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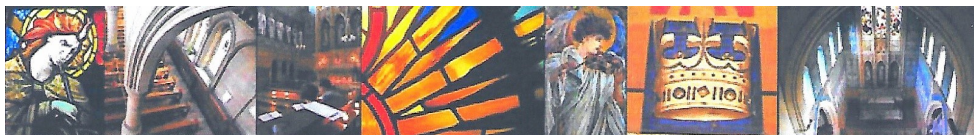
A worshipping community: inclusive, nurturing, engaged

THE LANCE

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2024



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Editorial

Firstly, I would like to apologise to you all for the lateness of this edition. This summer has been tumultuous for me for a number of reasons. Hopefully, full service will now be resumed.

Our great news is that our new vicar, Rev'd Deborah Loughran, has been licensed at a very happy and moving service and she is welcomed by the congregation. We look forward to meeting and getting to know her, and to her guidance and inspiration. May she and her family enjoy their time at St George's.

This edition looks back across the summer, at many of the events that took place then. From Flower Festivals, to Tea on the Green, wet summer walks and musical recitals, it has been a busy time. Through a long interregnum, the church has fared well. This is thanks to the hard work, conscientiousness and kindness of the Clergy team, the Church Wardens, our Musical Director and the many members of the congregation. St George's is in a good place and we look forward to our new vicar building on this strong base.

I would like to thank the two members of the congregation who wrote in, following Jonathan's letter, and the continuing debate about the Church of England's present stance on its role in the history of slavery.

We celebrate the achievements of both young and older members.

It is, of course, not all plain sailing, and the poor performance of this readership in the summer competition has been noted. We expect better. There may be homework!

Margaret Vane

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Clergy Letter



What music would you like at your funeral? Does anyone else know? Memorably, I once walked into a crematorium to “Always look on the bright side of life” from the film ‘Life of Brian’. It is unlikely that her relatives would have chosen this if they had not known her wishes. Grandchildren who love Taylor Swift and children who successfully bought Oasis tickets may not know your love of Nimrod or your dislike of any hymn sung to the tune Abbot’s Leigh. Do your nearest and dearest know that you have said a modern version of the Lord’s Prayer through gritted teeth for the last fifty years and yearn for the version you said at school?

During the interregnum I have realised that I can no longer ring a hospital ward and get information about a parishioner’s health without being asked whether I am a relative or know their date of birth. Data protection has been invented, on balance for the better. Several years ago, a pregnant woman was seriously assaulted in a Sunderland Hospital car park: an investigation revealed that her estranged abusive husband had phoned the hospital to ask when her next appointment was and had lain in wait for her. No longer will a university chaplain receive a letter beginning, “Emily is the most normal member of her family” as a vicar once wrote to me as he commended a new student to my pastoral care. No doubt there are doctors who wistfully remember the acronym NFJ* in a patient’s notes.

A practical way in which we can welcome Debbie as our new vicar is to take a couple of steps to make it easier for her to care for us as our parish priest. The first is to collect together any directions for your funeral service and deposit them in a file in the parish office. The second is to let her know your date of birth and contact details for your next-of-kin, particularly if you live alone or with someone who doesn’t attend St George’s. Those who know they are immortal need not follow this advice, but may need a reality check!

We have probably all got a recipe for fixing the things that we as individuals believe is wrong with St George’s: it may be explicit or deeply embedded. It will certainly be diametrically opposed to someone else’s recipe. Being an inclusive church means more than tolerating those irritating people who disagree with us. It means embrac-

ing them as fellow members of the Body of Christ, praying that we may see their strengths and asking for the grace to appreciate them. It also means being open to change our ideas and our behaviour. If we can manage this, and acknowledge that we struggle to meet this challenge, we might spare Debbie a rash of competing visions and give her a chance to get to know us as we are, flawed, bruised but open to a shared future.

*Normal for Jesmond. Doctors trained in Cambridge were more familiar with NFN - Normal for Norfolk.

Rev'd Bryan Vernon

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New Wildlife and Pollinator Patch

An area has been dug out at the back of the car park as a future wildlife patch – please take a look! If you can contribute to crowdfunding 'pollinator-friendly' plants to go into it, please put the money into an envelope marked 'Wildlife Patch' and drop it into the office.



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Collation, Institution and Induction

Wonderful words but what do they mean?

Whenever I see the word 'collation' Jane Austen springs to mind. Visions of cold collations pop up in front of my eyes - but enough of that! What does the word 'collation' mean in the context of Monday 7th October?

As far as I can see it is simply the act of conferring a benefice on a clergy person. Bishop Helen-Ann, as the diocesan bishop, is chief pastor of the diocese and when she admits the new incumbent to the spiritualities of the living (the responsibility to perform divine service, occasional offices, preach, teach and hold the cure of souls, aka pastoral care) she becomes the collator. Where the candidate is presented by some other patron it becomes an 'institution.'

The new incumbent is also admitted to the temporalities, which is the actual legal possession of the benefice as property. Towards the end of the service the new incumbent is also 'installed', which is simply the symbolic act of placing a new priest in their stall. I write this on Wednesday 9th October and it has now happened, and Debbie is our vicar. Alleluia!

The day itself was very busy. The church hall was filled with seasoned bakers and sandwich makers and wine connoisseurs and was a veritable hive of activity. I spent a lot of the afternoon in church trying my hardest to carry out the instructions of Paul Baker, the Area Dean. I think I must have got it right because he smiled a lot when he was surveying my handiwork (and he didn't change anything - a good sign). Jonathan in the Parish Office had provided me with carefully worded reserved signs to ensure people sat where they needed to be. A hard task as it was not all that clear how many of the people in the different categories were actually going to be present - the Deputy Lord Lieutenant was easy, as there was only one of him. There was Debbie and her family, parishioners from Telford (her previous parish and also from her previous x 2 parish), robed clergy, St George's ministry team, air cadets, community representatives - the list was long!



By 6.30pm the choir was rehearsing, people were starting to arrive and there was a distinct air of anticipation. Debbie was meeting people, looking very calm and composed. Just before 7.30pm Mike de la Hunt gave the 'housekeeping' info (fire exits and loos are the two most important features of a big occasion), followed by the Area Dean and we were off.



The procession was long and imposing, not to mention impressive. The Crucifer (Stephen Dawes), the readers, robed clergy and ecumenical representatives, ministers of the benefice, the Area Dean, the Archdeacon of Northumberland, the Venerable Rachel Wood (if I had ever been ordained I would have been delighted to gain the word Venerable in front of my name), the churchwardens of St George's and St Hilda's and the Bishop of Newcastle resplendent in gold, the Right Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley. We sang the opening hymn with gusto - To God be the glory - and the service began. I love the traditions of the Church of England, so I was a very happy bunny, listening to the familiar language.

