

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



Palm  
Sunday

28<sup>th</sup> March

**March**



Website: [stgeorgesurcmorpeth.org](http://stgeorgesurcmorpeth.org)

### ***A Message from our Minister, Revd Julian Sanders***

Dear Friends,

Each area of the country has its own different word for an alley. I don't yet know what you call it here in Northumberland (Answers on a postcard please!). I have heard them called ginnels, jitties, snickets, jennels, and passages. There are plenty of these in evidence in the town centre here in Morpeth, and also on many of the housing estates. Exploring these alleys and finding where they lead always makes a walk more interesting.

But I must admit there are many alleys that I avoid because they look quite ominous. One of my recurring childhood nightmares featured an alley way that was on my daily walk to school and echoes of this I think still affect me. I refrain, when I can, from walking down alleys where the light of the streetlamps does not penetrate its darkness. Not only is there the danger of pot holes and uneven surfaces, but you never know what might be lurking in the shadows! To emerge into the light and into the safety at the end of the alley always brings a sigh of relief.

Lent can be regarded both physically and spiritually as a dark alleyway leading to the warmth and light of the Easter celebrations. Lent marks the time of year when the dark hours give way and emerge into the lighter evenings of spring. The word 'lent' means 'spring' and is derived from the Germanic root for 'long'. Lent is the time when the days lengthen into spring, and darkness gives way to the light.

There was a tradition in the church of 'burying the alleluias' after the Pope imposed that the Alleluia was too joyful to be sung during this period of lent. In reaction to this, the worshipping communities developed their own rituals of burying the written words of their 'Alleluia', even to the extent of placing them in a coffin and burying them under the floor of the chancel.

Bishop William Duranti in 1296 writes:

***"We desist from saying the Alleluia, the song chanted by angels, because we have been excluded from the company of angels on account of Adam's sin. In the Babylon of our earthly life we sit by the streams, weeping as we remember Sion. For as the children of Israel in an alien land hung their harps upon the willows, so we too must forget the Alleluia song in the season of sadness, of penance and bitterness of heart."***

You can imagine the joy in those churches when the Alleluia is sung again, and bursts into glory during the Mass of the Easter vigil. Like emerging from the darkness of the alleyway into the glorious light, Easter bursts forth from the dark passage through which we traverse in lent with the lighting of the Easter Candle.

I hope that this lent you may find your own way of preparing, of reflecting on that which needs to change in your lives, of denying yourself that which is not wholesome. Just as we might identify the potholes as we stumble down a dark alley, so too we might during Lent pick out those things which are making us stumble in our own spiritual darkness. And just as we might emerge from an alley way, we look forward to emerging into the light and celebration of Easter and to sing with the angels: "Alleluia".

***Julian***

### **Morpeth Methodist and United Reformed Church The Prayers of Jesus, Lent Course 2021**

Come and join us on Zoom for our Len Course which focuses on the prayers the Jesus prayed in the gospels. We begin with the Lord's Prayer and journey through the gospels to the Garden of Gethsemane and finally the Cross. The sessions take place on Thursday afternoons and are repeated on Monday evenings.

#### **Thursday sessions at 2pm**

Zoom meeting ID 861 97436795

Passcode: 870309

Session 1 – 18<sup>th</sup> Feb   Session 2 – 25<sup>th</sup> Feb   Session 3 – 4<sup>th</sup> March  
Session 4 – 11<sup>th</sup> March   Session 5 – 18<sup>th</sup> March   Session 6 – 25<sup>th</sup> March.

#### **Repeated on Monday sessions at 7pm**

Zoom meeting ID 838 02723989

Passcode: 018245

Session 1 – 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb   Session 2 – 1<sup>st</sup> March   Session 3 – 8<sup>th</sup> March  
Session 4 – 15<sup>th</sup> March   Session 5 – 22<sup>n</sup> March   Session 6 – 29<sup>th</sup> March  
For further information on joining, contact Julian 01670 225539 or email

**[sanders.julian@talk21.com](mailto:sanders.julian@talk21.com)**

## Refugees and Asylum Seekers March 2021

### West End Refugee Service

WERS has announced that it has been awarded a two year Lloyds Bank Covid19 Recovery Grant. This funding comes with match funding from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport as well as valuable support from a development partner who they will work with for 12 months. Since the beginning of the current lockdown in January Dance City in Newcastle has been using their own kitchens, every Sunday, to provide hot, healthy meals to 35 refugees who WERS supports through its hardship fund.

Hannah Barnes, the new Director at WERS, writes in their latest newsletter "Refugees and asylum seekers in the UK face acute challenges. Covid has increased poverty and isolation levels significantly whilst the policies and narratives coming out of central government pose serious threats to people's rights and their ability to rebuild their lives here.

However, with the hope that comes with vaccine roll outs, we are looking forward to working more closely with the people that we support, and with existing and new partners, over the coming months and year, to shape how WERS can help create positive change for asylum seekers and refugees on Tyneside."

As an example of the work that has been on-going throughout the pandemic, WERS has made over 1500 welfare calls, identifying support needs, linking with services and providing essential information on keeping safe.

