm (3 rd Tues) nb: new start time Contact: Sarah Cleverley	515257
	Cobweb Orchestra 7.30 – 9.30pm In the Sanctuary Contact: Christine Oakes 518608 or Penny Oxley 514612	
WED	Morning Badminton: 9.30am Sarah Cleverley	515257
	Knitter, Natter Crafts & Chatter 2.00 – 4.00pm Joan Cooper	515682
	Afternoon Bowls 2.00pm Andrew Cleverley	515257
	Zumba: 6.00pm High Intensity with Lisa O on 07507 179 692 or zumbawithlisao@hotmail.com	
THURS	Morning Badminton: 10.00-12.00 Allen Oakes allen@oakesa.co.uk	
	Zumba: 5.45pm. Low Intensity with Lisa O on 07507 179 692 or email zumbawithlisao@hotmail.com	
SAT	Table Tennis: 10.00 – 12.00 Christine Richardson Country Dance Club: (Varies from month to month) Contact: Shirley Forster	513913
SUN	Orchestra: Norm. 4 th Sunday Andrew Hamnett (not August) Christine Oakes	518485 518608



Notes by the Way by Revd Stuart Brock

I try and read a lot of different kinds of book and occasionally I come across one that really inspires me. Just such a book is 'The Salt Path' by Raynor Winn. It tells the true story of a couple who lose everything, their home, their possessions and their ability to carry on living a 'normal' life. A ruinous civil debt is incurred when a former business partner wins a close court case against Winn and her husband, Moth. As the bailiffs move in to claim their furniture and leave the house gutted, in desperation they begin to seek alternative solutions to their housing problems. Then the darkness deepens. Moth is diagnosed with a rare but devastating and incurable disease and is given a short time to live.

The couple have nowhere to go except to chance their fortune by taking to the great outdoors. Both of them have loved the natural world since childhood so their strong instinct is to entrust themselves to it. Mad as it seems, they decide to take a chance by doing something they have vaguely imagined doing for some time: walking the South West Coast Path round from North Somerset to South Devon, a total distance of 630 miles. The book is a record of how, taking only a tent, a small amount of money and a well worn guide book, and wild camping wherever they can, they complete the walk and in so doing 'discover' themselves. The descriptive passages about their encounters with nature and with some of the people they meet along the way are lyrical.

The book inspired me at several levels. First, it is a story of triumph over extreme adversity. The couple are desperate, homeless and facing a totally unpredictable future. They set out in the belief that this is the only possible answer to their precarious position.

Second, it is a book that majors on the close connection between the human spirit and nature. In the close encounter between the natural world and humanity in all its weakness, the couple find peace. This powerful engagement is so often lost in the busy-ness of modern living where people have no way of switching off from the rush and noise of so much activity.

Third, the motif of a long journey has pointers to the spiritual journey every one of us is on, trying, whether we admit it or not, to discover who we are and what life is about. It is a sort of pilgrimage although Raynor and Moth do not claim to be 'religious.'

Fourth, this book is also a reminder to us in the church that organised religion is not the only way to discover answers to the deeper questions of life.

In fact, it may actually be detrimental to our coming to terms with who we are. It may keep us from the mindful observation of ourselves that could deepen our own spiritual awareness. Of course there is a place for organisation but not at the expense of a quest for the reality of Truth. It reminds those of us who feel at home in the church that there are many people who have no connection with organised 'churchianity' and yet are on the road seeking the answers to the same big questions we ask. We need to humbly journey with them and when the time is right, nudge them towards the one who is the 'ground of our being'. Finally it is a love story. It is Raynor's fierce love of her husband that drives her onwards, bullying him into keeping on walking, fighting his disease, keeping it at bay and effectively keeping him alive. It is the strength he gains from her that stops them both giving up. Despite some strong language, this is a beautifully written true story which resonates with the spirit of the age in which we live. Perhaps in work like this we have a modern take on pilgrimage and some fellow travellers we would never have expected!