Debbie was presented to the Bishop by the Archdeacon and the congregation promised to support Debbie in her new ministry at St George's and St Hilda's. Two readings followed, the first by Marjorie Dodds of St Hilda's and the second by Joan Grenfell of St George's. They were delivered so clearly that every word could be heard (not easy in St George's), in fact you could have heard a pin drop. The large choir sang the beautiful anthem 'How lovely is thy dwelling place' by Johannes Brahms, which is always so good to hear and was just right for this service.



The next part of the service involved members of the congregation directly, each person taking up to Debbie symbols of her ministry. Jonathan Booth (St George's) took the ewer filled with water of baptism, Cynthia Abrahams (St Hilda's) took oil of heal-



ing, Brent Swinburne (St George's) handed over a Bible, Marjorie Dodds (St Hilda's) took a book of Common Worship and Barbara Peacock (St George's) carried bread and wine. I did think that was a particularly meaningful part of the service.

The Declaration and oaths followed, Debbie making the declaration of assent, and then swearing the oath of allegiance to His Majesty King Charles the Third, followed by her facing the Bishop to swear the oath of canonical obedience. Debbie then signed both the declaration and the oaths.

Bishop Helen-Ann then read the Deed of Institution and gave it to Debbie with the well-known words 'Receive this cure of souls, which is both yours and mine; in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' The ministry team then joined Debbie and the Bishop for a blessing.

At this point the Bishop, having instituted Debbie to ministry in the parishes of St George's and St Hilda's, asked the Archdeacon to induct her and support her in her ministry. This was done by the churchwardens leading the Archdeacon and Debbie to the church door where Debbie's hand was laid on the door handle and he inducted her into the 'real, actual and corporeal possession of the parish churches of St George and St Hilda.' She was then given the keys of the churches plus maps of both parishes. Debbie's task was then to be taken into the Tower Room to ring the church bell (Lorna Taylor had shown her how, shortly before the service began). Debbie was then led to the vicar's stall by the Archdeacon and placed in the stall. Loud and prolonged applause followed, and Debbie was welcomed by the Area



Dean and by representatives of the local community.

After the second hymn Debbie led the prayers and gave out notices, and the service ended with a blessing (the Bishop) and the final hymn.

The procession paraded out of the church to The Symphony 2 Finale by Widor played by our organist Drew.

By that time we were all ready for wine and food and we were certainly not disappointed. There was an amazing amount. Jonathan (Parish Secretary) rated it as good as, and perhaps even better than, any others he had been to - praise indeed as he is very discerning of these events.

A wonderful evening and we look forward to working with Debbie in the years to come.

Barbara Peacock



Autres temps, Autres moeurs

Shortly after the announcement that Canon Pennefather, the first vicar of St George's, had accepted a parish in Kensington, the following notice appeared in the March 1897 issue of The St George's Monthly, the forerunner of The Lance:

Mrs Pennefather can strongly recommend two of her domestic servants whom she is not taking to London. A House Parlour Maid, and a House Maid.

Roy Large

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Memories of St George's Choir and Frederick Peacock



[After a big family get-together recently, the Smart family rediscovered this letter written by their mother in, they believe, 2009. We publish it here, as one more example, to remind people of the huge influence Frederick and his family have had on the lives of so many parishioners over the decades.]

'We arrived in Newcastle in 1977 and after trying a few near-by churches, decided to become members of St George's. Our four children either were or had been Christians and were soon in the choir under Frederick. My husband, Peter, later joined too. All went well until 1982 when, very suddenly, Peter died. At that time, the two older children were at university, and the twins, Alison and Andrew, were still at school. All were singing in the choir although Andrew's voice had broken and he embarked on a musical style of a different sort!

Later that year, Frederick asked if I wanted to join.' Yes please ` I said and have never been sorry. I have learnt so much, loved the music and I hope, improved my singing thanks to our talented, industrious, gifted, and friendly choir master. We have been to many other churches to sing, even to the Cathedral; sometimes miles away in the winter dark ; sometimes more local places. Once we all went on a bus to Bedford [?] except David Cullingford who decided to cycle. Brave if not foolhardy. He did get there!

Now the next generation [oldest 19 and at University] have been choristers and instrumentalists – hurrah. Alison is a professional singer and all three daughters have musical husbands. I am indeed blessed.

Thank you, Frederick'

Winifred Smart



A Recital For Frederick

David Hill gave a recital in memory of Frederick on Friday 20 September. David's programme included two of Frederick's favourite organ pieces: the Choral no. 1 by César Franck and Liszt's Fantasia & Fugue on Bach.

David was very complimentary about the organ, comparing it to Westminster Cathedral and a vintage Rolls Royce!

Drew Cantrill- Fenwick



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Summer Competition Answers

What would we do without one particular stalwart supporter! This was a difficult competition. There were at least 2 curve balls hidden in the photos. Not all the cathedrals were in England, and secondly, some of them were not at all well known.

Step forward DEREK NICHOLSON, a worthy winner.

Answers

1. Salisbury
2. Bradford
3. Edinburgh
4. St Davids
5. Cork
6. Hereford
7. Llandaff
8. Aberdeen
9. Downpatrick
10. Bury St Edmunds



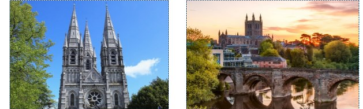
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10.

More jokes from Bristol...

Grace: "What did Spartacus say when the lion ate his wife?"

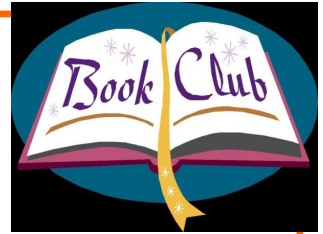
Robin: "I don't know. What did he say?"

Grace: "Nothing. He was Gladiator!"

This, from the girl who, aged 8, calmly announced to her parents that she had observed a lioness and cubs, at 30 paces, sleeping in the long grass, when she had wandered alone off the main path at Lake Manyara in Tanzania. The veracity was confirmed by our guide on inspection of footprints...Ah the delights of parenthood!!!!

Enid

Book Group



The next meeting of the church book group is on Wednesday 6 November at 7.30pm in the Winskill room.

The book is *The Colony* by Angela Magee

Refreshments will be provided

Anne Clark

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Friends of St George's
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Calendar of Events 2024-25

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Venue</i>
19th October	7.00pm	Felling Male Voice Choir	Church
14th December	7.00pm	Christmas with the Singers	Church

2025

1st February	3.00pm	Darling Dollies	Hall
22nd February	7.00pm	Quiz	Hall
8th March	2.00pm	A talk by Christopher Wardale on the stained glass of St George's	Church
23rd April	6.00pm	Annual General Meeting	Church
6th June	7.00pm	Annual Dinner	Hall
20th, 27th of July and 3rd, 10th, 17th of August	2.30 - 4.30pm	Afternoons teas on the green (or in the hall if the weather is bad!)	Green/ Hall



See website for updates and additional events:
friendsofstgeorgesjesmond.org.uk



A Recommendation for Advent Reading

I used the 2023 Advent Book from the Bible Reading Fellowship last year and I would like to commend it to anyone looking for Advent reading this year.