There are two ways to donate to WERS online: donations via Virgin Money Giving go directly to fund WERS project costs; donations via JustGiving go directly into WERS' Hardship Fund. Donations can be 'Gift Aided' on both Virgin Money Giving and JustGiving. Please note that no donation to WERS will be put towards any marketing or fundraising costs. Cheques can also be sent to West End Refugee Service, St Philip's Vicarage, St Philip's Close, Arthur's Hill, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 5JE

### Justice and Peace

The J&P Project is settling into its new premises and is now able to accept donations of food items, and also toilet rolls and toiletries. Because they are working collaboratively with SVP they are able to use their clothing store to support the refugees and asylum seekers. They also say they have an ongoing need for strong carrier bags as their clients are being encouraged to visit the premises less often, to try to keep everyone safe, and so they have more to carry when they do visit. Bags for life are especially well received.

Obviously whilst the lockdown continues it is difficult for church food collections. When the lockdown eases I will provide an updated list of food items which are regularly used in the bags. Financial support can still be offered to enable them to buy the essential food for the food bags which they distribute to their clients. Details of the Project's Bank Account are: HSBC DHN DESTITUTE ASYLUM FUND sort code 40-34-18, account number 52854058. Contributions by direct transfer would be most welcome, but cheques made payable to D.H&N DESTITUTE ASYLUM FUND can also be sent to Sara Harris, Justice and Peace Refugee Project Co-ordinator, St. Vincent's Support Centre, New Bridge Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 2TQ.

Regular donations by standing order can be made by completing the mandate and returning it to your bank. Taxpayers can also complete the gift aid declaration and return this to their treasurer, Marjory Knowles tel: 07929 343418 or by email: marjory.knowles@gmail.com.

Please remember these two projects in your prayers.

**Margaret Brock**

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### Your daily walk should be a sacred ritual

Under lockdown, millions of us who rarely walked around our immediate locality are now well acquainted with every nearby driveway, every crack in the pavement, and every pothole in the road. We have developed views on our neighbours' gardens, on their oddly coloured garage doors, and on their dogs, children and cars. If we go out at the same time every day, we may even be saying hello to the same people we don't know every day.

For many of us, that daily walk has become the high point of our day. After all, it is one of the few liberties we have left. Some of us go early, to enjoy the relative peace and quiet. Some of us go midday, to at least see other people, even if we can't talk to them. Others of us opt for dusk, the dark comfort of a street with lit houses and stars in the sky. Whatever time you most enjoy, make sure you do make the time to go for your walk. Your mental and physical fitness can only improve!

## MAY PLANT SALE.

Ever the optimists, Mary, Gillian and Ken are planning this year's Plant Sale in aid of church funds. At present it is impossible to know what form this will take but there will definitely be one with, as far as possible, the usual selection of bedding plants. The seeds and plug plants are already on order and we will keep you informed of what is available and how you can access them. So, watch this space for further details and spread the word to your friends.

**Ring Gillian (01670 515870 for further information)**



## 30 years on – Watching the Televised Service at St George's from 1992

A chance remark at the Friday Zoom coffee morning about whether Julian could understand our local accent led us to reminisce about Cuthbert Dunn's reading of the Good Samaritan in broad Northumbrian, at the service televised on ITV in October 1992.

We have kept a recording of it on video tape, remember those? We can still play videos, so decided to copy the service on to a DVD for Julian.

We watched the service again and it was lovely to see members of the congregation as they were then. A special mention should be made of the Rev Chris Ford leading our worship with the Rev David Jenkins, the then moderator of Northern Synod, preaching. Val Bothams and Cuthbert Dunn gave the readings and George Elliott, church secretary, led the prayers. The musical director was Ken Irvine and the orchestra, organised by Chris Anderson included many children who are now parents themselves. A number of our present congregation were in the choir. The flowers were super, and Dorothy Luke told me she was given a budget of £100 for them. Imagine how much that would cost today.

If you would like a trip down memory lane, we are able to transcribe the video onto a DVD and would suggest a donation of £5 to church funds for this.

**Sarah and Andy Cleverley Telephone 515257**

## January 2021 - New Month, New Year, New Decade.

Are you thankful to be leaving it all behind you? January, possibly named after 'Janus' the Roman god of doors, gates and transitions. As a search reveals, Janus, with his two faces looking both backwards and forwards, represents the middle ground between concrete and abstract ideas such as life/death, beginning/end, youth/adulthood, war/peace, and barbarism/civilization. What appropriate associations I reflect, for this month, this year, this decade. Despite being married to a Scot, I am not one who enjoys Hogmanay celebrations, in fact I'd be much happier following Gran's example of going to bed in one year and waking up in the next. Old years end, 2020 brought no thrills either. Like many folk perhaps, I wanted to forget so much of 2020. But I did allow myself time to look back to some happier times. The last ten years saw the culmination of my training for Non-Stipendiary Ministry, on the tremendous NEOC course; then my Ordination and Induction to St Mark's, Amble (see the photo of the family, and Interim Moderator, Ron Forster, taken on this happy occasion.) We have lived in Morpeth for nearly 35 years now, but my love of Amble stems back to childhood day trips and family caravanning holidays. This former mining and fishing community on the Northumberland coast is well named the 'friendliest port'. After 37 years of teaching RE in secondary school classrooms in the North East, this child of the Manse with a teacher Mother, and Father in stipendiary ministry had eventually embraced the two vocations that the 16-year-old Alison said she would never follow Dad and Mam in to; 2011 saw me teaching and in URC ministry - and loving both! The decade progressed with much joy and some sadness; three grandsons, early retirement from teaching and a purposeful ministry in Pastoral Charge at St Mark's. Sadly however, in December 2020 the family's unordained Pastor, Mam, Freda Pagan died. Three years after a stroke and a slow slide into debilitating dementia, Mam too became another of the thousands of deaths from Coronavirus. Like so many other families, we were devastated. If this is beginning to read like one of those Christmas 'round robin' letters which are loved by some and loathed by others, I apologise, but I felt these details give context to my end-of-decade reflection, especially when I wanted to think about two short but hugely meaningful words which were hugely important in our family – THANK YOU! This morning I got a 'Thank you' letter from an old friend and a text from a much younger one. Both of them were lovely to have, even if they have tweaked my conscience and reminded me of my thank-yous still unsaid or written - for which I am very sorry!