St George's Coffee Club



Tuesday 14th February 2pm in the Church Hall

Our speaker will be Bob Young talking about the history of Smalls shop in Morpeth. Guests are always welcome at our meetings. For more information contact Sarah Cleverley 515257 or just come to the meeting.

December Coffee Morning

A huge thank you to everyone involved with the fund raiser on December 10th. To members of the group, church members and all who came to support the event.

It was a quiet start on a cold icy morning, but many turned up, buying from a variety of stalls. On the day we raised £878.60 and a further £27 after church on Sunday. A grand total of £905.60p, is an amazing result. Thank You All
On behalf of Sarah Cleverly (Co-ordinator) and Linda Glascott (Treasurer)

West End Refugee Service January 2023

In his report for the AGM the Chair of Trustees said *“This report lists the developments that have been started during this last year and which will, in the long term, make WERS a highly visible champion for refugees and asylum seekers across Tyneside. We are now sustaining the strength of our longstanding support work, the hardship fund and the volunteering projects, and adding to them new projects – these include a renewed awareness raising campaign and a community campaigns group. We have also started a root and branch modernisation of WERS, bringing our account systems up to date, revising and adding to our entire policy framework, planning the introduction of a CRM [Customer Relationship Management system], reviewing our volunteering training and support, training staff and volunteers in diversity, improving the accountability of all staff and volunteers. But most important, we have introduced an Advisory Panel, made up of users of our services, which has a voice in improving the democracy of everything we do. This panel will give refugees and asylum seekers a powerful influence over how we run WERS, and in deciding our strategy. I look forward to seeing it grow.”*

In its latest Newsletter WERS says *“there have been almost daily announcements of more cruel government initiatives, accompanied by divisive language focusing on punishment not protection, as well as policies that speak to systems of security, rather than offering safety and support. It feels particularly important right now to share positive news of how local communities, committed volunteers and local organisations are building connections and working together to improve the lives of people seeking sanctuary here and of how people in the asylum system are becoming part of shaping this work.”*

The garden project is developing as a place to apply skills and make friends; the buddying scheme continues to support social connections between increasing numbers of people, and the new activities project enables residents of hotels to access sports and cultural experiences.

The WERS community campaigns group has also been busy, taking part in regional and national activity.

Justice and Peace Refugee Project

The Justice and Peace Project has again expressed its gratitude for the amazing support they have received over the past year. It has summarised its achievements during the first 11 months of 2022.

Over 11886 bags of food and toiletries (worth £67,335) were distributed.

Over £21,000 of monthly supermarket vouchers were distributed to those most in need.

An average of 442 clients were supported each month, with large numbers also being supported by the SVP clothing bank.

Extra Christmas gift cards were also distributed in December.

They also explain that *“in addition to providing regular food bags to clients who receive some government support while claiming asylum, the Project also provides a monthly supermarket voucher, currently worth £35, to those clients whose claim has been refused, with no government support and who are effectively destitute. Recently, one of our clients who has been living in the UK for 9 years, without the right to work or access to any benefits, expressed his sincere gratitude to the Project, saying that the vouchers each month are essential to provide the basic things he needs to live.”*

Donations of food, clothing and footwear are welcomed as well as financial donations.

Azad the Project Coordinator, along with a volunteer, visited a local school and some of the young children then visited the Project. They are hoping to go into other schools to work with the students there.

I have no doubt that both of these charities sincerely appreciate all the support you are able to give.

Margaret Brock

The World Day of Prayer 2023

It is on Friday 3rd March at 1.30pm
and is being hosted by St George's Church this year.

It is written by the women of Taiwan.

Rehearsals are on Friday 17th and 24th February at 11 am for singers and musicians led by Harriet Gilfillan. Full rehearsal 3rd March at 10am.

All are welcome! This is a Morpeth Churches Together service with members from all denominations and a usually a lively, friendly affair.

