

LINK

The newspaper for the Diocese of Newcastle



Former Archbishop joins our Diocese as Assistant Honorary Bishop

THE Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dr The Lord Sentamu of Lindisfarne in the County of Northumberland and of Masooli in the Republic of Uganda was commissioned as Honorary Assistant Bishop by Bishop Christine at St Mary's, Holy Island, on 14 June.

Bishop Christine said: "We are very blessed with the ministry of a num-

ber of Assistant Honorary Bishops in our Diocese, and it was my pleasure to add to their number by commissioning Archbishop Sentamu to this role.

"Following his retirement as Archbishop of York, he and his wife Margaret moved to Berwick, and I am delighted that he has offered to serve in our Diocese as an Honorary Assis-

tant Bishop alongside his national commitments.

"Please pray for Archbishop Sentamu, and for all of our Honorary Assistant Bishops as they minister locally in parishes and on my behalf in the wider Diocese. They bring an enormous amount of experience and wisdom, and I am very grateful for their partnership in the Gospel."



➤ Baron Sentamu is commissioned as Assistant Honorary Bishop by Bishop Christine

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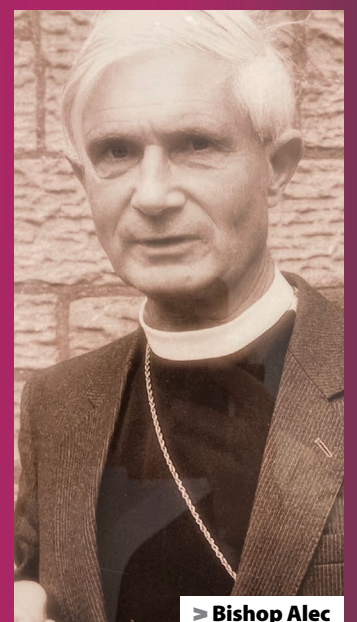


➤ Bishop Christine and the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu at the Commissioning Service of the Diocese's Pathways Mission on Holy Island in September 2018

Turn to page five for the obituary of the Rt Revd Dr Alexander Andrew Kenny Graham, Bishop Alec Graham, our much-loved and well-respected Bishop of Newcastle from 1981-1997.

Bishop Alec sadly died at the age of 91 at his retirement home in Butterwick, Cumbria in May. Previously the Suffragan Bishop of Bedford before taking up his role as Diocesan Bishop in Newcastle, Bishop Alec was passionate about the education of young people and also served as Chair of the Doctrine Commission.

Bishop Alec's obituary has been written by Bishop Stephen Platten and the Venerable Bob Langley.



➤ Bishop Alec

Bishops' Diaries

July

This is not a full list of the bishops' engagements but includes the items we think might be of particular interest to you. Under the present circumstances some appointments have had to be cancelled, and there is a possibility of further cancellations. Many appointments have been changed to virtual meetings.

Bishop of Newcastle

1st	Newcastle Diocesan Safeguarding Panel Confirmation – St Mary Throckley
3rd	Ordination of Deacons, St Georges Newcastle Ordination of Priests, St Georges Newcastle
4th	Ordination of Deacon, St Bede Newsham
5th	Yorkshire and North East Regional Bishops
9th-13th	General Synod
14th	Farewell Dinner for Revd John Claydon
15th	Meeting with retired clergy
17th	Church Mission Society Pioneer Graduation Day
18th	Norham Deanery Confirmation
19th	Consecration, York Minster
20th	Curates/IME 2 Meeting of Bishops and Archdeacons Diocesan Finance Synod
21st	Bishop's Senior Staff Meeting
22nd	Norham/Bamburgh and Glendale Deanery Service
25th	Newcastle Cathedral launch
26th	House of Bishops
27th	Hild Bede Strategy Day
28th	Mission and Church Property Committee

Bishop of Berwick

1st	Transformation Core Team Meeting Monthly Meeting of Bishop of Newcastle and Bishop of Berwick
3rd	Ordination of Priests Ordination of Deacons
4th	Confirmations Service at Holy Savior, Sugley Confirmations Service at Holy Trinity, Jesmond
5th	Yorkshire and North East Regional Bishops Meeting with CEO and Housing Manager of YMCA, North Shields
6th	Interviews for Interim Minister for Holy Cross, Fenham
7th	Meeting with Diocesan Director of Ordinands Transformation Core Team Meeting
8th	Transformation Core Team Meeting
11th	Eucharist Preach and Preside, St Benedicts Cowpen – 60th Anniversary
12th	Church Service and Presentation of Awards for Year 5 Pupils of Ponteland St Mary's Primary School Transformation Core Team Meeting
13th	Transformation Core Team Meeting Bishop's Council and Standing Committee
14th	Meeting of Together Newcastle Trustees Meeting with Director of Mission and Ministry
15th	Meeting with Director of Initial Ministerial Education (IME2) Licensing Service at Riding Mill
18th	Eucharist Vacancy Cover at St Michael, Felton
19th	Meeting of Discernment for Ordained Ministry with prospective candidate Transformation Core Team Meeting
20th	Curates/IME2 Diocesan Finance Synod
21st	Bishop's Senior Staff Meeting Together Newcastle Trustees Meeting
22nd	Meeting of Bishop of Newcastle and Bishop of Berwick Transformation Core Team Meeting Meeting with Director of Mission and Ministry

'How can I support you?'

Nic Denyer is our new Lay Ministry Development Officer. She is looking forward to meeting as many people as possible to understand how she can help develop lay ministry support in our Diocese.

THIS is my fifth week in post as Lay Ministry Development Officer, and it's been a bit of a whirlwind to say the least!

For those of you I've not met yet, I'm a Reader in Whitley Bay, as well as being mum to Olly (18), Aidan (16) and Iris (3). Iris was a little surprise.

My background is in nursing, midwifery and training all within the NHS, and I'm hoping some of those skills will help me with this post.

I've always lived in this area, my parents are from Lowick and Wooler, and until I left for uni I'd stayed in Northumberland. After finishing my nursing degree in Manchester I lived in Heaton for a little while before settling at the coast in Whitley Bay.



➤ Nic Denyer is also a Reader in Whitley Bay

I was baptised as a baby, but didn't start going to church until 2011, and I was licensed as a Reader in 2017.

I'm really keen to hear from all of you about the places you are ministering and worshipping in, and your thoughts about lay ministries in our Diocese.

I would also love to come and meet as many of you as I can to talk through your experiences and your ideas for training courses we hope to roll out across the Diocese.

I'd also like to pick your brains about what the Diocese needs to do to support you as part of the body of Christ, whether that be in further training sessions, helping create networks / mentoring or whatever else to recognise, and indeed, help you see the amazing God given gifts and vocations you all bring, whether inside or outside church buildings.

Feel free to give me a ring or send me an email, and let me know if we can get a date in the diary to meet up, where you are, and talk about all this.

■ Nic Denyer can be contacted at: n.deny@newcastle.anglican.org or 0191 270 4152.

Gospel Readings

1st	Matthew 9.1-8	17th	Matthew 12.14-21
2nd	Matthew 9.9-13	18th	Mark 6.30-34, 53-end
3rd	John 20.24-29	19th	Matthew 12.38-42
4th	Mark 6.1-13	20th	Matthew 12.46-end
5th	Matthew 9.18-26	21st	Mathew 13.1-9
6th	Matthew 9.32-end	22nd	John 20.1-2, 11-18
7th	Matthew 10.1-7	23rd	Matthew 13.18-23
8th	Matthew 10.7-15	24th	Matthew 13.24-30
9th	Matthew 10.16-23	25th	John 6.1-21
10th	Matthew 10.24-33	26th	Matthew 20.20-28
11th	Mark 6.14-29	27th	Matthew 13.36-43
12th	Matthew 10.34—11.1	28th	Matthew 13.44-46
13th	Matthew 11.20-24	29th	John 12.1-8
14th	Matthew 11.25-27	30th	Matthew 13.54-end
15th	Matthew 11.28-end	31st	Matthew 14.1-12
16th	Matthew 12.1-8		

Comings & Goings

Appointments

The Revd Malcolm Hall, currently SSM Assistant Curate in the North Shields Team, is going to be Stipendiary Curate in the North Shields Team.

Ms Kate Fox-Robinson has been appointed Lay Team Chaplain Newcastle upon Tyne NHS Hospitals Foundation Trust with effect from 16 May 2021.

Retirements

The Revd Angela Plummer, Priest in Charge, The Ascension Kenton, retired on 13 June 2021.

The Revd David Bowler, Incumbent of the Parish of Delaval, will retire on 1 September 2021.

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Link is produced ten times a year by the Diocese of Newcastle, with joint issues for August/September and December/January. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Diocese or the editor. The editor is pleased to consider articles or letters of not more than 350 words for publication. Where possible, articles should be accompanied by a good-quality digital photograph of 250dpi or higher. Please contact the editor before submitting obituaries.

For advertising rates and deadlines see www.newcastle.anglican.org/link.
Copy date for August/September 2021 issue: Monday 12 July.



