

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



May
2021

Website: stgeorgesurcmorpeth.org

A Message from our Minister Revd Julian Sanders

Dear Friends,

It may seem to some of you that I have only just arrived in Morpeth. The lockdown has in some ways suspended church life, even though much of what we do as church has continued throughout the past year. However, the time approaches for me to take a sabbatical and it has been difficult to find a right time to put time aside in order to take this. It just so happens that it has fallen that just as the churches are opening up, the time comes for me to step back and focus on other things for a short while.

My sabbatical runs from the beginning of June to the end of August, at which time the churches will be supported by the elders and other ministers associated with the churches. Services will continue in the churches (providing further lockdowns do not prevent this) and we have a good supply of preachers willing to lead worship. Any pastoral issues that arise should be shared with the elders who will have details of the support group that has been set up. I am hoping the summer will be a quieter time in the year and that I should be able to take my sabbatical with very little disruption.

The word sabbatical has the same origin as the word sabbath – a Hebrew word *Sabbat*. The origin of the word seems unclear – but focuses on perhaps the phases of the moon – and was used in relation to a day of rest. The keeping of the Sabbath, from Friday evening through Saturday, as a day of rest became one of the distinctive practices of observant Jews. In our Christian tradition the 'sabbath' is recognised as a Sunday, though since a change in the trading laws it has become less and less a day of rest (and it never really was for the ministers!)

Along with the sabbath laws for keeping the seventh day a day of rest, the bible lays down laws for a sabbath year when the farmed fields would be left fallow in order to allow the land to recover. (See Exodus 23:10-11). It is this idea of being left fallow that gives rise to the sabbatical – a period of renewal and refreshment in order to become more fertile when returning to work.

My sabbatical will not be a year of lying fallow, and not as frequent as every seven years, but hopefully it will be a time of renewal and refreshment. Just as the land might regain valuable nutrients and goodness that it needs to produce good crops and fruit, so too during my sabbatical I hope to receive ideas and inspiration and teaching that will allow a more fruitful ministry come the autumn months.

I know that there are many talented and capable people within our churches who can care and minister to our congregations during the time that I will be away. I look forward to my time away, so that I might rest but also be refreshed, but look forward even more to being back with you again and continuing in ministry with you.

With every blessing, **Julian**

Refugees and Asylum Seekers May 2021

This month's report is a little different from the usual ones I have written. There has not been much new information about the services themselves, but there has been an increasing focus on some of the effects of the pandemic and the hostile environment which refugees and asylum seekers find themselves in.

West End Refugee Service

The WERS clothing store is still closed as they currently have sufficient supplies for their needs but they are accepting donations of toiletries, cleaning products and non-perishable food items.

WERS has continued to support the refugees it works with throughout the pandemic, noting that its clients have faced increasing problems throughout this time and that health inequalities have deepened for migrant communities. It has been concerned about the fact that food poverty has also been on the increase among its clients. In order to be able to meet this need WERS has been working closely with the West End Food Bank and LifeVineyard Church in Newcastle. Like many other organisations working with refugees WERS has also been very concerned with recent proposals being put forward by the Government to control access to this country by asylum seekers. They stress that "It is a human right to claim asylum, how you travel to a country should have no influence here. People who claim asylum do not have the privilege of choosing how they travel or what documents to take."

Justice and Peace

The Justice and Peace project continues to adapt to life in its new premises and hopes to be in a position to receive more donations shortly.

The Justice and Peace Coordinating Council has been alarmed by some of the proposals made for housing asylum seekers in hotels, camps and barracks. The JPCC has stressed that it believes strongly in the need for newly arrived people in the UK to be treated with respect and dignity, saying it does not matter how people arrive here, and neither should they be deterred.

WERS and Justice and Peace have also both expressed concern about the proposal to house female asylum seekers at Medomsley, near Consett (now known as Hassockfield). This is seen as being inhumane and unnecessary and the JPCC is encouraging people to write to their MPs about this.

There has been a lot in the news recently about refugees and asylum seekers and we do well to keep ourselves informed and be prepared to act when necessary.

Margaret Brock



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



A gift of flowers and vouchers for the garden centre were handed to Teresa Benkhaleb-House following her stepping down from the role of Church Secretary. Teresa has done a great job over the past years as Secretary especially during the difficult times of the interregnum and, of course, lockdown. Much thanks and appreciation were expressed for all that she has done.