The book is 'An Advent Manifesto – Daily readings and reflections from Isaiah and Luke' by Martyn Percy (BRF. ISBN 978 1 80039 094 2). As the book, which can be purchased through the BRF website, was prepared for 2023/4 and Christmas being a movable feast, readers would have to adapt to the different dates or days.

The book takes the reader from the first Monday in Advent (2nd December 2024) through to Candlemas (2nd February 2025). Most of the readings will be very well-known, but Percy's commentaries are often informative and thorough and sometimes quite challenging.

Mike Oswald.

Mystical Events

Mystical events from the dawn of Britain are appearing in Towers Avenue.

Who can draw the sword?



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Peace Doves at Durham Cathedral

In April, St. George's Choir had the wonderful experience of singing an Evensong service in Durham Cathedral.

Before the service Liz Rhodes and I looked around the cathedral. We took part in a mass participation artwork project by artist Peter Walker and we made peace doves. Peace Doves are hand- made, paper doves each containing an individual message or prayer of peace, love, hope or friendship. Liz and I (along with lots of other cathedral visitors) made one each at a craft table. We handed our flat doves over to the dove helpers to be rolled into 3D birds to be kept for later.

In August we returned to Durham Cathedral to see the large-scale Peace Dove installation. It was made of over 15,000 paper doves made by visitors, local schools, community groups and church groups. The doves were suspended above the Crossing of the cathedral. It looked stunning, lit up with coloured lights and set to music by composer David Harper. We could see doves from all areas of the cathedral and could stand underneath looking up at them dangling from the ceiling so far away. We wondered where our doves were.



It was amazing that something as simple as paper doves containing personal prayers could create such an immersive message of peace.

Alison Mattison



Confirmation of Jonathan Booth

I was honoured to be confirmed at St Paul's in Whitley Bay. It was a lovely experience to celebrate and reaffirm my commitment to the church alongside so many others being confirmed. Thank you so much to Bryan for his support and preparation, to Malcolm for stepping in at the last second to sponsor me in Bryan's absence, and to Enid for coming to support me alongside my family.



I would like to thank St George's for the lovely reception I have received there since first attending.

Jonathan Booth

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Great North Run 2024

For the 39th time I have managed to reach South Shields on the Great North Run after 2 hours 50 minutes, 25 seconds, and 154th out of 273 participants in my age group. (The other 2,657,251 English people in my age group did not get a place!) Having had four weeks

without any training after an eye operation in the summer I was determined to be very gentle with myself. To my surprise I jogged the first seven and a half miles without feeling too challenged: then I remembered I had promised my knees that I would walk some of the way, so I blended walking and jogging for the rest of the way. Being overtaken by people whose bodies looked less designed for a half marathon than mine led to several negotiations with my knees, and they were remarkably forgiving. For the first time that I can remember I woke up next morning without the aches and pains that have always been the price of a Great North Run. Instead, I tested positive for Covid within 24 hours, grateful that this had not happened two days earlier.



An imaginative organiser has decided that run numbers should include the name of the runner: this is confusing when an Andrew has taken the place of an Emily. It also confuses me when complete strangers encourage me with shouts of "Come on, Bryan!" I spend the next mile wondering if I know them, but it's nonetheless welcome.

One of the joys of the Great North Run is the random conversations with strangers and others who have been out of my life for years. This year it was a great delight to meet a former tutee of mine at the start - and then to see her with her husband and two children at the end. It was also encouraging when another doctor I had trained dropped her drumsticks and left the steel band where she was playing to give me a hug.

Once again, I am very grateful to all those from St George's who have sponsored me, either by giving me money or going online to Christian Aid's website and cutting out all the middlemen, some of whom make quite a lot of money from processing charitable donations. It is humbling to realise that my annual 21km run could be the distance many women - and it is mostly women - have to walk to get clean water for their households.

I am thankful that I have a body that can still take part in a half marathon. Many people with greater self-discipline than I are no longer able to cover a fraction of that distance. I am also grateful that I have passed on my love of running to one of my daughters, who ran in a dinosaur outfit. My 17 year old grandson, Adam, finished his first Great North Run in 1 hour 31 minutes and my granddaughter Anya completed the Junior Great North Run for the last time before graduating to the adult run in 2025. It takes longer to reach South Shields these days, but as the inspirational Simon Boas said in his interview with Emma Barnett on the BBC 'Today' programme ten days before his death, if you win £92m but then discover it was only £46m, do you regret the loss of the £46m or celebrate the £46m you have won?



Rev'd Bryan Vernon

Bryan ran in aid of Christian Aid. The link to his giving page no longer works, but this one does: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/give/ways-to-donate>

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St Hilda's Flower Festival 'Famous Quotes'

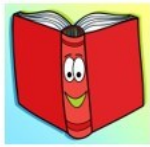
28th and 29th June 2024

St Hilda's hosted a flower festival in June, the beautiful flower exhibits seeking to represent uplifting and encouraging quotes, often from the Bible.

There was a preview on the Friday night with wine and cheese followed by the Mandolin Orchestra giving an enjoyable concert.

Lesley Dinning





BOOK REVIEWS

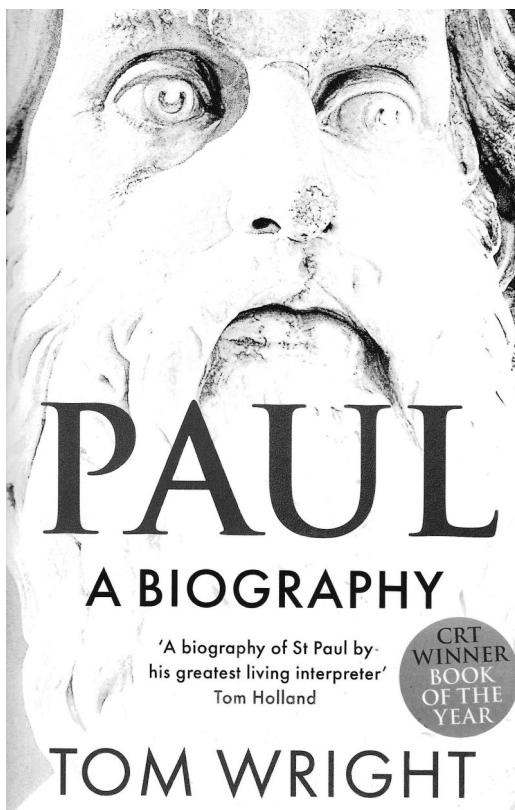


Paul: A Biography

by Tom Wright. SPCK 2018. ISBN 978-0-281-07876-9. 464 pages.