Pedal power launches new cathedrals route



With Bishop Christine Hardman

GROWING CHURCH BRINGING HOPE: NEXT STEPS

IN Newcastle Diocese, we have long since recognised the biggest challenge of decline in our churches – smaller congregations making less impact, fewer resources for mission, financial challenges, and dwindling numbers of children and young people. While it is easy to be downbeat about this, on the positive side we are seeing exciting opportunities for change and transformation, giving us great hope for the future.

Our 'growing church bringing hope - Next Steps' programme aims to create new space for God's transformation of the way we think about our churches in this Diocese. We create this space by changing the way we think about, organise and resource the mission and ministry of all our parishes, breathing new life into the way we serve our communities in the power of the Holy Spirit.

This fresh thinking is already bearing fruit and we recognise the significant transformation work being undertaken in many contexts. We should celebrate the changes already underway, such as:

- exponential growth in the training of lay ministers over the last three months;
- key recent appointments to support ministerial formation and lay ministry development;
- investment from the National Church to develop the work of our Generous Giving Team.

As you may know, we have been consulting across the Diocese to develop a bid to the National Church's Strategic Investment Board (SIB) to fund our 'Next Steps' programme. The first part of the bid was to help us to continue the process of exploring what transformation in our Diocese should look like.

The team drawing together the bid has been working with colleagues from the National Church throughout this process, which we hoped would see us submit our application to be considered in June this year. However, on the advice of our national colleagues, we have been advised to do some further work on our application and instead submit it for consideration in October.

We will use this additional time to refine our mission design which will strengthen our articulation of a compelling narrative about transformation across Newcastle Diocese. This will include how we will generate and build energy for God's mission in all our contexts and release the drive for mission in each of us. The delay in submitting our bid is disappointing, but it does not affect our determination to build energy for God's mission and see transformation across our wonderful Diocese.

Please pray with us for God's continued leading and guiding in this critical work.



> The 18 cyclists launched the route from Newcastle Cathedral

OUR Diocesan Secretary Canon Shane Waddle was among a group of cyclists to saddle up for the launch of a new cycling route connecting every cathedral in England.

The Cathedrals Cycle Route (CCR) was launched from Newcastle Cathedral – England's most northerly cathedral – at the end of May to coincide with the start of Bike Week.

Devised by Shaun Cutler, a PhD student at Newcastle Cathedral and Northumbria University, the new national cycle route links all 42 English cathedrals and stretches almost 2,000 miles across diverse terrain.

Carrying a specially-sculpted bronze baton from Newcastle Cathedral to Durham Cathedral, Shane was one of 18 cyclists to launch the route, along with Shaun; Revd Canon Clare MacLaren, the cathedral's Canon for Music and Liturgy; and Helen Wright, a Reader at Newcastle Cathedral.

Shane, a Lay Canon at Newcastle Cathedral, said: 'I'm so thankful to Clare and Shaun for encouraging me to join the inaugural first leg of this magnificent cycle route.'

"The weather was superb as the Dean, the Very Revd Geoff Miller, prayed with the cohort of cycling pilgrims (all of mixed cycling ability) who then made the journey from Newcastle Cathedral to Durham. We were warmly received at Durham in time for tea and cake!"



> Cycle Champion Canon Clare MacLaren hands the baton to Pam Houseman

Cycle Champion Clare handed the ceremonial baton, which features two sculpted hands reaching towards each other and is inscribed with the message 'some days you need a hand, other days you are called to lend a hand,' over to Pam Houseman, Cathedral Cycle Champion for Durham and Outdoor Education Officer at Durham Cathedral.

Clare added: "As a committed, but not very fit commuting cyclist, it felt like a real accomplishment to make it to Durham. Cycling is so great - not just for physical, but for mental health, as well as for our environment. The companionship and support along the way, and the warm welcome we received at Durham, made it a really wonderful pilgrimage experience!"

A small group of riders, who set off on the CCR on its launch day, are due to arrive back at Newcastle Cathedral, weather permitting, on 10 July – 42 days after embarking on their incredible trip and visiting all 42 cathedrals.

The relay event is encouraging people to cycle from cathedral to cathedral for their chosen charity or asking them to support Cycling UK's Break the Cycle appeal, which aims to help improve people's well-being through the charity's community cycling clubs, activities and projects nationwide. For more information, click [here](#).

The CCR has been created in conjunction with Sustrans, Cycling UK and the Association of English Cathedrals, and Shaun's initial research project was funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



> Canon Shane Waddle holds the bronze baton featuring sculpted hands and an engraved message

Lesley Towers credits the 'power of prayer' for her survival

BBC Radio Newcastle has recorded a powerful and moving interview with Bishop Christine's much-loved PA Lesley Towers about her journey over the last year after contracting Covid-19.

Lesley fell seriously ill just after lockdown in March 2020 and was

admitted to hospital where there were real fears she may lose her life.

This resulted in people across the Diocese praying for her survival.

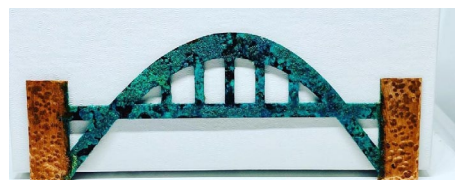
Thankfully Lesley pulled through and is now back at work at Bishop's House,

saying she owes her life to the NHS and the power of prayer.

The interview with Lesley and Bishop Christine was broadcast on BBC Radio Newcastle's Sunday Breakfast show, which can be listened to [here](#).



➤ **Melanie Kyles' hand-embroidered star**



➤ **Anke Sayn's Rainbow's copper ornament**



➤ **Greg Witherspoon's sketch**



➤ **Zoë Cotterill's artwork**



➤ **Multiminded Design's wooden ornament**

Capsule's century entombment

A TIME capsule containing a myriad of items which captures Newcastle's spirit has been buried by Newcastle Cathedral.

Hidden underground, the capsule has been buried as part of the exciting £6million redevelopment of the cathedral, with instructions for it not to be opened until the year 2121.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund 'Common Ground in Sacred Space' project began last year and is almost finished – see the Dean of Newcastle's latest View from the Lantern column below for the latest update!

Earlier this year, a public appeal called 'Back To The Future' was launched to find items, objects and artefacts that would provide a snapshot of Newcastle in the present day.

Now that the time capsule has been buried, the cathedral is able to shine a spotlight on the contributors and their contributions.

Anke Sayn Rainbow



➤ **The time capsule being buried at Newcastle Cathedral by Historic Property Restoration Ltd**

Anke is not from the UK originally, but considers herself an 'adopted Geordie'. She chose to contribute a painted copper version of the Tyne Bridge which she calls "a major symbol of engineering triumph and

industrial pride".

Greg Witherspoon

Greg's contribution is a sketch featuring some of Newcastle's landmark buildings: "The skyline is con-

stantly changing, so it can be a snapshot for future generations to look at.

"Despite this sketch being completed in early 2020, the skyline has already changed with the addition of the dramatic Hadrian's Tower residential complex."

Melanie Kyles

Melanie runs The Fashion Lab, a contemporary textiles studio based at Orbis, Commercial Union House. She had a hand-embroidered star put forward by Orbis co-director Jonpaul Kirvan.

"There were ten Northern stars created that were then gifted to people locally, forming a constellation."

Multiminded Design

Multiminded Design – Fiona Birbeck and Jim Bell – based in Ouseburn's Mushroom Works studios, created a layered wooden ornament/scene of the cathedral, made up of layered etched wood.

"We're fanatical about the North East, and the cathedral can be seen from miles around," says Jim.

Fiona adds: "When you've been out of the city and you're driving back in, it's one of those symbols

that you see and straight away you know that you're home."

Zoë Cotterill

Zoë is based between Hull and Newcastle and has earned a large following – particularly on Instagram – for her drawings of Tyneside architecture.

The print of hers that has been buried includes depictions of the Tyne Bridge, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Millennium Bridge, Sage Gateshead and Newcastle Castle.

The time capsule contains many other contributions from local artists, which will be showcased in a digital exhibition accessible via QR code at the cathedral later this year.

Additional items include objects that represent the world in which we're living right now – such as an empty Covid-19 vaccine vial and a Brexit 50 pence coin.

Also enclosed are documents related to the cathedral – including choir pamphlets and architects' building plans donated by Historic Property Restoration Ltd, who buried the capsule.

FLING WIDE THE DOORS!

CUE the drum roll, raise the flags, sound the fanfare, enter the quire (hopefully singing Parry's, 'I was Glad') then fling wide the Great West Doors. The cathedral, resplendent with new floor, lighting, and a post works sparkle clean welcomes one and all to share in its delights and to reconnect with its people and that definitely includes YOU!

Covid-19 has made sure that the last 18 months have been a complete whirlwind for everyone. At the cathedral that has been compounded by the planned arrival of diggers and scaffold, tracking and cranking machines, cherry pickers and container plant and, of course, a whole team of stonemasons, designers, conservators and archaeologists. Could it be that 18 months later both these elements of the last year's storm will come to an end? It would be an answer to many prayers!