Refreshments and a chance to chat follow the service

It would be lovely to have lots of singers from St George's in the choir male and female anyone with a desire to sing. Please come along to at least one rehearsal and especially on Friday morning 3rd of March at 10am.

Please contact Christine Oakes or Morag Stead if you would like to join the choir so that we have some idea of numbers. Looking forward to hearing from you!

Commitment for Life

Commitment for Life is the United Reformed Church's global justice programme. Commitment for Life is a way in which local congregations are enabled to participate in actions for justice around the world.

Commitment for Life belongs to every congregation. Many choose to support a region in the world through prayer, learning, advocacy, and action for justice. We support the region of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Commitment for Life partners are Christian Aid and Global Justice Now.

The four partner regions are Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and Central America (Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala).

Information about "Commitment for Life" can be found on the website: -

urc.org.uk/moving-stories.html

Every month we have a retiring collection for Commitment for Life on the first Sunday of the month.

In 2022 St George's Church gave £803 to this charity. We were able to give this much as in July, Kirsty and Andrew LeGrice gave a fascinating talk about their time in East Jerusalem and donations from this event were given to Commitment for Life.

Please continue to give to this very worthwhile cause.

Sarah Cleverley Link Person

Wordsearch for February

In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first 'public appearance'. Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child - to 'present him to the Lord'. At the same time, she, as a new mother, was 'purified'. Thus, we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, 40 days after Christmas. Jesus is described in the Bible as the Light of the World, and so early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day. The Church also fell into the custom of blessing the year's supply of candles for the church on this day - hence the name, Candlemas. The story can be found in Luke 2:22-40, where Simeon makes his great declaration of faith and recognition of Jesus. Simeon's 'Nunc Dimittis', is embedded in the Office of Evening Prayer.



*Forty Days Baby Boy Public Appearance Mary Jewish Mothers Temple Jesus Purified Present Lord Festival Presentation Light World Candlemas Simeon Nunc Dimittis Office Evening Prayer West **Solution on page 21***

"The less you do, the more the better, otherwise you find yourself wanting for the lack of too much to do".

What NOT to give her for Valentine's Day...

A box of chocolates, clumsily rearranged, because you ate all the caramel ones.

Any food item with the words: 'diet', 'light', or 'high fibre' on the label.

Any household appliance or power tool.

A gift certificate or cash.

Advantages of marriage...Marriage is a very good way to promote civilisation – according to Socrates, if you get a good partner, you will be happy; if you get a bad one, you will become a philosopher.

Tea Time Talks

This months Tea Time Talk takes place on
Thursday 9th February at 2pm.

Our speaker will be Revd Julian Sanders

On "Once upon a time..."

"Discovering what we don't know about our favourite Fairy Tales" Fruit
scones with jam and cream
£3 suggested donation.

With Valentine's Day in mind...how do you define love?

A group of 4-to-8-year-olds was once asked: 'What does love mean?' The answers they gave were surprising for their depth of insight...

- "When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love." Rebecca – age 8
- "When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth." Billy – age 4.
- "Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other." Karl – age 5.
- "Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your chips, without making them give you any of theirs." Chrissy – age 6.
- "Love is when mum makes coffee for my dad and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is OK." Danny – age 7.
- "Love is when you kiss all the time. Then when you get tired of kissing, you still want to be together and you talk more. My Mum and Dad are like that. They look gross when they kiss." Emily – age 8.
- "If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate." Nikka – age 6 (We need a few million more Nikka's on this planet).
- "My mummy loves me more than anybody. You don't see anyone else kissing me to sleep at night." – Clare, age 6.
- "Love is when mummy gives daddy the best piece of chicken." – Elaine – age 5.
- "Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all day" Mary Ann – age 4

Sudoku for February. Solution on page 21

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

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Little Teapot... Our new curate had young children and they insisted he choose for his screensaver a picture of a dancing teapot, playing the children's song 'I'm a Little Teapot'. When the earnest young HR officer for the diocese came to call, she sent back a message to the bishop: "The curate may be suffering from an identity disorder."