It is with great pleasure that we can say Morag Stead has agreed to take over the role of Church Secretary. Morag will be known to some of you as a previous serving elder of the church, and I am sure Morag will bring her own skills and enthusiasm to the role. We hope you will offer your support and encouragement to Morag as she takes on this exciting, and sometimes challenging, opportunity.



Crossword for May

Across: **1** Sense of right and wrong (1 *Corinthians 8:7*) (10) **7** Coming (*John 11:17*) (7) **8** 'All I have is — , and all you have is mine' (*John 17:10*) (5)

10 Smarten (*Acts 9:34*) (4)

11 Hold back (*Job 9:13*) (8)

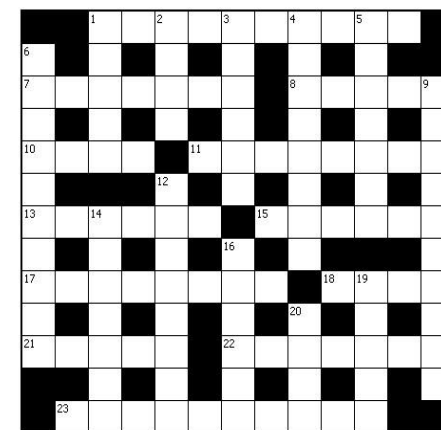
13 Member of the Society of Friends (6)

15 At ague (anag.) (6) **17** Citizen of the Greek capital (8) **18** So be it (*Galatians 6:18*) (4) **21** Twentieth-century poet and dramatist who wrote *Murder in the Cathedral*, T.S — (5)

22 Empowers (*Philippians 3:21*) (7) **23** Imposing (1 *Samuel 9:2*) (10).

Down: **1** Healed (*Luke 7:21*) (5) **2** Central space in a church (4) **3** Co-founder of Spring Harvest and General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance 1983–97, Clive — (6) **4** Moses killed one when he saw him beating a Hebrew labourer (*Exodus 2:12*) (8) **5** Bravery (*Acts 4:13*) (7) **6** It interrupted Paul and Silas singing hymns in a Philippian jail (*Acts 16:26*) (10) **9** Transgression (*Psalms 36:1*) (10) **12** Irish province in which Dublin is situated (8) **14** Same hit (anag.) (7) **16** 'The Spirit of God was hovering over the —' (*Genesis 1:2*) (6) **19** Author of the immortal stories of Winnie the Pooh, A.A. — (5) **20** Cab (4).

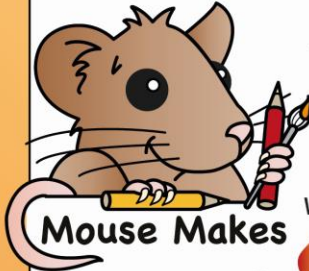
Solution on page 16



My Garden?

I thought I owned a garden, a lovely place to be
A bird said, "Beg your pardon, "This land belongs to me!"
A squirrel dropped a nut on me. Which wasn't what I'd planned
"Get lost!" said he, "for can't you see you trespass on my land?"
A pheasant flapped and squawked so loud, I scarce could hear me think!
"Get off my ground, for two's a crowd!" He kicked up such a stink!
The wild-life around me, so loudly do protest!
They growl and screech till I can see that I am just a guest!

By Nigel Beeton



Mouse Makes

Re arrange the scrambled letters to find the missing words.

The Holy Spirit
VSEIL
with us and in us.

The Holy Spirit
helps us to
WKNO
we belong to God.

The Holy Spirit
HCTSEEA
us about God.

The Holy Spirit
KPESSA
God's word to us.

The Holy Spirit
PHLSE
us to tell others
about Jesus.

The Holy Spirit
helps us when we
AYPR

On the day of PENTECOST
the disciples were gathered
together in one place...

What sound did they hear?
Acts 2:2

What did they see?
Acts 2:3

What filled them?
Acts 2:4

How did they speak?
Acts 2:4

What did the crowd hear?
Acts 2:6

Which countries
had they come from?
Acts 2:9

What was
their reaction?
Acts 2:12-13

Who explained
what was
happening?
What did he say?
Acts 2:14-36

How many
people were
baptised
that day?
Acts 2:41

Change each letter to the
letter before it in the
alphabet and see what
the **Holy Spirit**
produces in us:

KPZ
IVNJMJUZ
TFMG DPOUSPM
GBJUIGVMOFTT
LJOEOFTT
QBUJFODF
QFBDF
MPWF
HPPEOFTT

Colossians 5:22

What is the work of the
Holy Spirit? What does He do?
Fill in the missing letters.