As children, thank-you letters were as much a part of Christmas as the presents themselves and Mam insisted on them being written and posted before we went back to school - she would be so disappointed that mine are still not done, again! But it was me that was disappointed last Thursday evening (7<sup>th</sup> January, at 8pm) when I took pan and wooden spoon to our brightly lit kitchen door and stood banging and shouting 'Thank you' to the only other family that was also standing in the damp and the dark. These were MY Lockdown Heroes, facing me on the opposite street corner. Thursday nights have once more been reinstated and this time renamed, Clap the Heroes - ALL of them; NHS staff from cleaner to medic; carers in every context; everyone in our schools, colleges and universities, delivery, hygiene and retail staff, amazing scientists too. So why were there so few folk saying THANK YOU like so many had done on those balmy summer evenings, during Lockdown 1? I had had a particular reason for my noisy thank-you to the neighbours opposite because days before the first set of 8pm claps, I had fallen flat on my face when out talking my 'healthy' walk (huh!!) On my knees just yards from our garden gate, I was passed by a much healthier runner who, when he realised he'd have to come closer to me than the regulation 2 meters, and that my nose and mouth were bleeding heavily AND (the ultimate crime?) I wasn't wearing a mask, he ran on - at speed! My Samaritans then were the Mum and Dad, the fellow applauders I was now standing opposite and clapping with. These were the heroes of that March moment who, on receiving my hastily photographed mug shot, rushed over, P.P.E. clad, and bathed and steristripped my nose and lip. The first session of Clapping for Carers led to 10 weeks of neighbourhoods applauding - a suggestion made by Dutch national and London resident, Annemarie Plas. Despite some appalling and very public criticism, Annemarie hopes that clapping this time for ALL those who have become our HEROES in every walk of life and those that have encouraged and 'been there' for everyone, will enable us to weather this stage of the pandemic too. She said, 'I fully acknowledge that things are now worse than ever and that some may not feel that an applause is appropriate, but I also know how much it meant to millions of people last time not just to our carers but to our neighbours and communities; clap for the heroes directly in (our) own lives, and for all of those incredible individuals.' Taking a straw poll of friends and family north and south of the Border I heard many reasons (or excuses?) for not participating in this expression of thanks to the thousands of HEROES who continue to offer service in these hugely challenging times.

The explanations were many and various; not least the 'official' discouragement (and that of some medics too) who say close proximity to neighbours may compound the conditions for virus spreading.

What a shame. When is saying Thank You ever wrong? I do appreciate that different people choose to say their thanks and to show their gratitude in many different ways, but is it possible that in the darkness and gloom of Lockdown 3, the gratitude of the communal, celebratory clapping of spring and summer 2020 may have dissipated? Have the Heroes who have continued to give unstinting service in physical and mental Health, Social and Residential Care - as well as the thousands who have supported our children and young people in Education, Social and Criminal Justice services, been totally forgotten, ignored and unthanked? I believe that these heroes, paid and unpaid, deserve our unreserved and utmost gratitude. Please let us search out our own ways to say THANK YOU! Continued... Prayers in our own services of public worship include words of Adoration, Confession, THANKSGIVING and Supplication - we thank God for all the blessings of his Creation. Let us not forget to continue thanking God for ALL who spend their lives in the ceaseless service of humankind. Using words from Martin Rinkart's 17th Century hymn of thanks-giving and praise; 1 Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices, who wondrous things has done, in whom his world rejoices; who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today. 2 O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us, with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us, to keep us in his grace, and guide us when perplexed, and free us from all ills in this world in the next.

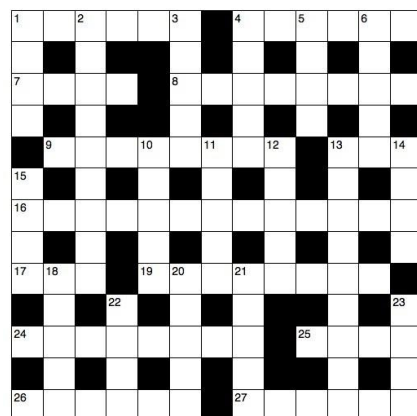
***Revd Alison Mills***

### **First Communion**

My three-year-old niece, Kelly, went with a neighbour's little girl to church for her First Communion practice. The minister had the children cup their hands, and then went solemnly down the line, giving each child a piece of bread, and intoning: "God be with you".

This made quite an impression on Kelly. She came home and told her mother to cup her hands and bend down. Kelly took a piece of bread from her sandwich, placed it in her mother's hands, and whispered, in her most angelic voice, "God will get you."