I write still awaiting the green light out of lockdown to be announced by the Prime Minister. This is, of course, well out of the cathedral's jurisdiction. However, save any



NEWCASTLE CATHEDRAL

View from the Lantern

With **The Very Revd Geoff Miller,**
Newcastle Cathedral

for unknown delays, the capital works in the cathedral are fast ending – Alleluia.

It's now time to invite you to 'come and see' and we hope you will take up our invitation. In the church itself you will see a stunning transformation: a splendid new floor and flexible seating, a really engaging interpretation which (with film, lights and audio) tells the story of Newcastle and its people and St Nicholas warts and all. We like to think of it as stories of the good, the bad and the ugly! There is a new retail point, a re-imagined café now run by the Oswin project (which works alongside ex-offenders) and super-duper new 'facilities' (no more

queuing for the loos) transforming the old hall basement. Outside a redesigned churchyard to include a profoundly moving walk with the Newcastle Beattitudes and a beautiful East Terrace built under the glaring eyes of infamous vampire rabbit. Without doubt this has been the most significant refurbishment of St Nicholas since 1787 and so many have worked hard to make it happen.

However, what excites and energises us most is what could happen in this place next. We have been busy (almost frantic on occasions) preparing different ways to offer a 'more than' welcome to those who would come and see.

- We have been encouraging and training volunteers to offer a smile, their ears to listen and their undivided attention to everyone they encounter – we need more volunteers, why not join us?
- A stimulating and varied programme of activities – tours, crafts, talks, family events, exhibitions, and concerts.
- And all of this topped, tailed and centred with a daily rhythm of prayer and worship, wonderful music and quiet, simple prayer.

Even under the cover of lockdown it's been a busy year but we are looking forward to a roller-coaster ride ahead!

For us it is a thrilling journey as we have become the privileged custodians of a living shrine – if by shrine you understand the original meaning of the word – 'a container for precious things'. Our shrine is filled with majestic stones, dignified colonnades, moving memorials and colourful glass but even more important thousands of stories, our stories of our joys and sorrows, and our encounters with a gracious God and each other.

So, it's time to get your diary out now and book a time to come. Bring your friends, stay and have lunch or tea and let us welcome you. We will be open each day from Monday 26 July.

And until we meet... God be with you.

Details of our programme events and regular worship and volunteering opportunities are easily found on: www.newcastlecathedral.org.uk or phone 0191 232 1939.

Bishop Alec Graham RIP 1929-2021

IT was with a heavy heart Link reported the death of Bishop Alec Graham, former Bishop of Newcastle in our June edition.

Bishop Alec was consecrated Bishop of Newcastle in 1981, joining us from the Diocese of St Albans where he served as Suffragan Bishop of Bedford for

four years.

He was a much-loved and respected bishop, serving our Diocese in this role until his retirement in 1997. Upon his retirement, Bishop Alec moved to Butterwick, Cumbria and lived there until his death on Sunday 9 May 2021, aged 91.

In this edition of Link, we feature Bishop Alec's obituary written by Bishop Stephen Platten, Honorary Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Newcastle and former Bishop of Wakefield, and the Venerable Bob Langley, former Archdeacon of Lindisfarne.

'We shall not see his like again'
By Bishop Stephen Platten

"WELL, what do you think of that, Leah-dog? What do you think of that? No, not much good, I agree." That was the sort of response that more than one candidate might well have received in an interview for a place at Lincoln Theological College, where Alec was Principal from 1970-1977; he seemed to interview via the dog! It was as likely as not, however, that Alec would take the student for a walk while he interviewed - perhaps as far as ten miles! If the weather was bad, then he'd interview in his study with Leah (Zillah came later and Bella later still) sitting upright in the armchair, while Alec sat on the floor with his back to the arm. He often used a curious turn of phrase, so, staying with him on one occasion, the telephone rang as he was re-setting the cooker timer. Already, disorientated by the technology, a telephone call was a bridge too far. He replied: "Thank you so much for your call. I'll ring back later, if you don't mind - I'm rather overset!"

Brought up in Tonbridge, where he also was at school, he was scholarly from the start. When not studying, trains and railways were a great interest - railways stayed with him all his life. Alec read Modern Languages at St John's, Oxford where he later gained a Distinction in the Postgraduate Diploma in Theology. Training for the priesthood at Ely Theological College, he served his title at All Saints, Hove. Thereafter, he went directly to Worcester College, Oxford where he remained for 12 years before being appointed as Warden of Lincoln Theological College, helping form ordinands of that

generation at a college which had boasted Michael Ramsey, Christopher Evans, George Simms and other great scholars as teachers there. Alec fitted well into that mould and was an outstanding Principal. He always rose to a challenge and during his time at Lincoln he accepted a continuing trickle of students whom others might have found challenging. He evoked an amazing loyalty and admiration and that was true throughout his ministry, not least here in the Diocese of Newcastle.

After Lincoln, and before Newcastle, Alec spent four years as Bishop of Bedford in St Albans Diocese, where again he was much-loved and appreciated for his eccentricities. He had a remarkable independence of mind - he changed his mind more than once, for example, on the ordination of women to the priesthood, always keeping in mind the good of the Church. Theologically, and notably in his own specialist area of biblical scholarship he was a radical, although even there you could never be certain; if you wanted a predictable response, then Alec was not your man. For four years, he chaired ACCM, then the body responsible for clergy selection and training. Throughout the following eight years he chaired the Doctrine Commission. He was awarded a Lambeth DD in recognition of his theological acuity.

Despite his intellectual ability and scholarship, he retained a profound humility. There was not an ounce of pomposity and he could show an extraordinary diffidence, especially if it related to an area where he felt he had inadequate expertise. Alec had a very clear belief in the catholicity of

God's Church, and in all that he was what one might term a 'High Church Tory' using those words in their 18th century sense. So, he was happy with plain worship without frills, either in vesture or ceremony. His commitment to the catholicity of the Church of England was clear in his very generous support of The Anglican Centre in Rome over two decades. We shall not see his like again.

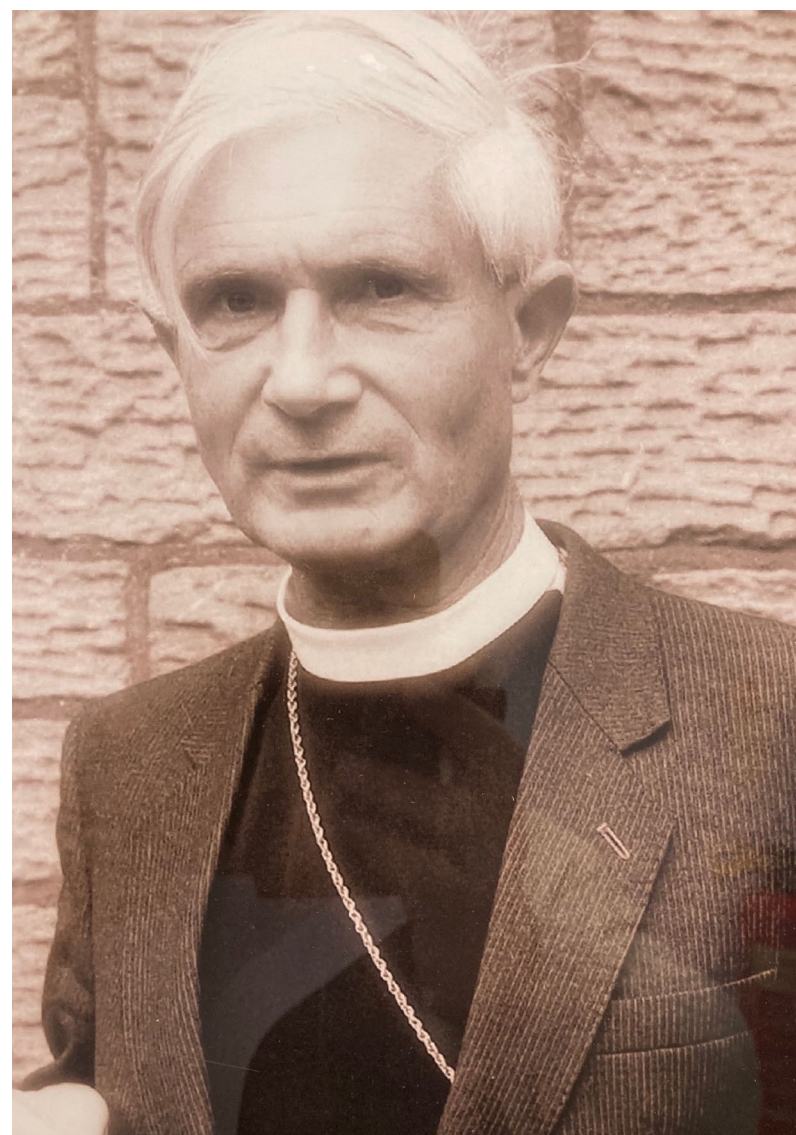
'Many bore witness to his wisdom and kindness'
By the Venerable Bob Langley

BISHOP Alec brought to Newcastle two key passions. Both reflected his previous experience as a theologian and educator. He wanted us all, clergy and lay, to understand and articulate our faith better, and take responsibility for how that affected our lives and vocations.