This is a most extraordinary biography! I imagine that many readers of *The Lance* will, like me, have a fairly confused idea of St Paul's travels and writings, full of misconceptions, misunderstandings and contradictions. Tom Wright is described by one reviewer as Paul's 'greatest living interpreter'. He sets himself the task, not only of sorting out What happened, and When, but also, trying to get inside Paul's mind, Why and How. Formerly Bishop of Durham and now Professor at the University of St Andrews, Wright is, as one might expect, profoundly scholarly and his work is well researched, but it is remarkable also for being imaginative and creative. Quite early on he says of Paul's letters: 'Prayer and faith are vital, non-negotiable parts of the attempt to understand them'. And indeed, it is clear on almost every page that this is more than an intellectual and academic exercise, perhaps more of a hagiography. An example of this can be seen in his observations on the letter to the Romans. For Paul, the new age of the Kingdom of God, in Jesus, has already come. The whole earth will be redeemed. Wright dismisses as 'a construct of the late Middle Ages' the view of heaven and hell as separate entities and both being quite separate from our life on earth. For Paul and Barnabus, the focus was not on 'going to heaven'. Heaven was coming to earth. Wright describes Paul's writing thus: 'Romans 8 is the richest, deepest, and most powerful sustained climax anywhere in the literature of the early Christian movement, and perhaps anywhere else as well'. Of the whole of the Letter to the Romans, he says: 'It is one of the most ecstatic and exhilarating, dense and difficult, intellectually and spiritually challenging, and rewarding writings from any period of church history and, some might argue, from anybody else's history as well'. He shows here his grateful admiration for what Paul achieved.

Malcolm Toft, in a recent article in *The Lance*, recommended Wright's studies of the Pauline letters. This biography is the climax of a life-time study of Paul and his writings, and is a masterpiece. He bases his interpretation not only on Paul's letters and



Luke's accounts in the Acts of the Apostles, but on a wide range of other contemporary sources, enlightening the reader, for example, about the different social, political and religious contexts in which Paul was working. The letters of course, reveal much about Paul's life, his beliefs, his concern for his fellow workers, the challenges he faced, not only from the Roman authorities but also from local traders and members of the local synagogue. This further research enabled Wright to understand, amongst many other things, the different social patterns of the various cities Paul visited, explaining some of the differences in the ways in which he approached his work. Wright establishes in some detail, for example, the sort of questioning Paul would probably have faced at the Areopagus in Athens. In

towns where there was a synagogue, Paul seems to have made it his normal practice to start his teaching there – he always thought of himself a loyal and faithful Jew, seeing Jesus as the fulfilment of the scriptures. In Rome, however, groups of Jesus followers had little contact with each other and there was no significant formal synagogue, so here he seems to have visited the different groups calling for unity

Wright starts his biography by assessing what upbringing Saul (as he was then called) might have had as the son of a comfortably-off Jewish trader in Tarsus, an ancient cosmopolitan city with connections to the philosophical traditions of Athens. His education as a young Pharisee would have included learning and praying with the psalms and studying the books of the Torah (the first five books of our Old Testament). He himself tells us he was zealous in following Pharisaic teaching on the Mosaic Law and the Prophets. As well as obeying the Ten Commandments, he would have practised the established rituals, and observed requirements concerning diet and circumcision, but above all worshipped the One True God. He would have been brought up to recite frequently the traditional Jewish prayer known as the Shema:

'Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might'. This upbringing would lead to his development as a zealous persecutor of the followers of Jesus. Saul, Wright tell us, seems to have been interested to watch the stoning of Stephen, remembered as the first Christian martyr. This was, for Saul, 'what "zeal" was supposed to look like'. After his revelatory experience on the road to Damascus, the zeal remained undiminished, but, of course, the focus changed.

Wright reconstructs Paul's life in considerable detail through his travels, with times of enthusiastic joy and times of discouragement and, in Ephesus, even what we would now call depression when he thought, wrongly as it turned out, that the church in Corinth had rejected his teaching. Wright readily acknowledges: 'These reconstructions... are, of course, guesses. But they fit in with what we know of the larger world of the time'. He shows us the extraordinary courage and determination Paul brought to his work following his Damascus experience. Fortright and fearless in his mission, he was willing to suffer and even to die in order to bring his hearers to Christ. He stood up for what he believed, challenging not only the Roman authorities who imprisoned him more than once but also the local inhabitants by whom he was several times beaten almost to death. He was even attacked by other Jews, but none of this stopped him from of doing what he believed God was asking of him. Indeed, he felt that by suffering, he was following the example of his Lord. He even challenged – and persuaded – Peter and James the brother of Jesus and the community of followers of Jesus in Jerusalem itself that non-Jewish followers should not be required to observe Jewish dietary laws and circumcision. All this is, of course, well-known from our reading of his letters and the book of Acts, but Wright seeks, from other sources, greater detail of some of Paul's experiences. He tells us what life in prison would have been like, and in another powerful passage, he describes in vivid detail what Paul and his fellow travellers would have lived through when the ship in which they were sailing to Rome was shipwrecked on Malta. From his research, Wright's discovered the size and type of ship it would have been and how and why, exhorted by Paul, the ship's crew would have taken the actions they did, such as jettisoning material necessary for sailing, dragging successive anchors and, eventually, abandoning the ship and its cargo.

The concluding chapters of Wright's biography start with an attempt to reconstruct what would have faced Paul when he eventually reached Rome and what he might have done there. Luke gives little detail in Acts and other contemporary accounts are

often too one-sided to be reliably informative. There is little clear evidence of what he did, and none at all of when and how he died. Did he achieved his ambition to go on to Spain? St Clement, writing perhaps about thirty years after Paul's death, seems to have suggested that he did. Did he die under Nero's persecutions? We have no way of knowing.