## March Crossword



**Across: 1** The earth is one (6)

**4** 'On a hill far away stood an old —

cross' (6) **7** 'I am the — vine and my

Father is the gardener' (John 15:1) (4)

**8** The Caesar who was Roman Emperor

at the time of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:1) (8)

**9** 'Your — should be the same as that of

Christ Jesus' (Philippians 2:5) (8)

**13** Jesus said that no one would put a

lighted lamp under this (Luke 8:16) (3)

**16** Involvement (1 Corinthians 10:16)

(13) **17** Armed conflict (2 Chronicles 15:19) (3) **19** Where the Gaderene pigs were

feeding (Mark 5:11) (8) **24** What jeering youths called Elisha on the road to Bethel

(2 Kings 2:23) (8) **25** The Venerable — , eighth-century Jarrow ecclesiastical

scholar (4) **26** 8 Across issued a decree that this should take place (Luke 2:1) (6)

**27** Come into prominence (Deuteronomy 13:13) (6)

**Down: 1** Where some of the seed scattered by the sower fell (Matthew 13:4) (4)

**2** Sexually immoral person whom God will judge (Hebrews 13:4) (9)

**3** Gospel leaflet (5) **4** Physical state of the boy brought to Jesus for healing

(Mark 9:18) **5** Tugs (anag.) (4) **6** To put forth (5) **10** Nationality associated with St

Patrick (5) **11** Leader of the descendants of Kohath (1 Chronicles 15:5) (5)

**12** 'After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping — heel' (Genesis 25:26)

(5) **13** At Dothan the Lord struck the Arameans with — at Elisha's request (2 Kings

6:18) (9) **14** 'Peter, before the cock crows today, you will — three times that you

know me' (Luke 22:34) (4) **15** Spit out (Psalm 59:7) (4) **18** 'When I — , I am still

with you' (Psalm 139:18) (5) **20** Concepts (Acts 17:20) (5) **21** Thyatira's dealer in

purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (5) **22** Does (anag.) (4) **23** The second set of seven cows

in Pharaoh's dream were this (Genesis 41:19) (4). *Solution on page 19*

## Miscellaneous musings modern life...

In filling out an application, where it says, 'In case of emergency, notify:' I put 'DOCTOR.'

Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.

The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight because by then, your body and your fat are really good friends.

## Here is an update from the children in Junior Church:

We have been keeping very busy every Sunday evening and have been working very closely with our Methodist friends. Each week one of us reads a bible reading that links in to what the grown ups have been learning about and then we have been writing our own prayers to share with the group.

Every week Jackie from the Methodist church leads us in a craft activity. Recently we have been making boats to replicate Jesus and the disciples in the storm, a paper chain of all the disciples joined together and we have been creating mazes to represent Jesus getting lost from Mary and Joseph when they went to the temple. Some of our art work has been put up in the window of the Methodist Church, if you walk past you will see our drawings of the 3 wise men and their camels bringing gifts to Jesus.

The best thing of all is seeing each other and having a chat about what we have been getting up to over the previous week. It keeps us connected and reminds us that soon we will all be together again.

Over the next few weeks we will be working alongside the Knit and Natter group who, as you know, have been busy knitting bunting for us all for when we finally return to church. Joan Cooper invited Junior Church to come up with some designs to add to the bunting so we all have our thinking caps on and will get creative for the following few Sunday evenings.

We all hope you are staying safe and that lots of you are now immunised! We really miss being in church and can't wait to see you all again soon,

**Julie Vermaas, Junior Church**

## Little old lady seeks handsome young man....

An advert appeared in a student newspaper of a university: "Sweet little old lady wishes to correspond with good-looking university student – especially a six-footer with brown eyes, answering to initials J.A.D." It was signed: "his mother."

To get to heaven, turn right and keep going straight. – *Anon*

Don't be irreplaceable. If you can't be replaced, you can't be promoted.



## **The Holy Land – life on the other side by Andrew LeGrice**

I thought I would send a snapshot of daily life here in Jerusalem – this was a day a few weeks ago.

0630 – wake up so we can get the kids to school, if we didn't get woken up already by a mosquito swinging by our ears as they still do so late in the year!

0700 – Breakfast. Usual fare really, although we throw in more fruit, which when in season is beautiful, local and cheap, and when out of season largely disappears.

Cereal is three or four times more expensive than back home.

Kirsty drops the kids off at the Anglican international school at around 0745, crossing over into the Israeli West of the city, and passing through the ultra-orthodox neighbourhood of Maresha. Kirsty then usually splits her time between volunteering at an organisation based on the Mt of Olives, various writing projects, the parent teacher association (which has suddenly got a bit spiky because of Corona!) and helping to keep the show on the road!! Because of coronavirus restrictions only our daughter is currently attending the pre-school. The troublesome six-year old stays at home with Kirsty and drives her to distraction with his petulance!!