Early on he instigated a scheme which resulted in hundreds of lay and clergy meeting in small groups across the diocese, learning from the course and from one another - Alec led a number of study days.

Formal support for clergy was strengthened alongside encouragement to meet regularly with a colleague to review how their work was going. A similar opportunity was afforded to parishes to invite someone from outside, to hold a mirror up to them as they developed their mission. Cooperation was at the heart of it.

He did not make great pronouncements about the direction of the Diocese. He expected clergy with lay people to chart their way forward in their place. He probably felt most comfort-



➤ Bishop Alec was the Bishop of Newcastle from 1981-1997

able at those events such as the pilgrimages to Holy Island, or diocesan gatherings where people from the Diocese studied, worshipped and ate together.

Some occasionally hoped for greater personal guidance and support and his acknowledged intellectual ability could feel intimidating. Often when you were relating some argument on a matter, he would say 'and . . .' leaving you floundering as to what to say next. But he was acutely sensitive to real need and many bore witness to his wisdom and kindness. He demonstrated an extraordinary ability to get alongside someone in a way in which difference of age, status or ability fell away; it became a meeting of persons.

When he arrived in Newcastle, Tyneside was experiencing the worst effects of the decline of the old heavy industries. He embraced the Faith in the City Report ensuring that the Diocese's response recognised that poverty and unemployment were as present in some rural and isolated ex-coalmining villages as in the riverside parishes along the Tyne.

His positive support meant that many grew in confidence seeing this kind of involvement in their communities was the church's work.

Alongside the parishes he saw his role as supporting and encouraging those in the local authorities and unions who were also seeking to respond to the economic upheaval. He quietly built up relationships enabling a mutual sharing of concerns in an atmosphere of respect.

When the decision about the ordination of women to the priesthood came, he was conflicted intellectually and psychologically, and torn by his

loyalty to clergy of the Catholic tradition, who had ministered in some of the most severely deprived parishes along the riverside. His commitment as bishop to maintain unity was probably the most important factor in deciding that the time was not right.

Sermons and synod presidential addresses were much appreciated. Sermons were always carefully crafted, often prepared months ahead on his summer stay in a cottage in the Highlands.

The words carried an intrinsic authority, not just that of the person who uttered them. It was as if they were sent into the ether for listeners to reflect on, own or reject, symbolised by his allowing each page to drift to the floor of the pulpit as it had been delivered. Presidential addresses dealing with current issues in church and society were for many the main attraction in attending synod.

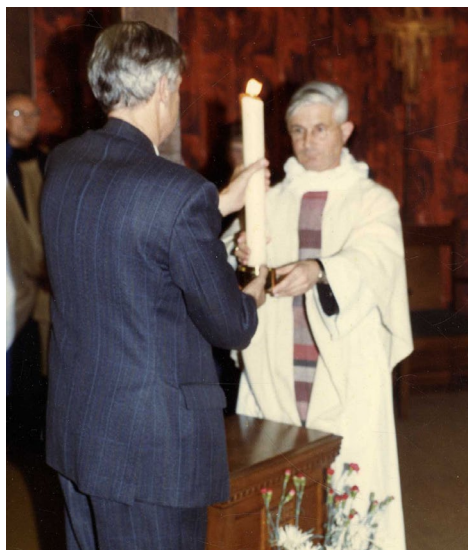
Dogs, Leah and Zillah were constant companions. They shared in the warmth of welcome to Bishop's House, though if they sensed a difficult interview ahead they could indicate disapproval.

He loved walking in the hills of Northumberland, their natural beauty, their wildness and their association with the northern saints.

Perhaps his choice of retirement home provides the clearest statement of what mattered most to him. Situated in a small hamlet, with immediate access to the open fells, one room adapted solely to take all his books, continuing involvement in local rural churches, and engagement in his small local community. "I've made a home for myself here now", he said to me a few years ago.



➤ Bishop Alec at an event celebrating the Diocese of Newcastle's centenary. Source: Northumberland Archives



➤ Centenary celebrations for the Diocese. Source: Northumberland Archives

Changes to ordinations

CHANGES have been made to the original scheduling of our priesthood Petertide Ordinations in light of the delayed lifting of Covid restrictions.

Bishop Christine was due to ordain 11 men and women to the priesthood at a service on Saturday 3 July at St George's Jesmond.

However, due to the postponement of the June 21 lifting of restrictions, the ordinations will now take place at two separate services – one led by Bishop Christine and the other by Bishop Mark – on 3 July.

Please hold all of our ordinands in your prayers as they begin their new ministries.

Priests to be Ordained by Bishop Christine at St George's Jesmond

Rev'd Yvette Charmain Daniel
Newcastle, St Francis

Rev'd Oliver Dempsey
Cowgate

Rev'd Rosemary Elizabeth Harrison
Ponteland

Rev'd Samuel George Lohead
Corbridge with Halton and Newton Hall

Rev'd Kim Wears
Willington

Rev'd Alan Robert White
Newcastle, St Gabriel

Priests to be Ordained by Bishop Mark at Holy Trinity Berwick

Rev'd Phyllis Alison Carruthers
Bamburgh, Belford and Lucker

Rev'd Samantha Jane Quilty
Holy Island

Rev'd Paul William Rusby
Morpeth Ministry

Rev'd Thomas Sample
Berwick, Holy Trinity & St Mary

Rev'd John Richard Storey
Upper Coquetdale

Covid and the workplace

IT has been sixteen months since our daily lives were placed into a state of turmoil and the dramatic effects of Covid-19 began to take their toll.

Workplaces have felt the full effects of the Covid crisis with many employees continuing to work from home or furloughed, and business owners across a range of sectors, not least in tourism, hospitality and entertainment, experiencing a devastating impact on their livelihoods.

During this unsettling and daunting period, workplace chaplains have continued to serve – albeit sometimes from a distance – and have helped support some of the businesses hit hardest by the Covid pandemic.

Northumbrian Industrial Mission (NIM) is an ecumenical charity made up of more than 20 chaplains who provide ministry and support to workplaces – from retail, manufacturing, government offices to Nexus Metro, Newcastle International Airport and the emergency services.

NIM's chaplains come from all denominations – ordained and lay, stipendiary and voluntary, some are Readers or Lay Preachers, others come from a range of backgrounds bringing years of work experience and a faith tested by the joys and struggles of daily life and work.

In this edition of Link, we are shining a spotlight on our workplace chaplains whose 'frontline' support and caring presence has provided a sense of stability and hope in the most uncertain and stressful of times.

Fiona Usher, Chaplain Team Leader at NIM, Lead Chaplain at Newcastle International Airport and Chaplain with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service and North East Ambulance Service, tells us more about the important role of workplace chaplaincy over the last year.

THE impact of the pandemic on our workers, businesses and economy cannot be underestimated – resulting in closures, redundancies, workers being placed on furlough, frontline, key-workers and others often placed in harm's way, and others working from home.

Keeping services available and businesses afloat has been a huge challenge for managers and owners – the task now is reopening safely and ongoing financial viability.

All this alongside other difficulties – grief,



► Fiona Usher and Revd Alan Meighen, Airport Chaplain

illness, trauma, mental health issues, isolation, relationship and financial difficulties, and of course missing family, friends, colleagues – and hugs!

Workplace chaplaincy has been able to offer a unique contribution to workplaces because of well-established relationships, built over many years and, as a result, has been able to provide much needed support, care and compassion in these direst of times.

Ecclesiasticus 3832-34 highlights how no one can survive without the vast array of daily work done by the majority of ordinary people. Without it we are told that, 'a town could not be inhabited, ... there would be no settling, no travelling'. These ordinary people and the work they do 'sustain the structure of the world, and their prayer is concerned with their trade.'

We have all witnessed the daily work of our nurses, care workers, front line and emergency workers, teachers, shop workers, delivery drivers, and cleaners who have played such an important role, alongside so many others, in 'sustaining the structure of our world', we truly 'value' their work and wonder how we would have coped without them!

And from chaplaincy conversations it is clear that some people now see their own work in a new light – 'before I thought I'm just a shop worker, now I know I'm a key-worker'.

NIM's workplace chaplains, alongside chaplains in other sectors such as the NHS, emergency services, schools, universities, prisons, forces, care homes and many other settings, have been privileged to offer care and support to these amazing people – as they have often struggled to continue their valuable work, many of whom are not connected to church.

We have listened as they have been forced to confront some of the big questions in life: meaning and purpose, what really matters and is of true value – spiritual and existential questions!

Chaplains, on behalf of our churches, need to continue being available and 'present' to hear these new and difficult stories of life – and to respond through loving care, and in the love and grace of God, with our 'stories' of faith and with hope.

Chaplaincy has also been affected and we have had to find new ways of supporting people. During lockdown many chaplains really struggled with guilt and frustration at their enforced 'physical absence', at a time when many lost their jobs.