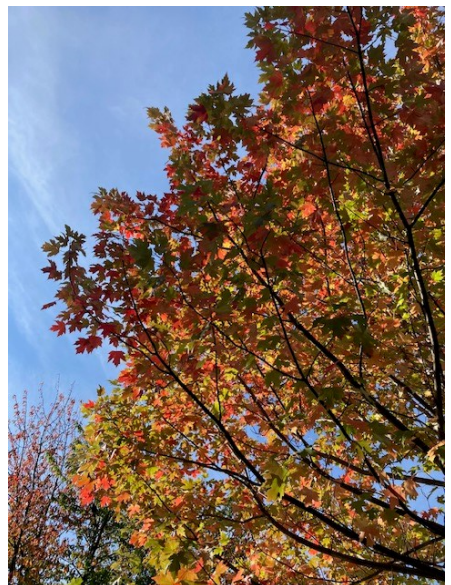
The final section of the biography returns to the two big questions: Why Paul acted as he did and why he was he was so effective. Part of the answer to the first question lies in his character, already seen in the zeal of his life as a young Pharisee. 'The first thing coming at us throughout his story, is his sheer energy. We feel it pulsing through the letters.' He faced up to people who challenged him – the civil authorities, members of synagogues, and even the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem, He suffered beatings, imprisonment, disappointments, and depression. He welcomed suffering as in suffering, he tells us, he believed he was following the example of Jesus.

And why was Paul so effective? For Wright it was the power of his teaching, the exhilarating hope of his message and his conviction that God was with him. The teaching to be found in the letters themselves is still – and has been since the earliest days – part of the bedrock of our Christian faith. 'He modelled what he taught, and what he taught was the utter, exuberant, self-giving love of the Messiah.' Wright's biography of this remarkable apostle is not only a work of great scholarship. It is, perhaps more importantly, a work of love.

Mike Oswald.

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Autumn Colours



Working with Children North East



(subtitle: **Start Early Making Fun Things for Christmas for Children North East!**)



Because growing up can be hard



In October 2020, (during Covid time!) when she came to collect items, I asked Tracy, the CNE coordinator at that time, my regular question "Is there anything else....?" The answer was "Well, little Christmas stockings to put a couple of sweets in would be lovely, please."



So knit them we did! Our dedicated knitters did a wonderful job, recruiting others to help in the project - friends in a local knitting group, next door neighbours and from further afield from Northumberland, York, Chester and Hampshire - and all Covid rules were adhered to. The final total was 326 mini Christmas stockings. They were a joy both to knit and to receive.

Last year, Alex Kirkpatrick became the coordinator of the Cowgate Hub. She asked if we could knit some Christmassy things for the toddler group and we gave her 39 mini Christmas stockings and 24 Christmassy stuffed toys. They were very popular and Alex has repeated the request for this year!



If you knit, crochet, enjoy sewing, this is for you! Perhaps you could invite friends who would enjoy using their creative skills to support the work of CNE? Choose your own patterns and ideas. The toddler group is multiracial so sensitivity in choosing skin tones will be appreciated. The knitting pattern for mini Christmas stockings is on the website and I can supply patterns for the knitted Christmas toys taken from Jean Greenhowe's 'Christmas Special' Booklet on request.



A separate Christmas collection box will be in church in November. Let's fill with it Christmas joy.



The last date for contributions will be Sunday, November 24th.

Elizabeth Rhodes

"What you do for the least of my brothers and sisters ..."

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Re The Slave Trade

**"Letters
Column"**



I have found reading your article in the May edition and Jonathan's in the July edition thought-provoking. The Oversight Group, parts of whose report you summarize, is concerned with the involvement of the Church of England in the slave trade. You wonder whether they go too far in seeming to apologise for being Christian, but they do at least attempt to find a way to resolve the present embarrassment felt by many members of the church, even if it is a rather clumsy way.

Jonathan offers a thoughtful and balanced response to your article, but he widens the discussion by reflecting on what mission work should look like now. The challenge for him, and for me, is working out how we should now approach non-Christians in our own country. Jonathan tackles this question very sensitively, but it remains problematical. Yes, we should clearly respect people of other faiths and of none, but it is also our duty as Christians to try to 'go... and make disciples of all nations'. As Jonathan points out, 'difference is not only ok but it is part of God's creation', but we believe that it is through Jesus, God incarnate, that the whole of creation is being redeemed. We should aim to offer this vision to all people.

Some of the outreach activities we offer do show an element of mission-mindedness. I believe the Junior Choir and the Little Saints do, for example. Our relationship with the West End Mosque is one from which both we and they can learn. Open Days, fêtes and so on can be opportunities for giving visitors a greater understanding of what we stand for. Jonathan's conclusion sets out the challenge clearly and adds we must not 'back ourselves into a corner'. We should not be afraid of being mission-minded!

Mike Oswald

Apologising for being Christian... or not?

Thanks to both previous contributors on this subject, and for the invitation to "weigh in". If you're sick of the subject, feel free to turn over!

I confess I'd never heard of the Church's Oversight group before previous Lances prodded me about it, but tried to "read the question" before considering my own

answer. Their remit appeared to be focussed on the African legacy of the Anglican Church's involvement, how this was experienced, and what might be best done now to bear fruit for the future?

Anyone who's enjoyed Sellar & Yeatman's *1066 and All That* can appreciate their satire of traditional history teaching, where everything is either "A Good Thing" or "A Bad Thing". I have found it useful to be prompted to reflect on my own family's history of Empire (Why *was* the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry in India in 1857? Probably not *just* doing fine displays of drill) – and my recent discovery that my own Liverpool baptism was in an ornate Queen Anne font donated by one of this country's most prolific slave traders.

Of course the British Empire is not the Church of England (though we're not the first generation to notice some blurred boundaries!) – and the Church is not Christianity.

I found the Oversight report a very detailed piece of work which of course needs reading in context, but I believe its point about the Church's hasty zeal in suppressing other faiths may be wise, in saying that missionaries could be prone to "throwing the baby out with the bathwater": banning some practices without understanding their theology often risks doing untold spiritual damage – some of us may have felt similarly about various C of E changes during our own lifetimes! I particularly feel for the Yazidi people of Iraq whose religion, in being thoughtfully syncretistic, has led to them being persecuted by almost everyone else for their nonconformity.

I am proud of much of our history, but also ashamed of much – there's a lot of it! My father felt that British history was just too long, and that the Americans had it easy in only having to start more recently... Modern materialist analyses can also easily focus on tangible legacies (e.g. the location of the "Elgin" marbles), whereas the historic charm of much good spiritual work can be hard to measure now. (*Times* garden writer Katherine Swift's beautiful *Morville Hours* notes this, and I found the same at the wonderful Little Malvern Priory.)

I hear a range of criticisms of Church and faith. I find that a "low" theology of Church helps me to cope with our organisation's imperfections, and avoids contaminating people's perceptions of Christ with our own shortcomings. I'm always, inevitably, a hypocrite in pointing to God's love, which is greater than my own. I find that building confidence in Christ gives me sufficient strength to carry lightly my love for the

flawed, failure-prone, fallible dinghy that is God's Church – I'm a minister of the Kingdom, which takes priority over the institution, and I can be proud of our faith while frequently having to watch the Church's public profile from behind the sofa, thinking "Oh Lord, what are we doing now?"