0730/0800 – at the moment I usually work from home two days a week, and for three days work in the city of Ramallah. On a Ramallah day, I nip down to the consulate (a bit like an embassy), get my temperature checked, say hello to the security and reception folk, and manoeuvre the cars in the parking lot until I can get my allotted one out! Ramallah itself is only a few miles north as the crow flies, but takes about an hour to get there because the most direct route in is considered too dangerous (Palestinians crossing there get shot reasonably frequently). The best option is a circuitous drive through Israeli settlements and orthodox areas. The road out from the Consulate passes St Joseph's hospital, where ambulance crews wearing PPE often loiter about. Once onto the open road, passing the hill-top tomb of the Prophet Samuel, I get great views of the Palestinian West Bank on one side and back towards Jerusalem on the other. As the road approaches the turn-off to go through the separation wall, you get a little picture of Israeli life – people out exercising in their lycra, neat little settlement houses, smooth tarmac roads, and speed cameras. A glimpse of two camels on the other side – recently wearing little coats in the 19c cold (!) – hint at the change to come.

Before crossing into Palestinian administered areas of the West Bank, a red sign proclaims that entry is illegal and dangerous for Israelis – not quite accurate but the message is clear. Getting in is easy. No questions asked, driving through a checkpoint, passing Palestinian labourers waiting to be checked or loitering at the side of the road waiting to be picked up to start work on the 'Israeli' side of the wall.

Waiting is a common theme, but they are better paid in Israel than in the West Bank, so it's worth it. The Israeli soldiers usually pay no attention, and on the other side, by the tunnel that Palestinians walk through is an old man slumped on the floor, a green baseball cap on his head, and in front of him a zimmer frame. He's waiting to be allowed in, perhaps to get medical treatment. Under a huge umbrella boxes of local figs are for sale, the last of the season. There are more holes than road, and speed bumps instead of speed cameras, piles of old cars, dogs lounging on the street and harrying my wheels. A big digger truck saunters towards me with two men nonchalantly chatting in the scoop. A lady in full black robes and head scarf leads a school age boy up the street on a handsome white donkey. The local school is shut. Rusting scorched-black metal refuse bins say: "From the Japanese people".

I drop in to a local bakery to pick up pastries for the office and to practice my limited Arabic with the friendly staff. Then on past a little village which is ringed by the twisted metal and collapsed concrete of houses demolished by the Israelis, I think because they were too near for comfort to the wall they had just built. Demolished houses are a reasonably familiar sight here.

As you approach Ramallah the streets gradually smarten up: you know you're in the city when everywhere are fancy cars, people in suits, nice little cafes. Ramallah is an old Christian village that is now a bustling city since it became the Palestinians' 'temporary' capital in the West Bank. Although there is a lockdown in place, it's not being enforced too strictly – some wear masks, some don't, although most places are shut by 1900. It's a hilly town and I work in an office with UK military personnel on a wind-swept hilltop. I split my day between there and the Palestinian Authority ministry offices where coffee is plentiful and the smoking stains the framed declaration of independence and portraits of Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas (their two Presidents) hanging on the walls. Meetings are long and full of debates and diversions.

From the roof of their building you can see Tel Aviv and the glistening blue sea not far away, something that is out of reach for most people here unless they can get a permit to leave the West Bank.

1700 – drive home, the sunset giving way to pitch black as the workmen walk back home from the Israeli side, the car's beams lighting up their lower halves briefly as they pass. Drive through an ultra-orthodox area, men folk all in black racing to get somewhere and ladies in jet black wigs with large broods in tow.

1800 – at home, some dinners are familiar British fare, but we've taken on the local stuff too: humus comes in 1kg ice cream tubs! The kids share a room – the safe room in case there's an earthquake (we've only had a tiny one), and then we're free to tidy the place up, watch Netflix and collapse!

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*Sudoku Solution on page 19*

Switched on...

A housewife was helping her aged mother get up the stairs on their brand-new stair lift when the minister telephoned her. He was horrified to hear her say: "I'm so sorry, but I'll have to ring you back. I can't talk right now because I've finally got Mother in the electric chair and I'm eager to press the switch and see if it works!

Fall down...

One way to find out if you're old is to fall in front of a group of people. If they laugh, you're young. If they panic and start running toward you, you're old.

Bishop...

A little girl told her mother, "We went to a confirmation service at the cathedral and I saw the bishop. Now I know what a crook looks like!"

Bend...

I got a package envelope in the mail the other day that had written on the front, Photographs: Do Not Bend. Underneath the postman had written: "Oh yes they do."

## The Alto's Lament by Bob the Organist

It is tough to be an alto when you're singing in the choir  
The sopranos get the twiddly bits that people all admire.  
The basses boom like loud trombones, the tenors shout with glee  
But the alto part is on two notes (or, if you're lucky, three.)



And when we sing an anthem and we lift our hearts in praise  
The men get all the juicy bits and telling little phrases  
Of course the trebles sing the tune – they always come out best  
The altos only get three notes and twenty-two bars rest.

We practise very hard each week from hymn-book and the Psalter  
But when the conductor looks at us our voices start to falter.  
Too high! Too low! Too fast! – you held that note too long  
It doesn't matter what we do – it's certain to be wrong.

Oh! Shed a tear for Altos, they're the Martyrs and they know  
In the ranks of choral singers they are considered very low  
They are so very 'umble that a lot of folk forget 'em,  
How they'd love to be sopranos, but their vocal chords won't let 'em!

And when the final trumpet sounds and we are wafted higher  
Sopranos, basses, tenors – they'll be in the Heavenly Choir  
While they sing 'Alleluia' to celestial flats and sharps  
The altos will be occupied with polishing their harps.

