

February 2025 to March 2025

CONTACT

**St. Georges United Reformed
Church**



Dear friends . . . **Happy New Year one and all!**

I don't know about you, but I feel there's something about getting through the holidays - with all their ups and downs - and then needing to [recombobulate](#), refocus, and figure out where we're headed in the new year that makes us ask the question: what were we doing before all the turkeys, tinsel, and presents? We were preparing for the birth of the Christ-child; Immanuel – God with us; hosting precious services for our local primary school; our pre-school; as well as our annual round of special services in church for the community in which we're set to serve.

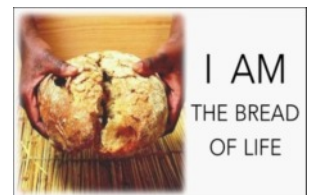
So, where are we now? Well, as your Minister, that means starting off the new year preparing for Lent as well as focusing on developing our new pastorate with St John's United Reformed Church, Wideopen; and Stamfordham Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP). Please keep attending Church Meetings where you will be updated with the progress.

You don't need me to tell you that the world feels very heavy – divided and uncertain. Hearts ache; minds seek peace; and souls hunger for hope. In these moments, many of us search for a way forward. Amid injustice and tragedies, we remember we must first gather round the Table for strength so we can respond with love.

Our Lenten Bible studies will commence on Ash Wednesday (5th March) with the theme: 'Not By Bread Alone'. Lent begins with a fast from bread. Jesus chose to fast and resisted temptation when the tempter offered him bread. After 40 days, Jesus ate bread. This story demonstrates that Jesus needed both physical and spiritual nourishment for his ministry. He needed bread and so much more, just like we do.

Our studies will continue throughout Lent, including Maundy Thursday and Good Friday when we'll explore 'Bread for Uncertainty'. When Jesus died, it was a sad day. His disciples, family, and friends felt helpless as they watched Jesus suffer. Suffering and pain do not make sense to us. Jesus was a good man! He taught us how to love God and each other. How could this happen? Good Friday reminds us to be sad and angry when people are treated poorly. But even though the "bread of life" was broken on Good Friday; that bread would go on to feed the world.

During Easter, we'll explore 'Bread for Feasting'. After Jesus' resurrection, the meals continued! Jesus picked up right where he left off, eating with people and feeding people. Jesus knew that people still needed him to fill their bellies with food and their hearts with good news. Today, we continue that mission - providing food and spiritual care to each other and our world. This is the purpose of the Church and the beauty of following Jesus today.



So please come and join me so that we can explore together how Jesus fed people - not just their bodies but also their souls - with good news, stories of redemption, and parables that showed the way of God's kingdom. From wedding feasts to eating with tax collectors to feeding thousands - people left Jesus' presence with full hearts and bellies. A gift Jesus gives freely so we may give to others.

Your friend and Minister, Liz.

A [new report](#) by Christian Aid, *Counting the cost 2024: climate breakdown*, identifies most expensive climate disasters year.



The ten most financially costly events all had an impact of more than \$4 billion. Most of these estimates are based only on insured losses, meaning the true financial costs are likely to be even higher, while the human costs are often uncounted.

The report also highlights ten extreme weather events that didn't rack up big enough insured losses to make the top ten but were just as devastating and often affected millions. These included several events in poorer countries where many people don't have insurance and where data is less available.

In terms of events which caused the biggest financial cost in 2024, the US bore the brunt, with October's Hurricane Milton topping the list as the single biggest one-off event at \$60 billion in damage and killing 25 people. Hurricane Helene which struck the US, Cuba and Mexico in September was next at \$55 billion and killed 232. In fact, the US was hit by so many costly storms throughout the year that even when hurricanes were removed, the other convective storms cost more than \$60 billion in damage and killed 88 people.

No part of the world was spared from crippling climate disasters in 2024, with floods in China costing \$15.6 billion and killing 315 people, and Typhoon Yagi which battered southwest Asia, killing more than 800 people. Yagi made landfall on September 2 in the Philippines, before moving on to Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand, where it triggered landslides, flash flooding and damaged hundreds of thousands of homes and agricultural land.

Europe accounted for three of the top 10 costliest disasters with Storm Boris in central Europe and floods in Spain and Germany costing a combined \$13.87 billion, and killing 258 people, 226 of which were in Valencia's floods in October. In Brazil, host of the COP30 climate summit in

2025, floods in the state of Rio Grande do Sul killed 183 people and caused \$5 billion in damage. The UK didn't make the list this year but in December the Environment Agency [warned](#) that a quarter of properties in England, eight million, could be at risk of flooding by 2050 due to climate change

While the top ten focuses on financial costs, which are usually higher in richer countries because they have higher property values and can afford insurance, some of the most devastating extreme weather events in 2024 hit poorer nations, which have contributed little to causing the climate crisis and have the least resources to respond.