TEAC_ES
COMF_RTS
REVEA_S
IN_OU
TRAN_FORMS
HEL_S
GU_DES
GENEWS
CONV_CTS
SANC_IFIES

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Knitted Bunting

As we hope St. George's will reopen in May.
Please can you let me know if you have any flags that you would like
collected so that I can add them to the already made bunting
Thank you to everyone, particularly the Junior Church,
for their support, we really can "put the flags out"
for Pentecost and our return to church services.
I hope the gargoyles will be listening to our joyful praise.
Joan Cooper tel .01670 515682



A long time ago we had an elderly friend who was a lay preacher. We called him by his initials - "W.T." He was a civil engineer who, at one time, worked for the Hudson Bay Company in Canada. He told us this story.

The Company worked closely with the local indigenous tribes. One day the wife of one of the chiefs was taken ill and had to be taken into hospital. W.T. was given the task of escorting the chief into the town so that he could be near his wife.

The chief was overawed by what he saw in the town as W.T. took him to the hotel where he would be staying. W.T. showed him to his room and, without thinking twice, he switched on the light. The chief was stunned. He looked at the light switch and the lighted bulb in total disbelief and said "Not!" So W.T. switched it off again. "Not!" said the chief. W.T. switched the light on and off a few times and the chief was totally bewildered. So W.T. removed the light bulb and put the chief's finger into the socket and switched on for a brief second. The chief's face was a study as he felt the power through his fingers.

The point that W.T. made when he told this story is that it is all very well knowing about the power, but for it to be of any use you have to be plugged in and switched on. A message for Whitsun?

Submitted by Janet Brown

HENRY DANCER DAYS CHILDREN'S CANCER CHARITY AS IT APPROACHES TEN YEARS OF SERVICE.



As we all acknowledge, the present Covid-19 Pandemic has had a huge impact upon charities. Some are affected because of their focus, others have needed to restrict their services and sadly many have had to close or are assessing the future with some trepidation.

Because of the interest and support that Henry Dancer Days Children's Cancer Charity has received from our church members and friends, I thought you may like to know how the situation is affecting us, what we are still able to offer and how far along the road we have come since the charity was formed almost ten years ago. I still cannot believe that so much time has elapsed since we lost Henry but an enormous amount has been achieved in his name.

Our aims are twofold

1. Hardship support for families with children undergoing cancer treatment.
2. Fun projects and distraction therapy in hospitals such as storytelling and pottery sessions for young patients. These are carried out by professionals in order to provide the highest quality experience for the children.

At present we can continue to offer financial help to families and special treats for the patients. Those receiving this support are recommended to the Charity by the CLIC Sargent nurses who work within the children's cancer wards in hospitals throughout the British Isles. This ensures that appropriate help is given to those most in need.

Unfortunately our storytellers and potters can no longer work in the seven hospitals that we at present service. However, they have all become most adept at Skyping, FaceTiming, Zooming and producing CDs for all those young people who otherwise would not be able to receive the one to one fun experience that they enjoy within the wards.

For those of you who like the number game here are a few pertinent facts.

- In the past nine years Henry Dancer Days has raised over £800,000
- Our storytellers and potters work in 32 Paediatric Oncology wards in the UK including Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Over 10,000 young people have experienced and been helped by our Storytelling

Project in hospitals

- Over 500 young people have been involved in the ceramics project in the Great North Children's Hospital
- 3,500 people have been helped and supported by our Hardship Support Programme

Although at present it is not possible to hold fund raising events, we are indebted to all those who continue to support us financially. We believe in turning those donations around as soon as possible to help the children and their families. It is of no benefit sitting in a bank account. What comes in, goes out and at present we are managing to keep our heads above water.

We are also so grateful to all our storytellers, potters and helpers who are working tirelessly in order to maintain and execute the Charity's aims. It has been a hard year for everyone and we do appreciate all the help, support and interest we continue to receive. Thank you to everyone and here's to the future of a small but extremely active and committed Charity that tries to shine light in a very dark place.