Sign Outside a New York

Convalescent Home... 'For the sick and tired of the Episcopal Church...'

Wages... Advert for a new minister: 'Wages not high, but retirement benefits out of this world.'

Don't die... The vicar announced: "I am sure that you will not wish to overwork our visiting priest while I am on holiday, and will keep funerals to a minimum."

Sick... During a church service my young niece had to go outside, as she did not feel well. She returned a few minutes later and admitted: 'I have been a little sick. But it doesn't matter, there's a box at the door marked 'for the sick'.'

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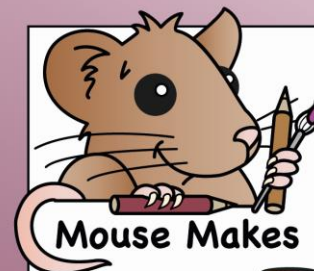
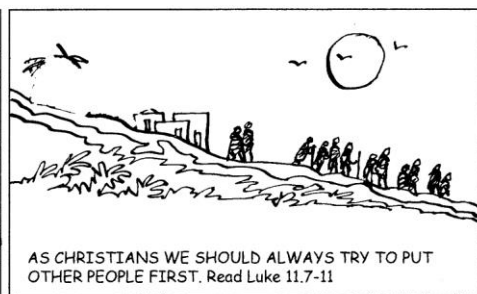
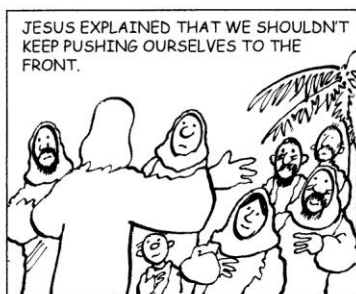
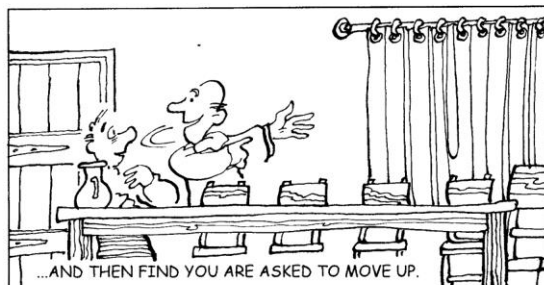
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What was the special meal Jesus was preparing to eat?

Matthew 26:18



What did Jesus take, bless and break?

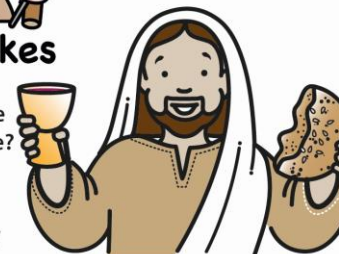
Matthew 26:26

What did Jesus give thanks for and share?

Matthew 26:27

What did Jesus say this represented?

His _____
Matthew 26:27-28



What did Jesus say this represented?

His _____
Matthew 26:26

Jesus instructed his disciples to continue to break bread and share the cup "in

of me."

1 Corinthians 11:24-25



SUPPER
LAMB • LORD
DISCIPLES
TOGETHER
EVENING
ROOM • JAR
WATER • TWELVE
JESUS • CHRIST
NIGHT • TOOK
THANKS
BLESSING
BROKE • GIVEN
COVENANT
DRINK • EAT
FORGIVENESS
SINS • HOLY
COMMUNION
EUCARIST

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

Find the words from the questions too!



You may be under the impression that we have retired from our concert organising but we have had a number of requests for events and have decided to run with them. Please come and enjoy what we have on offer, bring your friends and spread the word.

Ken and Gillian

1. **Wednesday 15th February 12.30 - 1.30pm.** By popular request a special one off Lunchtime Concert featuring KEVI Chamber Choir and their talented musicians.