On our return we have heard that in some workplaces the only goodbyes happened with the catering or cleaning staff – who felt the pain and shed the tears. So many 'good-bye and good luck' have remained unsaid, as people who have worked alongside colleagues for many years silently withdrew from the workplace – in a vacuum of shared loss, with no tokens of friendship, care or support.

For myself at the airport, and for our chaplains in various workplaces, I know that there are so many difficult stories and circumstances to hear and support (and hope to offer), beyond the walls of church but alongside ordinary people in their daily working lives.

■ If you'd like to learn more about NIM and the role of a chaplain or would like to support the work of NIM please contact: Fiona at: fiona-nim@btconnect.com

MU donation supports tiny tots

A GENEROUS donation towards books and resources is helping early years' pupils at a Northumberland church school to play 'catch up' in the aftermath of Covid.

Young learners aged between two and four years who attend Bishop's Primary School's early years' facilities have received special 'Story Sacks' filled with books, educational games and learning resources to enjoy at home thanks to a £2,000 donation from Newcastle Diocese Mother's Union. When the pandemic first hit, Mother's Union members realised that children's development, especially those in isolated communities or areas of high socio-economic deprivation, would be particularly affected by an extended period of lockdown.

With over 900 members in the Newcastle Diocese area alone, the charity's Diocesan President, Barbara Packer, wanted to explore how the charity could best support the children deemed most in need throughout Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland.

Barbara said: "Since we are a Church of England organisation, I approached the Diocesan Education Department for advice as to the best way to help children in our Church communities to gain access to educational resources which would support their development in the aftermath of lockdown. "The department suggested Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust and more specifically, Bishop's Primary School. We had already decided that we could afford to give £2,000 and that we would be

guided by 'those on the ground' as to the best way to use it."

Bishop's Primary School's Principal, Melanie Hinson, who launched a staff consultation to determine who would benefit most from the initiative, said: "While our older children have been able to engage in a full programme of remote learning, for our two and three year olds, the lack of interaction with children their own age has seen them return to our early years settings less confident, more anxious and in some cases, less independent than they were before.

"The Story Sacks have been really well received by staff, parents and our young learners. We can't thank Mother's Union enough for their kind donation."



► Mother's Union Trustee, Margy Tasker-Brown with Principal, Melanie Hinson and early years pupils from Bishop's Primary School

Trek and track the 'Lindisfarne Tales'

REFUGEES fleeing in panic, violent struggles for the throne, powerful faith, mind-bending miracles, modern archaeology, glittering swords and even a cuddly duck- they all feature in 'Lindisfarne Tales', a walking storytelling experience on Holy Island.

Chris Hudson, Reader in Tweedmouth parish, is leading free guided tours all through the summer on selected dates as a donations-only fundraiser for the local parish church of St Mary the Virgin.

He said: "As a storyteller, I've always loved narratives of Northern Saints like Oswald, Aidan and Cuthbert, and long nurtured a mad ambition to retell them in their original stunning locations."

"The parish church on Holy Island relies so much on donations from pilgrims who obviously haven't been coming over the last 12 months, so my guided walks are one way to fill that gap."

"My storytelling style's a bit 'Horrible History'-meets-'Blackadder', but visitors say they learn a lot on the way."

One of the many positive reviews Chris has received, states: "Excellent talk and tour this afternoon (Sat 12th June). Informative, illuminating and entertaining, Chris made the early history of the Island come alive. Would thoroughly recommend."

No bookings are required- just turn up. For more details including dates and times, see the 'Lindisfarne Tales' ([facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/LindisfarneTales)).



➤ Chris Hudson is leading a series of free walking tours of Holy Island

Book review: 'Church and Community in Shilbottle'

By Bishop Stephen Platten

HAVING known Shilbottle for the best part of half a century, it was fascinating to read Colin Gough's account of the village and to discover the full background to the five townships of Woodhouse, Hartlaw and Hazon, Whittle, Newton-on-the-Moor and Shilbottle over almost a millennium.

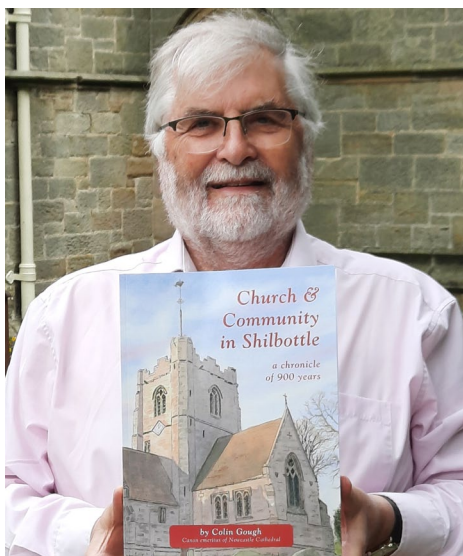
Previously, the one fact I treasured was that the colliery at Whittle produced the very best quality coal in Britain and supplied Buckingham Palace amongst other places!

Colin's book is unique in its realm. Some will know the community history of Glanton, published in 2001, but Colin has written a sustained account which is chronological in its first six chapters.

He is well qualified for the task as an Emeritus Canon of our Cathedral with a broad knowledge of the Diocese and as one having lived in Shilbottle since retirement from full-time ministry.

The chronological section is followed by chapters focusing on schools, donations, notable parishioners, ministries in the parish and, finally, a brief appendix on Guyzance, an extra parochial place.

Little is known of the early history, but we learn something of the Tisons, the land owners



➤ Colin Gough with his book at St James' Shilbottle

following the Norman Conquest, and then of the Percys who have owned much of the land ever since. Coal mining and agriculture have been key industries for nine centuries with Whittle pit closing as recently as 1987. Throughout, it is fascinating to see how Colin sets all within the wider context of the life of the nation and the world as a whole.

The impact of the Reformation on church life is vividly conveyed and the history

is placed within the background of the Church and the community throughout. The Commonwealth period wrought sharp changes, with the eviction of the priest, John Falder, from the Vicarage in 1648, then happily restored as incumbent after the Restoration.

We read of the fate of the church building and most notably of its complete rebuilding during the incumbency of Joseph Golightly.

The new building was consecrated by Bishop Ernest Wilberforce, first bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Newcastle, in October 1885.

The first couple to be married there was Dorothy Widdrington from nearby Newton Hall and Edward Grey, later Lord Grey of Fallodon, Foreign Secretary before and during the first part of the Great War.

This is a great read and along with the history of this parish you will learn much of the history of the wider Church, this Diocese and of our glorious county.

■ 'Church and Community in Shilbottle' by Colin Gough is available to buy direct from the author 01665 581100 or Colin1947@me.com (£15 or £19 including posting and packaging), and can also be purchased at Church House reception; K Chem Pharmacy & Post Office, Shilbottle; Alnwick Post Office and Grieve's Stationers, Berwick

Revd Canon Colin Gough – author's biography

IN 2001, Colin joined the Diocese of Newcastle as Adviser for Continuing Ministerial Development, especially responsible for clergy in 'early years' and for the continuing learning of all in ministry. He was also Vicar of Stanington, for a time Area Dean of

Morpeth and appointed an Honorary Canon of Newcastle Cathedral.

He and his wife retired to Shilbottle in 2010 and have now lived there longer than anywhere else since their marriage. Colin was

Bishop's Officer for Retired Clergy for five years and is currently a trustee of the Shilbottle Local History Group, chair of North Northumberland Genealogy Group and a member of the Benefice Ministry Team

Celebrations mark 200th anniversary of Ellacombe Chimes

By Shirley Brown, Churchwarden at St Cuthbert's, Allendale

TWO hundred years ago the unscientific and generally indifferent quality of bell-hanging meant that sounding church bells was a very strenuous physical activity.

The hard, physical work of the bell ringers was often recompensed with ale or beer, with the result that unruliness and occasional drunkenness erupted.

Revd H.T.Ellacombe, the vicar of St Mary's church at Bitton in Gloucestershire, had had enough. He devised a mechanism so that one person could ring all his bells from the vestry without the need to ascend the church tower.

He published many works on bells and bell-ringing so word of his fame spread quickly. Many churches installed them either for the same reasons, or if they had difficulty attracting ringers.

In 1978, JC Blackett-Ord donated a Carillon to Holy Trinity Whitfield in memory of his late wife Elisabeth.

The 200th anniversary of Revd Ellacombe's invention of 'remote' bell ringing occurs in June this year.

Churches are planning to ring bells across the world at midday on 26 June 2021 to celebrate this invention and his wider contributions to bells and bell-ringing generally.

At Holy Trinity Whitfield the Carillon will be rung at 12noon on 26 June by Jean Angus and Joyce Charlton.

If anyone would like to come to the churchyard to listen you are most welcome. Holy Trinity seems to be the only church in Northumberland taking part in this event.

The commemorative book, Ellacombe Chimes: Two Hundred Years, (ISBN 978-1-304-70761-1) can now be purchased from the publisher Lulu. We hope that in a few weeks' time this will be available through other outlets including Amazon and Barnes and Noble, but in the meantime you can pre-order from Lulu [here](https://www.lulu.com/en/GB/search/1000000000).