Have you ever laughed at a joke you did not understand?

Then you are not alone. It seems that two thirds of us have laughed at jokes we did not 'get', simply because we wanted to fit in with our friends at the time. And more than half of us have actually gone on to repeat jokes with punch lines which we don't ourselves understand. More than half of us have even researched a joke in order to try and figure out what was supposed to be so funny about it.

In research done by a British neuroscientist, it was found that humour that relies on puns or more obscure concepts is the most likely to confuse audiences. While laughter is universal, humour is very subjective. People all over the world laugh, but what they find to be funny varies widely, depending on culture, context and language.

During the research, it was found that two of the most misunderstood jokes are:

Some Omega-3 vitamins fell on my head when I opened the cupboard. I got super fish oil injuries.

What does a dyslexic, agnostic insomniac do at night? He stays up wondering if there really is a dog.

Dear Lord

Every single evening, as I'm lying here in bed
This tiny little prayer keeps running through my head.
God bless all my family, wherever they may be,
Keep them warm, and safe from harm,
for they're so close to me.

And God, there is one more thing; I wish that you could do;
Hope you don't mind me asking, please bless my computer too.

Now I know that it's unusual,

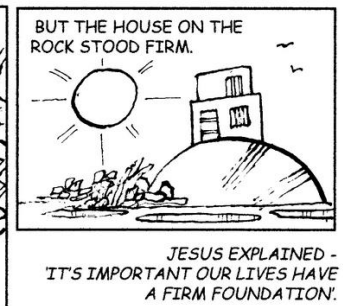
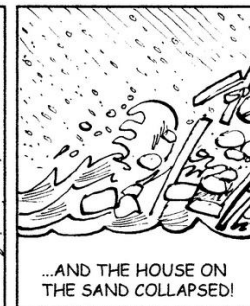
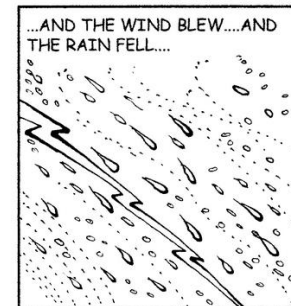
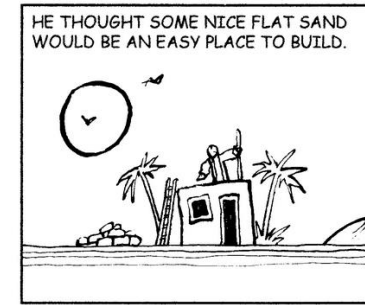
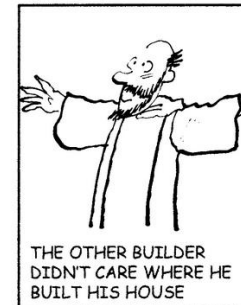
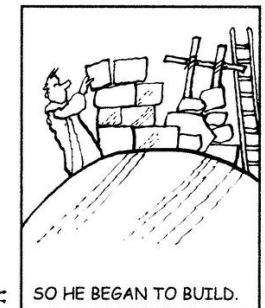
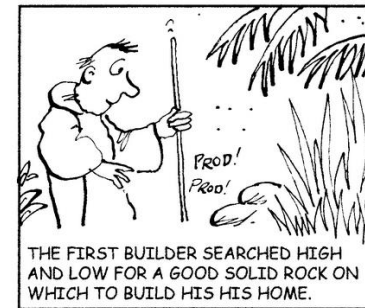
To bless a motherboard,
But listen just a second,
While I explain it to you, Lord.
You see, that little metal box,
Holds more than odds and ends;
Inside those small compartments,
Rest so many of my friends.

I know so much about them
By the kindness that they give,
And this little scrap of metal,
Takes me in to where they live.
By faith is how I now them,
Much the same as you.

We share in what life brings us,
and from that our friendship grew.
Please take an extra minute from your duties up above,
To bless those in my address book,
that's filled with so much love.
Wherever else this prayer may reach,
to each and every friend

Bless each e-mail in box and each person who hits 'send'.
When you update your Heavenly list
On your own Great CD-ROM,
Bless everyone who says this prayer
Sent up to GOD.Com

Submitted by Patricia Gatherum



ANNUAL PLANT SALE
ST GEORGE'S URC CAR PARK, MORPETH
SATURDAY MAY 29th from 10am until Noon

* See details of plant availability below.