***Submitted by Margaret Butchart.***

## Pray with Grannie...

A small boy went to church with his grandmother and joined her when she quietly slipped off the pew to kneel and pray. He even copied her example of burying her face in her hands. But after a few seconds his curiosity got the better of him. "Who are we hiding from, Grannie?"

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## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2021

Usually at this time the churches in Morpeth are preparing for the World Day of Prayer service which this year is on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Sadly however the corona virus pandemic has affected all our lives and closed churches have meant that people have been unable to meet for worship. In the light of the ongoing current lockdown situation, very reluctantly and with great sadness, the committee have decided to cancel our service this year. However for those with internet access there may be opportunities to view a live streamed service by accessing the World Day of Prayer website [www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk) where you will be able to find details.

We have received the orders of service which has been prepared by the Christian women of Vanuatu on the theme of "Build on a strong foundation" (Matthew 7: 24-27). This idyllic archipelago made up of 80 islands is not immune to struggles, especially in gender equality and education. They understand about building on a strong foundation as the islands are in the South Pacific tropical cyclone zone. In April 2020 Cyclone Harold destroyed everything in its path and they are still recovering from the devastation. The people of Vanuatu need our prayers and support.

We are planning for your church WDP committee member to distribute the orders of service to you so that you will be able to join in this Day of Prayer with the rest of the world on March 5<sup>th</sup>, either individually or by accessing live streamed services. Contact: Christine Oakes [oakescm@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:oakescm@yahoo.co.uk)

At our service we make financial offerings for the many good causes the WDP support during the year. These are outlined at the back of the order of service.

Please, if you feel able, would you make a donation to the WDP by using the envelope included in the order of service or by sending donations direct to the WDP office, via the website, text message to 70085 using the phrase 2021 WDP and then adding the amount you wish to donate (ie 2021WDP £5). It would be good if you could also add the code MORP3301 to your donation as this will indicate it has come from Morpeth. This is their only source of income and the monies raised from your kind donations will help the work of World Day of Prayer in England, Wales & Northern Ireland and projects run by Christian charities around the world.

Whichever way you celebrate World Day of Prayer 2021 we pray that it is a Blessing to all, and we know that Vanuatu will feel the wave of prayer from around the world. Remember them in your prayers throughout the year.

*God, help us to remember that in life there are always choices to make.*

*We invite you to encourage us to act on the words of Jesus,  
whom we recognise as the Way, the Truth and the Life. Amen*

Please note that another representative from St.George's is needed on the local interdenominational committee of the now renamed World Day of Prayer. If you feel that you would like to join Christine then you can contact her on

**[oakescm@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:oakescm@yahoo.co.uk)**

### Wordsearch for March

Life is full of ups and downs: after blessings, hard times often follow. They are not meant to destroy us but to help us grow spiritually by deepening our faith and dependence on God. The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil – to give Him the opportunity to stand fast against the enemy. The devil's temptations were based on half-truths, which Jesus rejected by standing firm on the whole truth of Scripture. The truth sets us free!

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

Holy Spirit Jordan Wilderness Tempted Devil Fasted Hungry If Bread  
Alone Kingdom World Authority Glory Worship Me Serve Jerusalem  
Pinnacle Temple Stone Foot Angels Bear Strike Test temptation  
*Solution on page 19*

## Puzzle Solutions:

**ACROSS:** 1, Planet. 4, Rugged. 7, True. 8, Augustus. 9, Attitude. 13, Bed. 16, Participation. 17, War. 19, Hillside. 24, Baldhead. 25, Bede. 26, Census. 27, Arisen.

**DOWN:** 1, Path. 2, Adulterer. 3, Tract. 4, Rigid. 5, Gust. 6, Exude. 10, Irish. 11, Uriel. 12, Esau's. 13, Blindness. 14, Deny. 15, Spew. 18, Awake. 20, Ideas. 21, Lydia. 22, Odes. 23, Lean.



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

**Mothers Day 4<sup>th</sup> March.**

**Palm Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March Good Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April**

## Conservative Advertising Campaign:

‘We plan to cut all homeless people in half by 2025’

**Food...** People at my workplace have started a funny new tradition where they give names to the food in the office fridge. Today I ate a sandwich called Mark, followed by some cake called Rosie.

## One out of Ten...

A Sunday school class was studying the Ten Commandments. The teacher asked if anyone could recite one from memory. Susie raised her hand, stood tall, and quoted, “Thou shall not take the covers off the neighbour’s wife.”

## NEWS FROM GREAT BAVINGTON URC

### Services

It is unlikely that there will be a service at Great Bavington Church on Sunday 7 March because of the Coronavirus situation. This may be reviewed nearer the time, so please see the church's Facebook Page [www.facebook.com/GreatBavingtonURC](https://www.facebook.com/GreatBavingtonURC) for updates. Arrangements for Easter (Sunday 4 April) will of course depend on the situation then.

Julian's Sunday services continue on YouTube – search for Morpeth and Area URC to find them. If you would like a copy of the service on CD, please contact Julian: [sanders.julian@talk21.com](mailto:sanders.julian@talk21.com), 01670 225539.

### Lent

Julian, with the Methodist Church in Morpeth, Is running a Lent Bible study on Thursday afternoons and Monday evenings on Zoom. Contact Julian for details.