Doors open at noon with coffee and tea available. Admission £4.

2. **Saturday 25th February 7.30pm.** The New Tyneside Orchestra Musicians and Friends present 'Musical Chairs', a concert of ensemble delights from around the classical and traditional worlds including music by Beethoven, Poulenc, Villa Lobos and Alistair Anderson. Something for everyone.

Tea, coffee and biscuits available during the interval.

Tickets £6.50 with £5 concessions. Accompanied children free. Pre book by ringing 01670 51580 or pay at the door. Proceeds in aid of Sunflower Sisters Ukraine/UK.

3. **Friday 31st March 7.30pm.** Fundraising Concert for Henry Dancer Days Children's Cancer Charity. Iona Brown, principal violin with Royal Northern Sinfonia and David Murray, piano.

Tea, coffee and biscuits included during the interval.

Tickets £8 available by ringing 01670 515870 or from Chantry Tourist Information Centre. Accompanied children free. There will also be donation buckets on the evening.



**St George's United Reformed Church
Bridge Street, Morpeth, NE61 1PD**

**Saturday 25th February 2023
At 7.30 pm**

The New Tyneside Orchestra

Musicians and Friends offer:-

Musical Chairs

**A Concert of small delights from around
the classical and traditional worlds**

**including music by Beethoven and Poulenc,
Alistair Anderson and Villa Lobos.
Something for everyone.....**

Tea, Coffee & Biscuits available at Interval

**Tickets £6.50 with £5 Concessions available At the Door
Or pre-ordered from Gillian Irvine, 01670 515870**

**Proceeds in aid of :-
Sunflower Sisters Ukraine/UK.**



"Joy Wight is keen that all her friends should know that she has now moved into Foxton Court. She will, of course, be delighted to see any of her friends who wish to visit. She is also hoping to get a landline telephone so that she can keep in touch with you more easily."

Thank you to everyone who helped with Angels this year, knitters, baggers and taggers and distributors. In all we placed 426. Some were hidden on a train to Penzance, some placed in Christmas bags donated to a woman's refuge. Some to Rutherfords coffee shop customers and lots as usual placed all over our area. A big thank you needs to go the staff in Rickards who acted as a reception for Angels for us.

This message came to our website

"Just to say, we found one of your beautiful Angels at my son's school, Collingwood. My son said it was a gift from his dog Chase in Heaven. We had lost Chase in July. Thank you so much for putting a smile on his face.

Merry Christmas."

There is nothing more I could say. Thank you. **Patricia**



It's all in the VALENTINE...

For God so lo**V**ed the world,
That He g**A**ve
His on**L**y
Begott**E**n
So**N**
That whoever
Believes **I**n Him
Should **N**ot perish,
But have **E**verlasting life."



John 3:16

Managers' Coffee Morning

This years' Managers Coffee Morning on Saturday 21st January raised an amazing total of £625.15. Raffle £167.00, overbought items £151.95, Coffees etc, £151.80, cards £84.00, book/jigsaws £50.40 and a donation of £20.00. An additional £520.00 was taken for the 100 Club. A good morning's work and well done to all who contributed to another impressive St George's fund raiser.

St George's Book Club?

Do you enjoy reading?

Would you like share reading experiences with others?

Would you like to be part of a regular book club at George's?

If you are interested and would like to know more, please speak to Julian or Morag for more details.



St

Girlguiding at St George's

We had a busy run up to our Christmas holidays. Natasha from the Creative Studio in Morpeth came and painted ceramic baubles with the girls. The Guides and Rangers also made their own paper craft Christmas cards. The girls planned and prepared for their Christmas market stalls. On the night we had a variety of things to buy from homemade cakes, tombola, raffle, homemade crafts, games and refreshments. We would like to say a big thank you to all who came to support us.

Morpeth Division celebrated the end of the year with a Christingle service, with the girls making their own Christingles. We sang carols and even had a surprise visitor who popped in to say hello. The Rainbows enjoyed seeing Santa.