These included Cyclone Chido which devastated the islands of Mayotte in December and may have killed more than a thousand people. A terrible drought in Colombia saw the Amazon River there drop by 90%, threatening the livelihoods of Indigenous people who rely on it for food and transport. Heatwaves affected 33 million people in Bangladesh whilst also worsening the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. West Africa was hit with terrible floods which affected more than 6.6 million people in Nigeria, Chad and Niger. In Southern Africa, the worst drought in living memory affected more than 14 million people in Zambia, Malawi, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

Christian Aid says these extreme events highlight the need for more urgent action to reduce carbon emissions and accelerate the transition to renewable energy and underlines the importance of providing funding for vulnerable people.

Christian Aid CEO, Patrick Watt, said:

"The human suffering caused by the climate crisis reflects political choices. There is nothing natural about the growing severity and frequency of droughts, floods and storms. Disasters are being supercharged by decisions to keep burning fossil fuels, and to allow emissions to rise. And they're being made worse by the consistent failure to deliver on financial commitments to the poorest and most climate-vulnerable countries. In 2025 we need to see governments leading, and taking action to accelerate the green transition, reduce emissions, and fund their promises.

“The transition to a global economy powered by renewables is inevitable but the question is whether it will move fast enough to protect the poorest people. At the moment, the answer to that is no. Rich countries must provide the funding needed to help the poorest communities adapt to climate impacts they have done little to cause.

“The scientific evidence of the lethal toll that burning fossil fuels is taking on people and planet is incontrovertible. This will likely be the hottest year ever recorded, breaking last year’s previous record. These terrible climate disasters are a warning sign of what is to come if we do not accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels. They also show the urgent need for adaptation measures, especially in the global South, where resources are especially stretched, and people are most vulnerable to extreme weather events.”

Christian Aid Press Release, Dec 2024.

An amazing English 2 letter word

A reminder of one word in the English language that can be a noun, verb, adjective, adverb and preposition.

A two letter word in English which has more meanings than any other two letter word- and that is UP. It is listed in the dictionary as an (adv), (prep), (ad), (n), or (v).

It is easy to understand UP meaning towards the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake UP ?

At a meeting, why does a topic come UP? Why do we speak UP, and why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report? We call UP our friends, brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver, warm UP the leftovers and clean UP the kitchen. We lock UP the house and fix UP the old car.

At other times, this little word has real special meaning. People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses.

To be dressed is one thing but to be dressed UP is special.

And this UP is confusing. A drain must be opened UP because it is blocked UP. We open UP a shop in the morning but we close it UP at night. We seem to be pretty mixed UP about UP !

To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of UP, look UP the word UP in the dictionary. It will take UP a large part of the column and can add UP to about 30 definitions.

If you are UP to the task you might try building UP a list of the many ways UP is used. It will take UP a lot of your time, but if you don’t give UP, you may wind UP with a hundred or more.

When the sun comes out, we say it is clearing UP. When it rains the earth soaks it UP. When it does not rain for a while, things dry UP. I could go on and on but I’ll wrap it UP for now- and my time is UP. Now I’ll shut UP !

SOME THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW (AND SOME YOU DON'T!)

In Ancient Greece, Socrates had a great reputation for wisdom. One day, someone came to find the great philosopher and said to him,

“Do you know what I just heard about your friend?!”

“A moment” replied Socrates. “Before you tell me, I would like to test it with the three sieves” “The three sieves?”

“Yes,” continued Socrates. “Before you speak about others, it's important to take the time to filter what you mean. I call it the test of the three sieves. The first sieve is TRUTH. Have you checked if what you're going to tell me is true?”

“No, I just heard it”.

“Very well. So you don't know if it is true. Let's move on to the second sieve, that of KINDNESS. Is what you want to tell me about my friend something good?”

“Oh no, On the contrary!”

“So,” questioned Socrates, “you want to tell me something negative about him, and you're not even sure it is true? Perhaps you can still pass the test of the third sieve, that of UTILITY. Is it useful for me to know what you're going to tell me about this friend?”

“No, not really”

“Therefore,” concluded Socrates, “What you were going to tell me is neither true, nor good, nor useful. Why, then, did you want to tell me this?”

- The widest motorway in the world is located in Ontario, Canada. At its widest point, it has 22 lanes.
- Public toilets in Japan are filled with smart glass. The glass remains transparent until the doors are locked and then they turn opaque.
- Australia has more than 10,000 beaches. If you were to visit a new one every day, it would take you more than 29 years.
- Rolls Royce is the most durable car ever made. Almost three quarters of all the cars produced by Rolls Royce in the company's history are still in active use today.

With thanks to LIVErNEWS, the Liver Patient Support Newsletter.

Bible a Month: China

“The Lord has told us what is good. What he requires of us is this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God” (Micah 6, vs8. GNB)

China covers an area of 3.7 million sq miles (the UK is 94,058). It has borders with North Korea, Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Pakistan and India. It has a population of 1,416 million; Languages include Simplified Chinese in written format and Mandarin in spoken format, plus many local dialects and minority languages. The literacy rate, of people who can read and write, is 96%. Bible Society has been working in China for more than 200 years, thanks to Christians like you supporting the work. In 1811 a group of translators sailed off to China and in 1823 Bible Society supporters funded the publication of the Morrison- Milne Translation into Chinese.