* Please be aware that car parking in the immediate vicinity of the church is not possible however you will be able to drop off and pick up nearby and there is parking within 200 yards.

* It would be helpful if you could order your plants in advance by ringing 01670 515870 (Gillian) or 01670 829656 (Mary) and these will be packed for easy collection at the Sale.

* If you have any queries please ring Gillian or Mary
 Please support this Church fundraising event and, as we do not have our usual publicity outlets, tell your neighbours and friends.

These arrangements are dependent upon a smooth unlocking of Government Covid restrictions which we hope will go according to plan.

All advice will be carefully adhered to.

Plants will also be available from mid May for collection by arrangement from Gillian or Mary. Where necessary they can be delivered locally.

If ordering in advance please be sure to leave your telephone number or email details.

Suggested pricing 20/25p per plant, geraniums 50p per plant although you may wish to pay with a donation. Vegetables also available.

>

> **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 hope that the Plant Sale will be well supported as it will be the first major fund raiser for the Church for a year.



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

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Sudoku Solution on page 16

Anaesthetic....

As the manager of our hospital's cricket team, I was responsible for sorting out the equipment for the games. One day as I walked through the surgery department carrying a bat that belonged to one of the surgeons, I passed several patients and their families in a waiting area. I heard one man say to his wife, "Look, darling, here comes your anaesthetist."

Miscellaneous observations on daily life:

You know you're into middle age when you realise that caution is the only thing you care to exercise.

You do not need a parachute to skydive – you need a parachute to skydive twice.

Coronavirus – warning about vaccine.

This happened recently and is an important lesson for our friends and family in the older age group. A friend had his second doze of vaccine at the vaccination centre. Shortly afterwards he began to have blurred vision and struggled to get home. He rang the vaccination centre and asked if he should go straight to the hospital for help. He was told NOT to go to the hospital, but instead to return at once to the vaccination centre and pick up his glasses....

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Wordsearch - Rogation Sunday

The first Sunday in May is Rogation Sunday. This is when many parishes still 'beat the bounds'. Rogation means an asking of God - for blessing on the seed and land. The practice began with the Romans, who processed around the cornfields each Spring, singing and dancing, sacrificing animals, in order to get rid of evil. About 465 AD the Western world was suffering from earthquake and storm. Mamertius, Bishop of Vienne, aware of the pagan custom, ordered that prayers should be said in the ruined or neglected fields. Thus 'beating the bounds' became a Christian ceremonial. It arrived in England early in the eighth century. Each Spring, led by the priest, a little party from the parish would set out with a Cross to trace the boundaries of the parish. They'd implore God to keep their corn and roots and boughs in good health, and bring them to harvest. In the days when maps were scarce, 'beating the bounds' helped remind everyone just where the boundaries were. Do you know yours today?

Sunday May Rogation Beat Bounds
Asking Blessing Seed Land Romans
Processed maps Cornfields Spring Earthquake Storm Prayer Cross
Boundaries Crops Harvest. *Solution on page 16*

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

The Warm Cheese Scone

Over the last fourteen weeks, I've been missing many things,
With all hopes of socialising gone, except when the phone rings.
Almost top of my missing list was... **A warm cheese scone.**
Not baked and warmed at home by me,
But served on a plate with butter and tea.
Today is the day my dream came true, I had my scone, my friend, with you.
We sat in the sun and enjoyed every morsel.
With others around, safely distanced of course.
The laughter we heard made our hearts full.
Now, April fourteenth will for ever be,
Warm Cheese scone day for Mary and me.

Patricia April 14th 2021

Great Bavington United Reformed Church

Services

Services at Great Bavington URC will start again on Sunday 16 May at 6.30pm so we are looking forward to meeting again in person. However, don't feel that you need to come back to church then if you are not comfortable about it yet. Julian's services will continue online (and by CD) even after services start in church again. After that, there will be a service on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of every month, at 6.30pm, and as Julian will be on sabbatical from June to the end of August, other people will be ministering during that time.