I find that many (thank the Lord!) have good experiences of Church – but not everyone has. Those can be profoundly dislocating to one's faith, and I've found it helpful to carefully distinguish the Church from Christianity – this makes life more complicated, but also (I hope) makes my faith more resilient: I commend Article XXVI in the Book of Common Prayer – *Of the unworthiness of the ministers!* I also note that, when one has once admitted having bad experiences, or struggling, others feel more able to admit the same: there is then a danger of polarisation, where I find myself sometimes acting as a "lightning conductor for grumbles" in various places; whereas others sometimes seem to sail on serenely, thinking that everything in the garden is rosy! It can resemble politics of recent years – we find ourselves keeping company with those with comparable experiences, and find it harder to understand the "others"...

TS Eliot, in his Choruses from "The Rock", seems to speak wisely about repenting of the sins of the past, fighting to keep what is good, and building for the future:

*"Of all that was done in the past, you eat the fruit, either rotten or ripe.
And the Church must be forever building,
and always decaying, and always being restored.
For every ill deed in the past we suffer the consequence:
For sloth, for avarice, gluttony, neglect of the Word of GOD,
For pride, for lechery, treachery, for every act of sin.
And of all that was done that was good, you have the inheritance.
For good and ill deeds belong to a man alone,
when he stands alone on the other side of death,
But here upon earth you have the reward of the good and ill
that was done by those who have gone before you.
And all that is ill you may repair if you walk together in humble repentance,
expiating the sins of your fathers;
And all that was good you must fight to keep
with hearts as devoted as those of your fathers who fought to gain it.
The Church must be forever building,*

*for it is forever decaying within and attacked from without;
For this is the law of life; and you must remember that
while there is time of prosperity the people will neglect the Temple,
and in time of adversity they will decry it."*

Let us pray for grace to repent of the Church's failings, proudly proclaim the good news of Christ crucified and risen, seek the wisdom to tell the difference, and look forward in God's trust, hope and love. Thanks to all our "old Empire hands" for all your service, and may we (as the Zulu nation say) kneel down so that the next generation may rise up.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu once said "When the missionaries came to Africa, they had the Bible and we had the land. They said 'Let us pray.' We closed our eyes. When we opened them, we had the Bible and they had the land" – he laughed like a drain, and (I recall) said "Who got the best deal?". We may yet get to hear Tutu's hyena laugh again, if we get to heaven.

Dept Wing Chaplain Dr M Toft

Smarties Take the Biscuit!

At the last session of Smarties before the summer break, the children decorated a great number of biscuits. They were displayed and admired at parish coffee and then consumed with delight, mostly by the children!

Alison Mattison



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MAKE FRIDAY CAFÉ
WHAT YOU DO?

Articles etc. for The
Lance to be received
no later than the 15th of
each month

Send to:

mmvane31@gmail.com

Thank you, Margaret.



Friends of St George's Tea on the Church Green in Warm Summer Sunshine? Was It a Possibility - or Was It Not?

Knowing what we do about the British weather, what persuaded us to think that July - the middle of British Summertime - would be a sensible time to think that organising a weekly session of tea al fresco on the four Sundays in July from 2-4 pm would be successful? We felt that the Green, being an accessible public space, would attract people from Jesmond and further afield to meet with others, to chat, drink tea and eat cake, and even a glass or two of Pimms. Was that just pie in the sky? It almost was - but with the indomitable British spirit to the fore we made it happen.



I have to admit that the first three Sundays of the month didn't offer the best of weather, but that didn't stop us. People came and we simply transferred into the Church Hall. We drank copious cups of tea and mountains of delicious home baked cakes - and we chatted with people we knew and people we didn't know. There were no complaints.



The final Sunday was fantastic! The weather was glorious - we sat outside - over forty people came - and, yes, we drank Pimms (and huge



thanks to Christine for that). Our guests begged us to do it again - and we will. We are planning next year already - so watch this space.

Barbara Peacock

Congratulations Donald!

For the last two years, Donald Gaze, alongside his work on the staff at the Theatre Royal, and occasional helping at Oxfam and elsewhere, has been studying at Newcastle College for a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education as a mathematics and numeracy specialist, mathematics having been the subject of his Northumbria University degree. This has involved learning about the whole process of education - from the point of view of teacher and student, to educational technology and understanding of behaviour, and especially, of course, the actual practice of teaching.



As a result of his work and achievement he was recently awarded the PGCE by Newcastle College University Centre at a ceremony held in the Civic Centre. The certificate qualifies him to teach students aged from 16 years upwards, including VIth form colleges and further education colleges. Not only has he achieved success in the award of the certificate, the staff at Northumberland College have been so impressed by his ability that they have offered him the opportunity of doing some teaching at the College in the autumn.

We offer Donald our congratulations on his achievement, and good wishes for a successful future career in teaching.



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New Lectern Steps

If you were absent from church on Sunday 28th July, we have now received the magnificent new lectern steps. Huge congratulations and thanks to Ian Ness for a brilliant design that complements the furniture in the nave and is a fitting addition to the inventory at St George's. They 'belong' in the space.

Ian was the first to use the steps at the 9.30 am service and I was the second. The design means they are so much easier to negotiate in robes without fear of going flying; and the reader, however vertically challenged, can be seen and heard clearly.



The steps are part of the Ann Biles Legacy, and were dedicated by Joan Grenfell on 15 September. There will be a plaque recording the details of the legacy attached to the lectern.

Best wishes

Dr Nigel Russell-Sewell



St George's Summer Walks

Come rain or shine?

A typical Saturday in July. It's raining and it's none too warm at a meagre 12 degrees. So how about a four-mile plodge around Ponteland? Well, nine of us did just that, obviously we are the types who are programmed to assiduously follow the diary and can't contemplate a change in plan or think of anything better to do. Added to which, we are of the age of weather appropriate clothing, the sad generation who missed out on cavorting around town on a Friday night clad in little more than underwear and tattoos!



Gamely we set off down a damp wagon way with trees dripping. We snaked our way round the outskirts of Darras Hall, occasionally catching glimpses through the trees, of some "Des Res" with tennis courts etc. Gated properties where the poor postman has to walk extra miles up long drives! Slight diversion here in praise of the worthy British postie. Attired in shorts in mid-winter, sure footed as Torvill and Dean on ice, they negotiate plots guarded by rottweilers, draught proof letter boxes equipped with the equivalent of car wash brushes and numberless houses called "The Nook"!