We have only just started 2023 with a visit to our local fire station at Pegswood. The girls learnt all about how to keep safe in their homes and had a tour of the station. It's huge; there are so many rooms and different places there. They even got to sit in the fire engines and press the blue lights.

The next few weeks and months are busy as they have planned to make bird feeders, celebrate Chinese New Year, a visit from the High Sheriff, carry out badge work and lots lots more.

Liz Kelly

Death of the Queen

It was expected,
Much as the second coming is expected
By a Church grown used to waiting:
Every year a year of grace,
Each day a day of forbearance.

It came suddenly,
Less like a thief than a returning master,
And found her full of duty,
Having seen off one premier and greeted another,
Ready for more if need be.

Then it all happened.
Each gun salute, every procession
Had been discreetly planned
By watchful servants whose job is discretion,
Black tie or dress at hand.

People joined in:
People who had no need to care
Which was duke or duchess of where,
Taking their turn to confront mortality,
Not getting too near.

What brought them there?
In fractured times, a sense of belonging;
Affection for an unknown friend;
An anchor in the past; a longing
For the end time to end.

Dermot Killingley September 2022



Crossword for February

Across: 8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)

9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)

10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)

11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)

13 Clay pit (anag.) (7) 16 Went to (John

4:46) (7) 19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to — your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5) 22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14 Down: 'On — — let them escape' (Psalm 56:7)

(2,7) 24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1) 25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4).

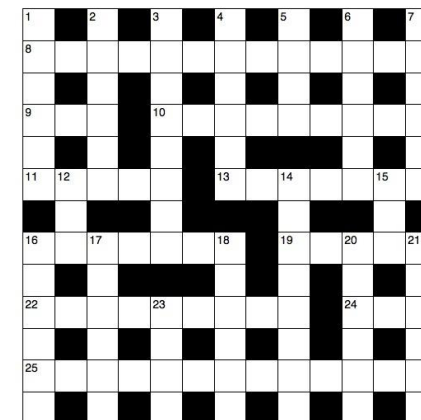
Down: 1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6) 2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6) 3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8) 4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but — him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6) 5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4) 6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4) 7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to — your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)

12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1) 14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always — to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8) 15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)

16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6) 17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)

18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)

20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6) 21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (6) 23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4). *Solution on page 21*



In a sack... Seen in a church magazine: "Bring your old newspapers (and your neighbours), put them in a sack and tie them in if possible."

Ladies: Notice in a church hall where a sale of second-hand clothes was in progress: 'Ladies may have a fit upstairs.'

BUTTER THOSE PEAS **St George's** *Strip that willow*
Country Dance Club

Saturdays 7.30-9.30

January 14th, February 11th, March 11th



You don't need a partner. You don't need to know how to dance,
Dances are explained and there is plenty time for a rest and a chat.

£2.00 for St George's Church. Bring your own refreshments

More information from Shirley Forster 07749525269 shirlsgurc@gmail.com

Party that Boston *Waltz That Circle*



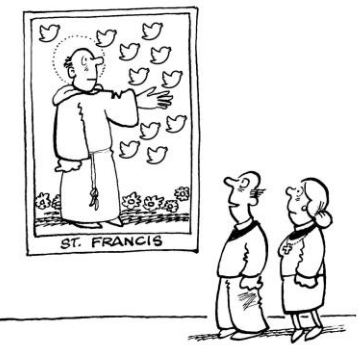
With our very own *live band SGURC*

1/1



"He moved here after the PCC voted to lower the church heating bill. He says it is warmer out here."

Judgement?... This true story concerns the visit of a visiting preacher to a little village chapel... 'He was a few minutes into his sermon when, without warning, about twenty square feet of thick and decayed Victorian plaster fell from high on one wall and crashed into a group of empty pews below. As the dense fog of dust began to settle, and it became clear no one was injured, the minister prepared to resume his sermon. Then he paused, and looked heavenward and in a slightly pained voice, asked: "Was it something I said?"'