The URC has created some Lent resources and activity materials: <https://urc.org.uk/lent.html>

### Ice Cream Van

Tony's Ice Cream Van comes to Great Bavington on the last Sunday of the month, at around 12 noon. Tony has a huge range of ice creams in cones, tubs or on sticks, or bring your own container to put some in the freezer for later. Imagine it's the seaside and the summer!

### Connie Leathart - pioneering airwoman

Connie Leathart lived at Little Bavington Farm for many years. During the 1920s she took up flying and became a successful and competitive pilot. During World War II she joined the Air Transport Auxiliary, delivering planes from factory to airfield and was one of the very few women carrying out this role. Connie died in 1993 and is buried at Thockington. Read more about her at <https://www.northumberlandarchives.com/archive-exhibitions/constanceleathart-clouds/>

We hope all is well with everyone at St George's.

**Nicola Bell**

## WIDDRINGTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH PRAYING TOGETHER

During March please pray for:

People in war zones and refugees

Those suffering religious persecution (of any faith)

The work of relief agencies

Those suffering from Covid19 throughout the world, especially in countries where health services are less advanced

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

Workers in 'non-essential' retail and hospitality who may be in danger of losing their jobs - or have already lost them

Farmers and farm workers: especially those busy with 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

Students, school children, teachers and lecturers and parents, undertaking, delivering and supervising home learning.

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](mailto: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.

At time of writing, it is very difficult to know what we will be able to do in March. Details of what will happen will appear on our Facebook page, and we will also communicate by phone or email, so that everyone will be kept 'in the loop'.

**Flowers:** Flowers for March (if required) by Fiona and in April by Kathleen. Easter is April 4th, and we are likely to be again confined to our 'bubble' for decorations. Gifts of spring flowers and greening twigs will be appreciated. We'll let you know more in the next magazine.

**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](http://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 expect we'll get a pay out again this quarter.

**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:**

We are not sure when we will be able to resume worship. It will depend on how infection rates reduce. At time of writing our ward is at the top of infections for the county, which is disappointing, but the situation is under review. When we reopen, please join us if and when you feel able. 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 no longer be 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 March, should worship be possible:**

**7th Rev'd Lynda Coulthard**

**14th Carol Dixon**

**21st Rev'd Julian Sanders**

**28th (Palm Sunday) 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.

**1st Wednesday:** Prayer Group: We are again meeting weekly (via zoom) during the lockdown. 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 is very disappointed by the new lockdown. He liked it when Julian recorded the service for February 7th in church.

The website is at: [www.widdringtonurc.org.uk](http://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 see below for more details.

### **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.

At our Churches Together meeting on 18th January we discussed this year's World Day of Prayer service which is due on March 5th. We have agreed not to attempt to hold this year's service on the designated date, but instead will consider holding it in September. Meanwhile the booklets will be available from your rep (Fiona) if you would like to read it at the proper time. Rev'd Joanna Dobson is considering basing 'Church at home' for Sunday 7th March on the service. We also agreed that each church will donate £20 to World Day of Prayer in lieu of service collections. If you would like to help out with this, please let Kathleen have your contribution by the date of the service (in March)

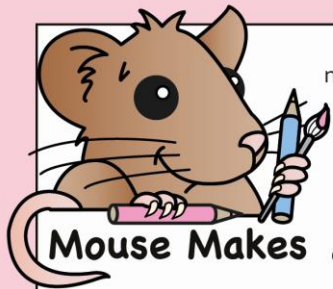
**FEM**

### **Memorial Arboretum**

Part of our Ecochurch project will be the creation of wildflower meadows in the rough grass areas round the church. In addition we invite you to help us create a Memorial Arboretum. If you would like to dedicate a tree in memory of a church member or friend of the church, please let the elders know. We will have a list of approved trees and shrubs: these will be small native species with flowers or catkins, and often berries. Alternatively you can make a donation to help us plant a dogwood hedge around the perimeter.

**FEM**





**Who is my mother?**  
Look up the Bible verses  
then find the mother's  
names in the word search

**CAIN and ABEL**  
Genesis 4:1-2

**JOSEPH**  
Genesis 30:22-24

**ISHMAEL**  
Genesis 16:15

**TIMOTHY**  
2 Timothy 1:5

**RUBEN**  
Genesis 29:32

**GAD**  
Genesis 35:26

**SAMUEL**  
1 Samuel 1:20

**OBED**  
Matthew 1:5

**ISAAC**  
Genesis 21:3

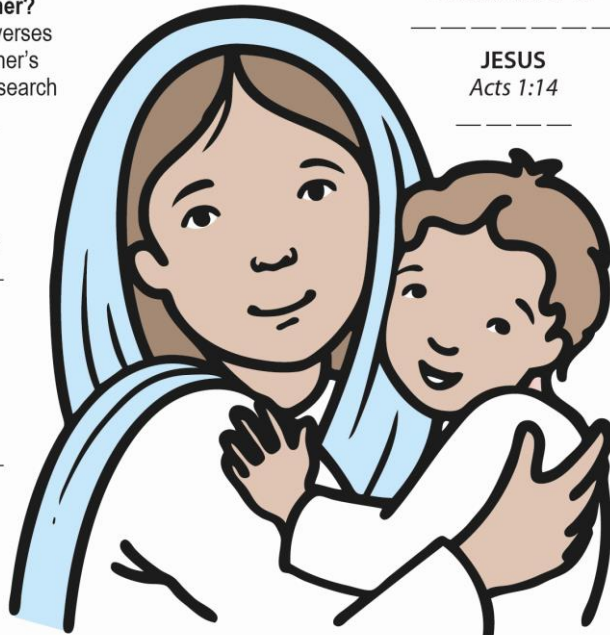
Jesus was **loved** by his  
mother Mary, she looked  
after him, worried  
about him and prayed  
for him. She **cuddled**  
Jesus when he was  
born, **cried** when he  
died and **rejoiced** when  
he rose from the dead.