But back to the walk. After a sharp turn down a hidden snicket, we were suddenly out in the open countryside walking through fields of barley (identified by Alison as it had ears) .The sort of field that on a sunny day would be wafting gently in the breeze with the odd Von Trapp child prancing through! In the opposite field, a lonesome horse chomped grass in a desultory fashion, oblivious to the temporary invasion. The final lap took us back into Ponteland, through the soggy park, where only dog walkers and damp dogs braved the elements. It was then back up to the car park and the delights of Davidsons cake shop, fortuitously equipped with outdoor covered seating area. We bypassed the newly opened chic bistro as we didn't want the blonde off the shoulder clad ladies perched on bar stools to feel overdressed!

How hard can it be to order drinks and eats for nine people? Like how many workmen does it take to change a light bulb! There followed a comedy sketch worthy of Victoria Wood. Notably, the upheaval in the seating area, with chairs rearranged and

MB afflicted with "Bin Phobia" moving bins behind pillars so no one could find them! The poor lad who served us must have been demented. He kept emerging clutching bags of scones and coffees which no one seemed to claim. There was an intermittent cry of "I didn't order cheese scone with jam!" In the end it was sorted with but a cappuccino and a cheese scone to spare. Alison bravely went on the first mission to find the loo, described by MB as being "round the back with a wee door!" (Titter ye not!) By this point, the damp had penetrated our bones and Paul's shirt. (We will be having a whip round for a new waterproof.) We departed, probably leaving a sigh of relief from the long-suffering staff of Davidsons. And thank you to Margaret for having the guts not to cancel, at least our spirits weren't dampened!

The August expedition will be led by Peter and Alison and Peter assures us that he knows which buttons to press to get us going! Make of that what you will!

Fast forward to Saturday 10 August. Another St George's foray. We are venturing bravely south of the river on the Metro. Peter has obviously pressed the right buttons, the sun is shining, the Metro is on time and there is a reality show-stopping moment when "Ta Da!" the lovely Canon Clare is there to meet us at Seaburn Station! Alison diligently shepherded us across main roads, there being twenty-one of us it was like a school trip with the inevitable stragglers. The first section took us down neat streets with tidy gardens, the majority favouring astro turf. Some company had obviously made a killing, knocking on multiple doors as they "happened to be in in the area!". Astroturf is contentious, but the consensus was that while we don't like the stuff, it's better than an unkempt patch of grass. Which prompted me to ask for advice on my garden squirrel problem. Having greased poles, sprayed nuts, wasted a fortune on 'impenetrable' feeders that our tenacious squirrels have mastered, I was finally sorted by our own environmentalist Alexis who recommended a feeder that spins. I must mention here, that amid a soberly dressed bunch, Alexis clad in a funky bright red top sparkled like a poppy in a field and lowered the average age range!



We walked through Roker Park towards the seafront, an illuminated Winter Wonderland in winter, magical for children, and very pleasant in summer too. We emerged from a bridge and there the sea lay before us. Sunshine, rippling, waves, and an almost deserted promenade. We don't take this for granted being Northerners where every day we are not soaked or blown away, is



a bonus. There was a great choice of cafés with lovely seating area. Tempted by the mouthwatering cake display, some of us opted for Lovely Lily's while Peter spied an ice cream café. All tastes were catered for. Refuelled, we carried on and were so lucky to see in the distance, a lone dolphin doing a little display. Sadly, my photos showed only a black dot in the distance, but I assure you, he was there! The last part of the route took us along the River Wear with a fishing trawler chugging along adding to the ambience. We then passed various crafts bobbing in the marina, no gin palaces, but nevertheless bustling. The final treat was the fascinating St Peter's Sculpture Trail created by sculptor Colin Wilbourn and writer Chaz Brenchley who



worked alongside local residents to highlight aspects of Sunderland's past. Sculptures were many and varied. They included cormorants taking flight, a collection of books to represent the Venerable Bede and three doors, Past, Present and Future as well as cameo pieces of home and war. Information was cleverly displayed randomly on metal plates which looked like pages torn from a note pad. Funnily, this ad hoc presentation divided opinion. There were those of us who loved the artistic flourish and those who itched to straighten them out and I'm sure that must say something about us? As we approached The Glass Factory, Ian noted a cargo ship, proving that the River Wear still works! We

then climbed up to the Metro station and parted company from Canon Clare who waved from the opposite platform to the St George's Platoon returning north!

End of a super walk which effortlessly ticked all the boxes. Seascapes, dolphins, café, culture and sunshine. It was good to see the attractive side of Sunderland which often gets negative publicity and as ever it was great to walk with and enjoy the company of members of the family of St George's.

Maggie Paczek

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The Scattering of Ashes at Sea: A Reflection

Just to share with you what has to be one of the most meaningful and beautiful events of my Anna Chaplain ministry.

I had previously taken the funeral of one of the residents in one of the care homes I regularly visit. She was a lady who had spent some years in the Merchant Navy, describing them as 'the happiest days of her life'. It was fitting then that her ashes be scattered at sea, and I was invited as Anna Chaplain to be present when this happened.

The Tynemouth RNLi had agreed to take the ashes out to sea. They did this so movingly, turning the boat to come as close to those of us watching from the shore as they could. When all was set, the ashes were scattered onto the sea, then the boat pivoted on itself and circled 4 times. I guessed that this was probably to disperse the ashes away from the boat.

Then the engine was shut down and it was still. Such a profound moment.

After giving 3 short blasts of its horn, the boat turned and went on its way. Valerie was safely entrusted to the sea she loved. It was so spiritual..... as if we were in a huge open air cathedral.....reminding us of God's power over the elements.

I had been asked to offer some prayers which I share with you.

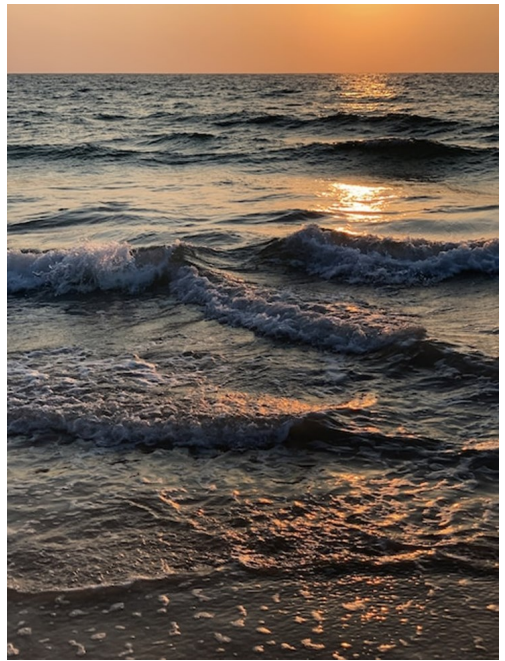
As the boat appeared and took its position:

Thank you Lord, for the love and fun Valerie brought into our lives.

As we stand beside the sea, we offer these ashes as a symbol of our love and remembrance, as we remember in particular the years Valerie spent as a merchant seafarer, years she described as the 'happiest days of her life'.