➤ The Carillon at Holy Trinity Whitfield

Young Christians' march to campaign for Climate Justice

HUNDREDS of young Christians will march through our Diocese as part of a pilgrimage spanning the length of the country in their fight against climate change.

Marching from Cornwall to Glasgow – from G7 to COP26 – the pilgrims will call on world leaders to address the Climate Emergency.

Organised by the Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN), the relay route set off from Truro Cathedral, near to where the G7 are meeting, on 13 June and will end in Glasgow where COP26 – the 2021 United Nations climate change conference – is being hosted.

Volunteers are encouraged to sign-up to support walkers, cyclists, and other pilgrims as the march passes through our Diocese from 4-15 October.

Newcastle is one of ten Residency Hubs at main cities along the route where additional events advocating for climate justice are encouraged.

The route will leave Berwick-upon-Tweed and enter Scotland on 15 October, concluding on 31 October in Glasgow to coincide with the beginning of COP26.

Rachel Mander, a young Christian and the relay co-leader, said: "We stand

in solidarity with people and places that are being plunged into debt and poverty because of climate change.

"More carbon emissions mean more disease, more food insecurity and more poverty.

"We will not let the UK government host summits on our doorstep only to hear more talk and no action."

The YCCN is not restricting participation and is galvanizing people of all ages and faiths to take part.

■ **For more information on the relay, Residency Hub and how to lend your support, click [here](#).**



➤ The relay passes through our Diocese from 4-15 October

Budding gardeners bloom thanks to floral gift



➤ Nic Crofts from Wansbeck Garden Centre with Gardening Gang leader, Clare Marson, and pupils from Bishop's Primary School Josephine Butler Campus.

GREEN-FINGERED youngsters at a church school have received a generous donation from an Ashington-based garden centre.

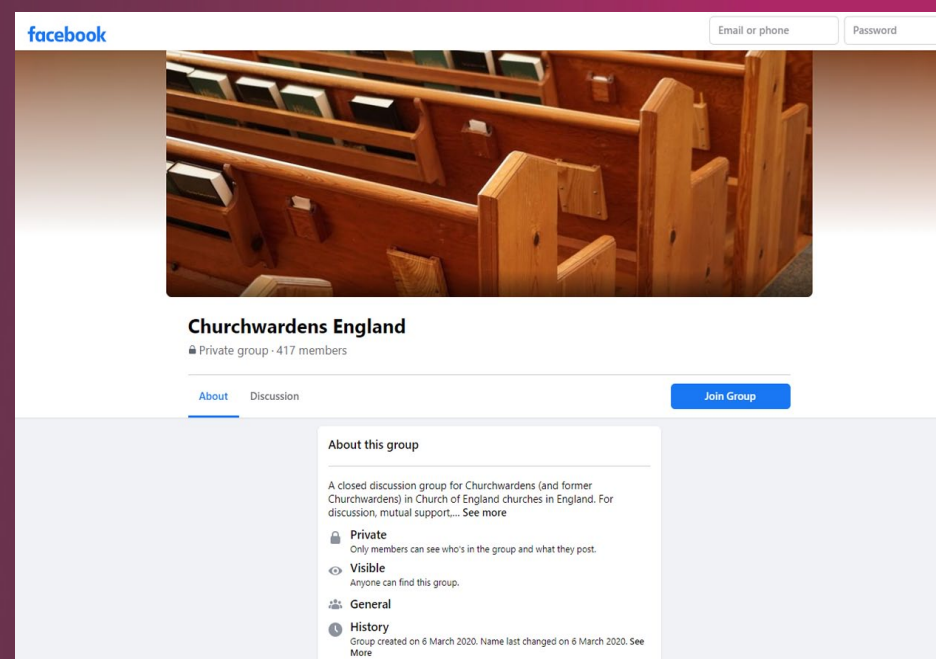
Wansbeck Garden Centre has kindly pledged hundreds of bedding plants to Bishop's Primary School's Josephine Butler Campus for use in its flower garden.

The flower garden, which is tended by pupils as part of the school's 'Gardening Gang' is the centrepiece of the Academy Road-based campuses' outdoor space; which also comprises a potted courtyard, a poly tunnel and an allotment area, complete with its own chickens,

rabbit and ducks. Using the donated plants, the children decided to update a planted version of the school's logo using a mix of Stokesia and Lobelia to capture the purple and yellow colours of the Bishop's crest.

Clare Marriott, Head of Campus at Bishop's Primary School - Josephine Butler Campus, said: "We're incredibly grateful to the staff at Wansbeck Garden Centre for their kind donation of so many flowers! It's really allowed our children to be creative and we've had so many compliments from staff and parents about the work the children do outdoors."

Churchwardens Facebook Group



A DIGITAL community of churchwardens has grown to 400 members since its inception a year ago.

Gary Hepburn, a churchwarden in the Diocese of Salisbury, launched the Facebook group 'Churchwardens England' in 2020 with numbers swelling since its creation.

He said: "Salisbury Diocese recognised that recruiting and retaining churchwardens can be a problem and wanted to ensure those thinking of being churchwardens felt part of a wider network, felt supported, could get

advice around the clock and understood what the role was about.

"Talking recently to new churchwardens who have joined the group they really do feel it is a great support and that when they need it that others with the same responsibilities, all sorts of knowledge and skills and years of experience are there to help."

Michael is keen to promote the group further to ensure all churchwardens are aware of the online community which can be accessed [here](#).

World Environment Day



MORE than 150 people visited St Mary's Ovingham for a special event highlighting the need to care for our planet and the world around us.

The church hosted a fair on 5 June to mark World Environment Day – the United Nations day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action to protect our environment.

Featuring bird and bee counts, the fair hosted a range of Fairtrade goods and stalls from the local environment groups as well as the 'Creation Window'.

Martin Davenport, Environment Champion for St Mary's Ovingham, said: "The one-way system round the fair to minimise risks and maximise social distancing worked well and had the hidden benefit of allowing all stalls to be given a viewing by the people going round."

"The feedback received from stall holders and the general public was that an enjoyable day was had by all. I think it is safe to say that on the day judging by the level of interest shown in the event it brought more than a touch of hope into people's lives."



➤ A range of stalls sold Fairtrade goods

Churchyards under the microscope



➤ Afternoon wildlife count at St Mark's, Ninebanks

THE wild and wonderful flora and fauna of churchyards in our Diocese were under close inspection as part of a national event.

Churches across our Diocese and beyond participated in nature counts and activities to record wildlife during Churches Count on Nature week, which ran from 6-13 June.

The citizen-science event was jointly run by the conservation charities Caring

for God's Acre, A Rocha UK, the Church of England and the Church of Wales.

The project saw communities and visitors making a note of the animals, birds, insects, or fungi in their local churchyard and this data has been added to the [National Biodiversity Network](#).

Ros Ronaldson, Environment Champion at St Mark's Church Ninebanks, said: "We had a wonderful afternoon for our Caring for God's

Acre wildlife count. Taking part were ten adults and three children, we experienced the rich glory of God's creation, had fun, tea and cake.

"In the two hours we were observing we identified a wide variety of flora and fauna: 44 plants and flowers, 14 insects, 12 trees and shrubs, 12 birds, 11 lichens, five grasses and one mammal - the constant resident rabbits. A very productive and enjoyable afternoon!"

Green Church Showcase launched

THE Church of England is collaborating with the Church Times and the Roman Catholic Church to launch the 'Green Church Showcase'.

This will be a hunt for inspiring church initiatives to protect and preserve the planet and builds on earlier successful collaborations: the Green Church Awards and the Green Health Awards.

Participating churches, church schools, dioceses, and Christian groups of any denomination, are invited to submit details of work that they have undertaken to combat climate change, protect nature, and involve their communities in making changes.

A judging panel chaired by the Bishop of Norwich, Graham Usher, the new lead bishop for the environment, will sift through the entries at the end of July. They will be looking for projects that are most easily reproducible by others, so the whole Church contributes to the reversal of climate change.

These selected projects will feature in a specially commissioned video — the 'showreel' — to be launched during the COP26 climate talks in Glasgow at the start of November.

Participants will be encouraged to include information about:

- Building projects moving towards net-zero carbon, such as energy efficiencies, pew heaters, heat pumps, and solar panels
- Building projects that balance conservation and the environment, such as maintenance programmes, sympathetic retrofits, and using low-carbon materials
- Courageous advocacy and community engagement
- Nurturing the natural world, and using church land to develop health and wellbeing
- Involving young people at every level
- Diocesan initiatives that break new ground
- Simple but effective gains on a shoestring

The showreel will be launched during an online debate about the Church's response to the climate crisis in early November, hosted by Church Times. The selected projects will also feature in a booklet, published at the same time. Advice will be available online, to give other churches and groups the tools they need to replicate the successful projects.

The Rt Revd Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich and Chair of the Church of England's Environmental Working Group, said: "It's my great pleasure to support the Green Church Showcase as one of my first actions, in the week I take over as lead Bishop on the Environment.

"In this vital year for climate action, I encourage churches and church schools around the country to tell their stories. The showcase aims to celebrate practical action on the ground and, through these real examples of what is possible, inspire others.