**SOLOMON**  
1 Chronicles 3:5

**JOHN**  
Luke 1:57-60

**ESAU and JACOB**  
Genesis 25:24-26

**JESUS**  
Acts 1:14



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

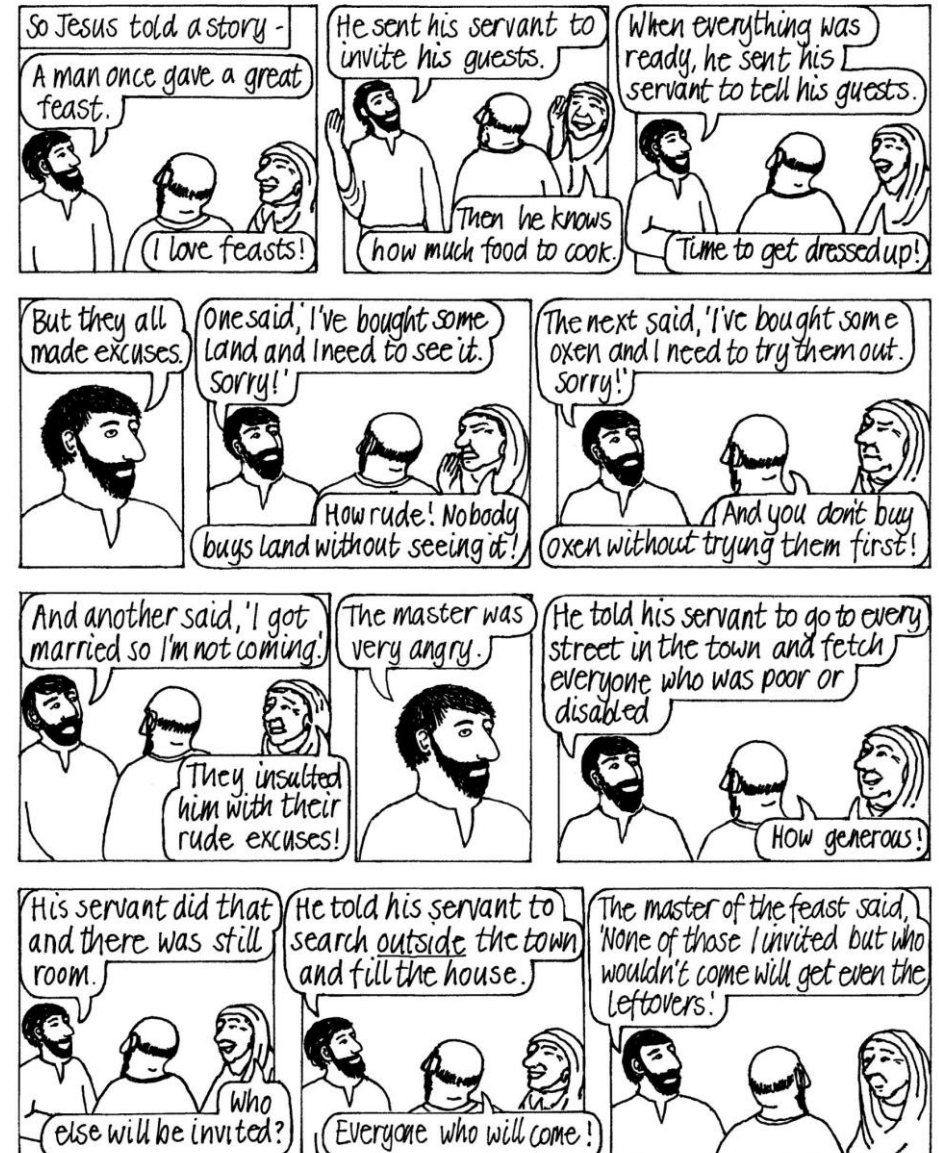
There are two other words in the word search, can you find them?

# Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in  
Luke chapter 14 verses 15-24

Jesus was at a dinner when one guest said  
how good it would be to be at God's feast  
for His people at the end of time.





## SAVING ROBIN'S WAISTLINE ----CHURCH FUNDRAISER

Would you like some home baking to cheer up a "can't think what I'd like to eat day"

We are making a limited menu:

Apple or Plum Pie for 1, 4 or 6 portion, 50p, £1.50, £2.00.

Microwave Sponge Puddings, Apple, Treacle or Plum. 1-2 portions £1.00

Apple Crumble 2 or 4 portions £1.00, £2.00

Cake, Chocolate, Victoria Sponge 1/2 £2.50 or whole £4.00.

***Please contact Joan Cooper on 01670 515682***



The next joint newsletter with Widdrington & Bavington URC's covers events in April 2021. **The deadline is Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March** 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**