He's been updated. He's now the patron saint of tweeting!

Answer to prayer... A small boy badly wanted a baby brother, so his dad suggested he pray every night for one. The boy prayed earnestly, night after night, but his prayers seemingly weren't answered. So after a few weeks, he didn't bother to ask anymore.

Some months later, his dad said they were going to see Mum in the hospital and he was going to get a big surprise. When they got to the room, the little boy saw his mother holding two babies. The little boy stood still for a moment, and then cautiously observed: "It's a good thing I stopped praying when I did."

Talking theologically... Jesus asked His disciples who men said that He was. And one of His disciples replied: "Master, thou art the supreme eschatological manifestation of omnipotent ecclesiastical authority, the absolute, divine, sacerdotal monarch." And Jesus said, "er - What?"

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Matthew chapter 18 verses 21-35

Jewish teachers used to say you only had to forgive people three times before getting revenge, so Peter asked Jesus...



Solutions:

ACROSS: 8, Cross-examined. 9, Ash. 10, Apocrypha. 11, Sci-fi. 13, Typical. 16, Visited. 19, Offer. 22, No account. 24, RAC. 25, Sovereign Lord.

DOWN: 1, Oceans. 2, Hophni. 3, Islamist. 4, Exhort. 5, Omar. 6, On spec. 7, Add all. 12, CBI. 14, Plotting. 15, Awe. 16, Vanish. 17, Starve. 18, Daub it. 20, Furrow. 21, Recede. 23, Cure.



February

14th Valentines Day,

21st Shrove Tuesday,

22nd Ash Wednesday



Miscellaneous observations on life...

Marriage licence – the only permit taken out after the hunt is over.

It's easy finding reasons why other folks should be patient.

Families are often like fudge – mostly sweet, with a few nuts.

Some people cause happiness wherever they go. Others, whenever they go.

It is said that if you line up all the cars in the world end to end, someone would be stupid enough to try to overtake them. You can't have everything – where would you put it?

Latest survey shows that 3 out of 4 people make up 75% of the world's population.

If the shoe fits, get another one just like it.

Love is grand. Divorce is a hundred grand.

Advert in newspaper: Home computer, as new. Never been figured out.

Be nice to your kids. They'll choose your nursing home.

The trouble with referees is that they just don't care which side wins.

A hangover is the wrath of grapes.

Is it true that you never really learn to swear until you teach a loved one to drive?

Great Bavington United Reformed Church

Here is the news from Great Bavington

Services in February:

Sunday 5 February, **2.30pm**

Sunday 19 February, **2.30pm**

Film Night

Monday 13 February, 7.00pm. A clue for the film's name: the capital city of one of the UK nations. Written and directed by Kenneth Branagh. Certificate 12A.

Refreshments provided. Suggested donation £5.

History Night

History Night is now happening on alternate months - January, March, May and so on, on the fourth Tuesday of each month. So there won't be one in February, and the next one will be on Tuesday 28 March at 7.00pm.

Bavington Parish Council Meeting

Bavington Parish Council meets in the Meeting Room at 7.00pm on Thursday 2 February. Claire Miller is the Parish

Clerk: clairemillerparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk.

Building repairs

The repairs have made an enormous improvement: the better ventilation in the roof space means that the whole building is much drier, and is therefore also easier to heat. Tristan Spicer, conservation architect of Doonan Architects, and the Heritage Consolidation team did a great job. The repairs were funded by grants from Northern Synod, the Ray Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund, Congregational & General Charitable Trust and the Northumbria Historic Churches Trust.

Other info

The church is usually open during the daytime for visitors.

The meeting room is available to hire for meetings and other events for £25 per evening or half day.

Please check for updates on services and events on the church's Facebook page, email bavingtonchurch@gmail.com or ring 01830 540350. Rev Julian Sanders can be reached at sanders.julian@talk21.com or 01670 225539.