Opening the church for visitors

At the moment, covid restrictions mean that the church cannot be open for visitors – only during service times. According to the current roadmap, it should be possible to open the church for visitors during the daytime after 17 May, but please check on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/GreatBavingtonURC>

Books, postcards



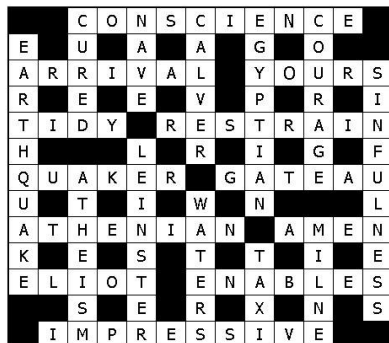
Looking for something to read? Thinking of sending a postcard?

Copies of "A History of Great Bavington" (£7.00), "Roll of Heroes" (£5.00) and postcards (50p) are available email bavingtonchurch@gmail.com or ring 01830 540350 to place your order and arrange payment (cheque or PayPal). P&P is at cost, depending on the quantity of books and cards ordered.

"A History of Great Bavington" describes the history of Great Bavington, and "Roll of Heroes" is about the men who were killed or died during World War I and are commemorated on the Roll of Heroes in the church. Some really fascinating stories in both books. The postcard is from a watercolour by Tim Wells who used to be an Elder here at Great Bavington.

Nicola Bell

Solutions



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



9th May Rogation Sunday, Sunday before Ascension

13th May Ascension Day

23rd May Day of Pentecost, Whit Sunday

A Brighter Tomorrow

There is much we can do just to brighten, this world of all take and no give
There's a great deal that we can contribute, through the everyday lives that we live.

By supporting one's elderly neighbours, or through lending a hand in some way

It's by taking a bunch of spring flowers, to someone to brighten their day.

It's by sparing a few precious hours in the service of those most in need

It's all about setting a standard and trying to give others a lead

It's the way that we tend to treat others, help and aid folks in distress

It's the care and assistance we offer, that will set us apart from the rest.

The choice that we face is quite simple, the rewards plain for all men to see

'As you did all of this to my brother, then' said Christ, 'you did it to Me.'

By Colin Hammacott



WIDDRINGTON UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

PRAYING TOGETHER

During May 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

Farmers and farm workers

School, college and university students, especially those finishing their courses, with or without examinations. Pray for fairness in assessments.

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

Those who have still to receive the vaccine

Those whose mental health has suffered over the past year.

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 May we continue to offer Sunday worship. Please see below for details. Please note: the copy date came before the April Elders meeting. If anything changes we will make sure to let you all know!

Flowers: Flowers for May by Kathleen and June by Fiona. Gifts of garden flowers or cash donations would 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 £325 so far with just nine members. We got a payout last month. Social: We will let you know when our social programme can recommence. If we are able to organise anything towards the end of the month we will let you know by Facebook, email and word of mouth. 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 hope to continue Sunday worship throughout May. Please join us 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 May are:

2nd David Rogers

9th Rev'd Julian Sanders*

16th Rev'd Lynda Coulthard

23rd Steve Collinson

30th Worship Group

*We hope that the ordination and induction of Liv Walden as Elder will take place at this service.

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 have decided to continue to meet weekly during April and May. Meetings are at 7.30 via Zoom.

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 over 160 likes, with another 5 people 'following'! Any information we have about service arrangements will be published there. Thanks to Liv for her contributions.

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! He is really happy to see us 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 hope to have sown our first 'bee bombs' in the area to the left of the drive as you enter by the time you read this - or soon after.

Please contact the Elders if you wish to dedicate a tree in the memorial arboretum.

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 until they can meet in the Community Centre.

Traidcraft Big Brew: we are hoping for a fine day before June 7th, but after the May easing of restrictions, when 30 people can meet outside. Diana has offered to host this. We'll let you know if this will be going ahead..

Possible joint outdoor picnic/communion: details still 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. To do this you can:

* visit www.christianaid.org.

* Pay directly to Christian Aid Bank by phoning 02075232226

* Pay by phone on: 02075232269

FEM

Diana Hogg writes:

Why not come and enjoy a coffee or other refreshing drink and something to eat on Saturday May 22nd from 2-5pm at Cook's Hemmel, Causey Park, NE61 3EP

We'll be outside, relaxing and enjoying each other's company. It would be great if you could let me know only if you are planning to come. Please phone 07398123690.

Donations to Traidcraft would be most welcome



The next joint newsletter with Widdrington & Bavington URC's covers events in June/July 2021. **The deadline (due to holidays) is Sunday 16th May.**

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**