"Whether your project has tackled the energy use in your building, cared for nature in your grounds, or engaged your community, please do apply as part of the Green Church Showcase."

The closing date for entries is Wednesday 21 July. For more information, and application forms, click [here](#).

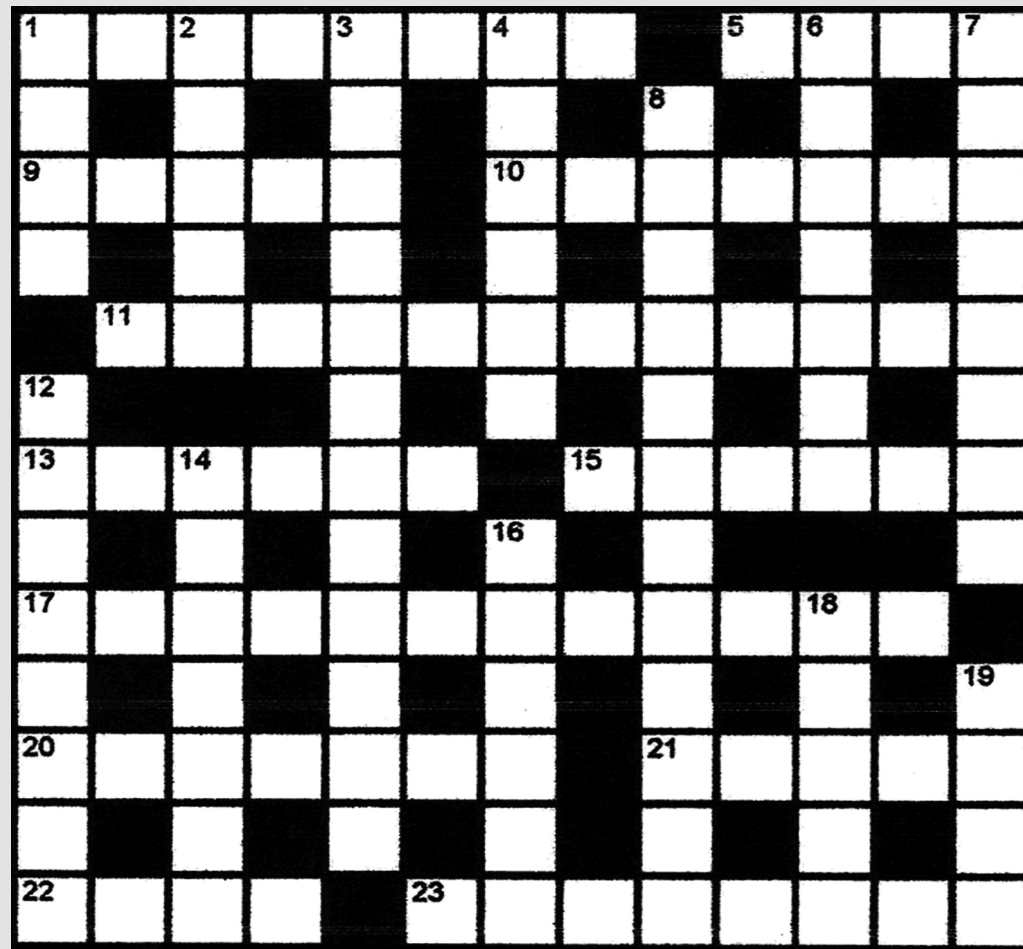
HAVE YOUR SAY

Anything catch your eye in this month's LINK?
Something on your mind?
Or in your prayers?
Send an e-mail, message or letter to LINK and we'll publish the best of them:

Have your say. LINK, Church House, St John's Terrace, North Shields NE29 6HS. Email us: communications@newcastle.anglican.org

**Link Crossword 174** *Compiled by Mary Sutton*

This month we are including the crossword for anyone looking for something to keep them occupied during lockdown but just for fun (sorry, no prize this month). Please DO NOT submit crosswords to Church House.

**ACROSS**

1. Boy in uniform finally getting service (8)
5. Small taxi used by strikebreaker (4)
9. Proportion needed for rodent before ten (5)
10. Actors next to the French strongholds (7)
11. Ten mates, told off, identifying part of the Bible (3,9)
13. Spoil one married couple (6)
15. Vessel use with courage (6)
17. Ainer used by fool – he's husky, we hear (7,5)
20. Go before page, then go back (7)
21. One male taking time to produce likeness (5)
22. Consumes some cake at school (4)
23. Saint with skin irritations and pains in the side (8)

DOWN

1. Listener left with nobleman (4)
2. Praise former partner getting to lake (5)
3. Drink of spirits located, say, when myopic (5-7)
4. Most pleasant French city street (6)
6. Assemble for prayer (7)
7. Live with drunk man, infatuated (8)
8. Public demonstration in favour of exam (7)
12. Follower finding record on untidy pile (8)
14. Incredibly close, I go past entertainer who breaks free (12)
16. Agree to give rise, say (6)
18. Saint with burnt remains of hidden store (5)
19. Directions given with information (4)

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD 173

- ACROSS: 1. Messiah
5. Light 8. Parishioner
10. Blue 11. Accurate
12. Pastor
14. Novice 16. Premiere
18. Rite 20. Christening
22. Stole 23. Trinity
DOWN: 2. Expel
3. Serpent 4. Ass
6. Inner 7. Heretic
9. Incense 11. Airless
13. Apricot 15. Version
17. Moral 19. Tight
21. Err

WAITING UNTIL THE WHEELS FALL OFF?

MY husband is a keen mountain biker. For many years he 'trundled' across the landscape in the foothills of the Himalayas and across deserts. He loves, no relishes, the challenge of the uphill, and that really is uphill, as well as the more-or-less controlled exhilaration of dizzying descents.

On one of these trips when everyone had been loaded into a very smart looking Land Cruiser and the bikes had been lovingly loaded into their own luxury transportation, the journey to the first night's stopover commenced.

The driver fought valiantly with the steering as the vehicle gathered speed up to 30mph.

He constantly battled with mean-minded mechanical forces to guide the vehicle back to the safe side of the road. He held on tight as the whole vehicle shuddered and rattled onward.

My husband and the tour guide exchanged alarmed looks. It's one thing being bumped around on a bike, after all that falls into the category of fun, but this...

Suddenly, everything became quiet and smooth. The magical speed of 50mph was reached. Joy!

The whole rigmarole started up again as they slowed down for traffic lights and then took off again. Misery!

Wellbeing

by **Patty Everitt,**
Counselling
Advisor
(Interim)



It struck me that this is exactly what happens to us when we get highly stressed or anxious.

We put our energies into keeping ourselves on track, wrestling with stuff so we can keep going. Feeling shaken and rattled.

Then we find things go more smoothly as we distract ourselves with loads of things to do.

As bits and pieces fall away from our load, or we drop them, or we have to slow down to sleep then the rattling and shaking starts up again.

Like that rather smart Land Cruiser, it is obvious to observant others that something is not right. Very likely we are mistaken if we think that we are giving out the 'I'm fine' signals to others.

What both that Land Cruiser and we have in common is that if there is an underlying something that needs to be fixed just keeping the speed above some magical number isn't going to fix it. At some point we will slow down and then things catch up with us; a bit like Sandra Bullock in the film *Speed*.

The Land Cruiser needed a mechanic. If we are rattling and shaking as we get up to speed or as we slow down then we need the equivalent help.

If we don't take care of said vehicle then at some point the wheels will come off.

If we don't take care of self ... then at some point the wheels will come off.

When we are feeling highly stressed or anxious, we often put our energies into keeping ourselves on track, wrestling with lots of stuff so we can keep going. We put our energies into the outside world when some of that energy is needed in our inside world.

Neuroscience research points to the fact that chronic stress, and prolonged high levels of stress hormones, promotes inflammatory health conditions. In other words, our body knows what's happening even if we choose to ignore it.

So maybe now is the time to take care of ourselves so we are not storing up mental and physical health problems for our future.

You are the gift that you offer the world – take care of that gift.

Grants for church buildings

THE deadline for applications for the National Churches Trust Cornerstones Grants programme closes in July.

This programme offers grants of between £10,000 and £50,000 towards the cost of major urgent structural repair projects as well as projects that introduce kitchens and accessible toilets to enable increased community use.

The application deadline is 5 July and further information can be found [here](#).

The trust's Foundation Grants programme offers small grants of between £500 and £5,000 towards urgent maintenance works, small repairs and small investigative works and surveys. Click [here](#) for more information.



► Applications for Cornerstones Grants close on 6 July

Tuck into the Great God-Family Picnic



THIS year Godparents' Sunday is 11 July and there are three ways every church can be involved in supporting the special relationship between godparents and godchildren.

The Church Support Hub has partnered with Messy Church to come up with a range of [resources](#) for this special day including everything you need to pray, to hold a Godparents' Sunday service and to organise a colourful Great God-Family Picnic.

Click [here](#) for more information on Godparents' Sunday and some ideas from the Church of England on how to celebrate.