Nicola Bell

WIDDRINGTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

PRAYING TOGETHER

If you would like to add any topics to next month's prayers, please let me know.

During February please pray for:

Ukraine and other war zones

Refugees

The people of Afghanistan, especially women.

Those suffering religious or ethnic persecution

Victims of natural disasters,

Victims of crime

The work of relief agencies

Those suffering still from Covid19 throughout the world.

Health workers and workers in essential industries and services

Medical researchers, especially those working on COVID 19 vaccines

Vaccine delivery in third world countries.

The sick, both with physical and mental problems and the recently bereaved

Those in financial difficulties, and fuel poverty

The homeless

"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). The Copy Date for each magazine is the second last Sunday of the month before the next issue. If you miss the deadline your contribution may have to be held over to the next issue.

Flowers: Flowers for February by Kathleen, and for March by Fiona. Donations of cash and later in the year of garden flowers would be welcome.

Easy Fund Raising (Easy?) Do you shop online? Have you joined Easy Fund Raising yet? 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. This can range from a penny for a Kindle 99p short to several pounds for a major purchase. 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 £400 so far with just nine members. We get a payout each quarter provided at least £15.00 has been raised. Every little helps!

Fund raising: Salvation Army Gift Sunday: £240 as well as gifts in kind; Crib Festival: £113 for Widdrington Foodbank; Carol Service: £200 shared between Shelter and Crisis.

Worship: We feel we are 'back to normal'! Please feel free to wear a mask - or not - as you wish. Hand sanitisers continue to be available

You are invited to join us for coffee/tea after the service.

Preachers for February, along with duty rotas are in the table below.

Social

We had our planning meeting on January 19th and hope we have a social programme to suit you all. While events from May to August continue to be evening events, in the darker months we will be meeting in the afternoon. Most of our events are on Fridays and Saturdays. Most events will have pooled teas, with voluntary donations for hall expenses. We ask church members to provide the food: we hope that friends from other churches, or the community will regard themselves as our guests.

In February we will be holding a Domino afternoon. This will be on Friday 17th at 2.00pm, with a pooled tea.

On Saturday March 4th we will have a Film Afternoon: Julian will provide and show the film, and there will be a pooled tea.

Regular events:

1st Tuesday: Coffee Club meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 10.30am at various coffee shops. In February this will be on 7th in the Church Hall complete with home made scones and bacon sandwiches!

1st Wednesday: Prayer Group: We gather at Cook's Hemmel, Causey Park at 7.00pm. You are welcome to join us, or tell us any of your concerns for prayer.

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 186 likes, with another 8 people 'following'! Any information we have about service arrangements and social events will be published there.

Please note: Sean, our sheep, has his own Facebook page! Search for 'Sean'. Sean now has 24 (+2 following!) page 'likes' but he wants some more, so please tell your friends about him!

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.

Churches Together in Widdrington and Ulgham.

We met in January to review last year and look ahead. Coming up: the Lent Course will start in February, led by Julian. We will meet in the Sunday School room on Fridays at 2pm, starting on February 24th except for March 3rd, when we will be holding our World Day of Prayer service at 2.00pm at St John's.

FEM

We are still collecting things!

*Medicine blister packs for Cancer Research

*Green plastic milk bottle tops to make wheelchairs

*Basic toiletries for the Ukraine appeal

*And don't forget the hamper for the food bank!

*Crisp packets no longer required for the time being.

Widdrington Rotas February

Date	Preacher	Vestry	Door/Offering
5th	Margery Tate	Diana Hogg	Ruth Gordon Fiona Middlemist
12th	Carol Dixon	Liv Walden	K Bailey E Barber
19th	Rev Julian Sanders	Fiona Middlemist	A Grieves L Walden
26th	Sue Rutherford	Kathleen Bailey	D Hogg M Scott