As the ashes are scattered:

May the depths of the ocean now cradle her soul in serenity and peace.



After the scattering:

Like the boundless ocean, Lord, Your love knows no end, and so we find comfort in knowing that Valerie now rests in Your eternal embrace.

Give us the grace to carry her memory in our hearts as she is now carried into the beauty of the sea's eternal rhythm.

Rest easy now Valerie, and move gently with the ebb and flow of the sea.

You will be forever remembered.

You are loved, you are cherished, you are deeply missed.

May Valerie's soul find solace in the depths of the ocean, where the currents of time and tide carry her to a place of perfect peace.

I hope I have been able to give you a sense of what will always be a highlight of my ministry. I wished I had a photo to share with you, but I was too caught up with what was happening to think about that.

Every Blessing

Joan Grenfell

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Church of England Calendar

October	
1	<i>Remigius, Bishop of Rheims, Apostle of the Franks, 533</i> <i>Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, Social Reformer, 1885</i>
3	<i>George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, Ecumenist, Peacemaker, 1958</i>
4	Francis of Assisi, Friar, Deacon, Founder of the Friars Minor, 1226
6	William Tyndale, Translator of the Scriptures, Reformation Martyr, 1536
9	<i>Denys, Bishop of Paris, and his Companions, Martyrs, c.250</i> <i>Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, Philosopher, Scientist, 1253</i>
10	Paulinus, Bishop of York, Missionary, 644 <i>Thomas Traherne, Poet, Spiritual Writer, 1674</i>
11	<i>Ethelburga, Abbess of Barking, 675</i> <i>James the Deacon, companion of Paulinus, 7th century</i>
12	Wilfrid of Ripon, Bishop, Missionary, 709 <i>Elizabeth Fry, Prison Reformer, 1845</i> <i>Edith Cavell, Nurse, 1915</i>
13	Edward the Confessor, King of England, 1066
15	Teresa of Avila, Teacher of the Faith, 1582
16	<i>Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London, and Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, Reformation Martyrs, 1555</i>
17	Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, Martyr, c.107
18	Luke the Evangelist
19	Henry Martyn, Translator of the Scriptures, Missionary in India and Persia, 1812
25	<i>Crispin and Crispinian, Martyrs at Rome, c.287</i>
26	Alfred the Great, King of the West Saxons, Scholar, 899 <i>Cedd, Abbot of Lastingham, Bishop of the East Saxons, 664</i>
28	Simon and Jude, Apostles
29	James Hannington, Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa, Martyr in Uganda, 1885
31	<i>Martin Luther, Reformer, 1546</i>

November	
1	All Saints' Day
2	Commemoration of the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day)
3	Richard Hooker, Priest, Anglican Apologist, Teacher of the Faith, 1600 <i>Martin of Porres, Friar, 1639</i>
6	<i>Leonard, Hermit, 6th century</i> <i>William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, Teacher of the Faith, 1944</i>
7	Willibrord of York, Bishop, Apostle of Frisia, 739
8	The Saints and Martyrs of England
9	<i>Margery Kempe, Mystic, c.1440</i>
10	Leo the Great, Bishop of Rome, Teacher of the Faith, 461
11	Martin, Bishop of Tours, c.397
13	Charles Simeon, Priest, Evangelical Divine, 1836
14	<i>Samuel Seabury, first Anglican Bishop in North America, 1796</i>
16	Margaret, Queen of Scotland, Philanthropist, Reformer of the Church, 1093 <i>Edmund Rich of Abingdon, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1240</i>
17	Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, 1200
18	Elizabeth of Hungary, Princess of Thuringia, Philanthropist, 1231
19	Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, 680 <i>Mechtild, Béguine of Magdeburg, Mystic, 1280</i>
20	Edmund, King of the East Angles, Martyr, 870 <i>Priscilla Lydia Sellon, a Restorer of the Religious Life in the Church of England, 1876</i>
22	<i>Cecilia, Martyr at Rome, c.230</i>
23	Clement, Bishop of Rome, Martyr, c.100
25	<i>Catherine of Alexandria, Martyr, 4th century</i> <i>Isaac Watts, Hymn Writer, 1748</i>
29	<i>Day of Intercession and Thanksgiving for the Missionary Work of the Church</i>
30	Andrew the Apostle

Understanding the Calendar:

Principal Feasts and other Principal Holy Days.

Other Sundays & Lesser Festivals.

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Festivals.

Commemorations

The Diocese of Newcastle upon Tyne

Parish of St George, Jesmond

We are a Church of England (Anglican) church in the Diocese of Newcastle with an inclusive, catholic tradition of Christian worship. We welcome all in Christ's name.

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Rev_debbie@hotmail.com

Reader and Anna Chaplain

Mrs Joan Grenfell

grenfelljoan@yahoo.com

Reader & Air Cadet Chaplain

Dr Malcolm Toft

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Jonathan Richards 281 1659

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PASTORAL CARE

Any pastoral concerns or commendations should be made to Joan Grenfell or a member of the clergy.

ENQUIRIES CONCERNING BAPTISMS MARRIAGES FUNERALS

Initial enquiries should be directed to the Parish Office, which is open Monday to Friday, 9.45 am to 12.45 pm.

address: St George's Close, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 2TF

tel: 0191 281 1659

email: office@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

Website: www.stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Facebook: St-Georges-Church-Jesmond

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Livestreaming of services

Please note that we livestream the 9.30 communion service. You can watch the service [here](#) while it is being broadcast live. If you'd like to watch the recording after the service has finished, please go to our [YouTube channel](#) (it may take a couple of hours after the stream has finished for the video to appear).

<https://stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk/sunday-worship/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCuPrChpepxs6Jo-PfLvwJw/featured>



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Welcome to St. George's Church Jesmond

We are a Church of England (Anglican) church, part of Jesmond life since 1888, with a congregation from the locality, the city and the region. We aim to be friendly, diverse and to welcome all in Christ's name. Our worship is inclusive and in the catholic tradition, with high quality music. If you are new to this area, or would like to find out more, please get in touch. www.stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Facebook: St-Georges-Church-Jesmond

Twitter: @stgeorgejesmond **email:** office@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

SUNDAY SERVICES

08.00 Holy Communion
09.30 PARISH COMMUNION with
Sunday School / Smarties (age 4-16)
Children's corner available in church
11.30 Holy Communion (1st Sunday of
month)
18.00 Taize (2nd Sunday of month)
18.00 Choral Evensong (3rd Sunday)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

08.45 Daily: Morning Prayer
09.30 Thursday: Holy Communion
Saints' Days as announced

Livestreaming of services. You can watch the 09:30 service live [here](#), or later on our [YouTube channel](#)

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