Noticeboard

1-5 July. Let The Flowers Speak. Norham Arts Group with Norham Natural Environment Group and Norham in Bloom.

Sat 3 July 5.30-7pm. St Cuthbert's Church, Norham. 'The Art Gardens and Plants of the Impressionists' – a talk by David Mitchell, currently Chair of the Scotland Gardens Scheme and a former curator of the Royal Botanical Gardens, Edinburgh (and an experienced broadcaster). Tickets £5 available [here](#) or Norham Village Shop.

2-4 July 10am-5pm & 5 July 10am-12noon. Norham Village Hall.

Exhibition of Contemporary Artworks by local artists (available for sale). Display about Victorian botanical artist and Norham resident Margaret Rebecca Dickinson. Free entry.

Sunday 4 July 1-5pm. Norham Open Gardens. Open Gardens Trail map £3 per person from Norham Village Hall. Refreshments and plant stall and Ginger House Gardens flower stall.

For further details contact norhamartsgroup@gmail.com or telephone 01289 382280.

Thursday 1 July, 10am-11.30am. Zoom Event: Do you want to

be a parent-discipling church? Organised by the Religious Resources Centre.

Led by the experienced and gifted Kitchen Table Project team from [Care for the Family](#) (and some special guests!) this event will look at how you might move through this season of challenge, into a healthy, long-term plan for families' ministry. Bookings: enquiries@resourcescentreonline.co.uk or 0191 375 0586.

Thursday 1 July, 6-7.30pm. Zoom Event: 'Woman symbol

and women agents: Proverbs 31 and biblical womanhood' – A Conversation@theRRC with Esther Zarifi.

Today there is a rise in both Christian feminism and conservatism, with each appealing to scripture for support and inspiration. In this Conversation@theRRC Esther Zarifi, (winner of the Leonard Hassé Memorial Prize for her MA Dissertation on Proverbs 31) will be discussing how we might read and interpret Proverbs 31 in the light of these contemporary tensions. Is Psalm 31 allegory, metaphor or modelling?

How might we understand woman as symbol and/or agent? And why does this matter for women (and men) today? Bookings: enquiries@resourcescentreonline.co.uk or 0191 375 0586.

Thursday 1 July, 7.30pm. Zoom Event: Introducing 'Reading the Fabric'.

Peter Ryder, author of 'Reading the Fabric: an investigative guide to the Medieval Churches of Northumberland', will discuss his book with John Grundy at a free Zoom event. Click [here](#) for more details.

LIKE A METAPHOR

Tim Hardy (formerly of the Religious Resources Centre) writes at www.timbo-baggins.co.uk and is looking forward to his current house move being a thing of the past.



...AND, RELAX

So, after the removal firm, instead of the large van we were expecting, supplied a medium-sized van that had to make three trips from Leamington Spa to Birmingham instead of just one, we finally said goodbye to the smaller-than-expected team of delivery men at around midnight. The house was ours, all our stuff was here and it was time for bed.

Over the course of the following week, we made a start on the sorting and unpacking, making sure that the most necessary rooms were sorted out to a usable level first: the bathroom, bedrooms and kitchen were quickly pretty much in their final state but the living room and study remained a mass of boxes with just a sofa or a desk in their respective corners. As more and more of the house became operational, the impetus to carry on sorting out dried up – especially as we went back to work and started living in the new routine of taking Anwen to her new school, the slightly longer commute for me, and the getting used to the new area in general.

I've found myself having to make active decisions to spend what would have been free time sorting yet another aspect of the house. "On Friday, I'll shift the boxes of books from the living room to the shelves in the study." "On Saturday, I'll sort out the television and the hi-fi in the living room." That kind of thing. If I don't, then the tendency is to let things slide

whilst I take another break, watch more cartoons with Anwen, read Twitter for another hour, call a friend, and suddenly it's time for bed and the house is no closer to being sorted.

There's a danger in relaxing and becoming too comfortable with the way things are – the house staying full of boxes and remaining less useful, less suitable for habitation and guests, and, eventually, less relaxing – infuriating, even – to be in. We have to give up what we can have now, that may seem like it's good enough for the time being, in order to have something better further down the line; work still needs doing – there's a job that needs to be completed and we don't want to end up ridiculed like the parabolic unprepared tower builder of Luke 14.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like this.

I can choose to watch a film right now, with the substandard sound that the television produces, or I can choose to set up the amplifier, speakers, surround sound, and sub-woofer, so that future film viewings are a more satisfying experience for everybody. We can let ourselves be distracted by whatever our own pale reflections of Heavenly rewards may be, or we can set our sights on the "not yet" when the work is done, the house is sorted and ready for guests, and we hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your lord." and we can rest from our labours.



Run for Cruse!

CRUSE Bereavement Care has charity places available for the iconic Great North Run which this year takes place on 12 September.

For more information click [here](#) or contact Sarah Buck at sarah.buck@cruse.org.uk or 07534 928693.

Visit www.newcastle.anglican.org/events for events taking place across the Diocese

Sisters stronger together



➤ Janet Ben, 31, showing the beans that she sells at the market. Credit: Christian Aid/Amaru Photography

IN Malawi, women are struggling in the face of the climate crisis. Cyclones have destroyed homes, floods have washed away livestock and extreme weather is affecting crops.

The climate crisis is pushing them deeper into poverty. In the aftermath of floods, they have lost nearly everything. Food is scarce and there is no money to educate their children. But people are uniting and changing their lives together.

Janet and her family lost everything when Cyclone Idai swept through Malawi in March 2019. Their house was, quite literally, reduced to a pile of bricks and their livestock was washed away. At that point, Janet found herself homeless and only able to eat once a day.

But hope came from an unusual fruit – and an amazing group of women.

Janet knew that other women in her community had teamed up to improve their finances. She said: “I used to admire women who were already members of this group. They were able to support their families.”

By Helen Cunningham, Church Engagement & Fundraising Officer (North East & Cumbria) **christian aid**

Joining the group has changed everything for Janet and her family. From the moment she joined, she felt love, friendship and a sense of community from other women.”

Women like Janet and Ida have united with their sisters to start new businesses. Powered by sustainable energy, these enterprises offer a way out of poverty and protection from the climate crisis. But they are hard to set up alone.

The women make juice from the baobab fruit, working in shifts. “Once we’ve made the juice, we take it to the market to sell. After selling we bring the money together,” explained Janet.

The women were given training in business basics and making baobab juice, along with a low interest loan. They make up to 6,000 bottles of juice a month, with the women working in shifts.

The Women’s Group chair, Eddina Yonsai said “It’s a real team effort. Some women go to get baobab fruits,

some clean the bottles, while some stir the juice, put it in the bottles, stick on the labels and close the bottles. That’s how we work.”

Christian Aid and our partner, Eagles Relief and Development, are building a processing unit for the group, and once that is complete, the women plan to install a juice-making machine and fridge, plus solar panels for electricity.

As the group grows, so do the benefits for the community. So far, 188 part and full-time jobs have been created through the women’s enterprises. The women’s average monthly income has increased tenfold since the beginning of the project. As more women join the group, they learn valuable skills from the other members, improving the lives of more women.

Janet now has a new home and is proud that her children are all at school. She is also now a successful businesswoman who has a reliable source of income from the juice and has opened her own stall at the local



➤ Eddina Yonsai, 49, (far left) and Janet Ben, 31, (far right) and their fellow Makande Women’s Group members with bottles of baobab (malambe) made at their processing unit. Credit: Christian Aid/Amaru Photography



➤ Members of Makande Women’s Group showing off the baobab fruit they have collected to make baobab juice. Credit: Christian Aid/Amaru Photography

market.

Harvest is obviously a time of celebration in the church calendar. It’s a time when we celebrate all the riches and abundance of Creation and look to share this with others.

Your support can help bring more women together to access the money they need to get started. It can train them with the skills they need to run a sustainable business. And it can help provide the renewable energy needed to keep it running.

Could you hold a collection in your Harvest service, or in another autumn service, to help women’s groups around the world come together to build fruitful new lives? Perhaps you would pray for women in Malawi, that they may continue to lift each other up, and give thanks for their achievements. And please keep acting through our campaign to ensure the UK Government, as host of the UN climate talks (COP26) raises the ambition of all countries to deliver climate justice.

■ Click [here](#) for more details, or contact Christian Aid at hello@christian-aid.org or on 01925 573769.



Clergy spouse survey

CLERGY Family Network is currently undertaking a survey of all clergy spouses across the Church of England.

This will help the network to identify needs for support and how they can best help clergy families in the future.

If you are a clergy spouse, please fill in [this survey](#). The closing date is Wednesday 30 June.

For more information on Clergy Family Network or the survey, visit their [facebook page](#) or [website](#).

MONTHLY E-BULLETIN



HAVE you signed up to our monthly Diocesan e-Bulletin? Delivered straight to your inbox on the last Friday of each month, the e-Bulletin features the latest news, information, upcoming events and resources for the Diocese as well as our monthly Prayer Diary.

You can sign-up at www.bit.ly/ebulletin-resub or via our Facebook page [@nddiocese](#)