During the Cultural Revolution, Bibles were destroyed, but in 1984 Bible Society was invited by the Chinese authorities to help establish the Amity Printing Company in Nanjing. Since then, more than 100 million Bibles have been printed there for distribution in China.

Bible work flourishes to this day. With most people now able to access the Bible there, it is crucial that they are properly equipped to fully engage with and understand it. To achieve this, you also supporting pastor training and the translation of the Bible into China’s minority languages. A vast digital Chinese Bible hub, which will be accessible by Chinese communities worldwide as well as in mainland China, is also being developed to enable them to access more Scripture resources and training.

Prayer Pointers.

- Please pray that in 2025, the authorities will permit the publication of the completed translation of the Bible into the Mongolian language spoken in the Chinese province of inner Mongolia
- Thank the Lord for the millions of people coming to faith in China. Pray that God will help them understand the Scriptures so their faith will not waver.
- Pray for the success of the pastor training programmes organised by churches in China with the support of Bible Society.

Bible a Month Newsletter, Jan 25.

Eyewitness Report from China

By Arleen Luo, Manager of Asia and Chinese Mission.

I regularly visit China as part of my job to check how all of Bible Society’s projects are progressing and to establish and maintain relationships with Chinese Bible workers, churches and high-ranking government officials.

I like going back to my homeland. Trains are fast and reliable. I can call for medicine to be prescribed and delivered to me in 30 minutes in the middle of the night. That’s something I really miss a lot. Oh, and I can even have a hotpot delivered to me at 4 am if I want!

I was a Protestant lay preacher in Beijing before I joined Bible Society and one of the highlights of 2024 was opening a dialogue with the Catholic Church in China. The Bible Society team visited Ningbo, which has a vast Christian heritage. It’s a port on the eastern coast that the Qing dynasty emperor was forced to open to trade in 1842 at the end of the First Opium war. Western missionaries arrived and many beautiful churches were built.

When I visited the Catholic bishop’s church he was staring at us. He was dressed in his fine robes and asked, “Which of you is ordained?”. Its funny looking back on it but I felt embarrassed at the time. “I have to admit

I'm a lay person. Do you still want to talk to me?" He smiled and said, "I just wanted to address you properly". Then he poured us some tea.

Right now, the focus in China is on Bible engagement and specifically the training of pastors and lay preachers. There is only one ordained minister for every 6700 Christians in China so training more is crucial and we wouldn't be able to do it if it wasn't for Bible a Month supporters. Many Christians have Bibles but they need someone to guide them through the text. A single pastor might serve 7 different churches in some areas, so each congregation will only hear one sermon a month.

Training is provided through seminaries in China. Lots of lay preachers are very poor so, for example, we will pay for their travel and accommodation so they can attend. We have trained thousands of Bible students over the years. But the training does not only take place in China. Two Bible students completed their doctorates in England and Singapore last year under scholarships provided by Bible Society and have returned to China to teach in seminaries. You're now supporting the PhD training of three more students in Edinburgh, Cambridge and Israel. You're also supporting Bible translations into minority languages that are spoken by large numbers of Chinese people.

Last year the Bible was published in the Ganyi language and in September the pastors received the Ganyi Study Bible. The Ganyi is one of the major tribes of the Yi people (population 3.8 million) and live in Yunnan province. They were evangelised by British missionaries in the early 19th century. The Ganyi never had the full Bible until last year. Work had begun 15 years ago. What happens is a consultant goes there and trains a translation team. The teams salary is very low so we supported them for 15 years until they completed it. Next year we hope a translation will be published for the people who live in the northern Chinese province of Inner Mongolia .

Regular giving truly makes Bible translations possible because we cannot embark on such projects unless we know we can fund them for their entire duration.

There are many restrictions on religious activity in China and these have recently been increasing. This is why we work hard to maintain our careful relationship with Chinese officials. This can be tricky so we really need your prayers.

We look forward to seeing a new generation of Chinese Christians who are deeply rooted in the Bible and confident in the Scriptures as their embark on their discipleship journey.

St George's continues to support Bible a Month and Bible Society, with a regular payment each month of £30.

Last date for articles for the April/May 2025 issue of Contact

The last date for articles is Wednesday 19th March . Just give or send your articles to Bob Renton (bob@bobrenton.co.uk) or Dorothy Barker (dorothy@btinternet.com) If you prefer to post an article then please phone Dorothy B for the address on 01670 716087.

Distribution continues to be mostly by email but printed copies are always available in church for those who prefer that. The magazine is also on the website at www.stgeorgesurc.church

Remember this is YOUR magazine and we are interested in hearing what you are interested in or have been doing. Perhaps some holiday stories? Family stories? DJB

THANK YOU

Once again a very big thank you to all who ordered Christmas cake this year. I hope you enjoy the festive season. Thanks to you this year I have made a donation of £200 to church funds. Thank you for continuing to help me raise money for Our Church.

Audrey Matfin



POINTS TO PONDER

- Having noisy children in the church is a far better sound than the sound of no children in the church.
- Sometimes I just look up, smile, and say, “I know that was you. Thank you”.
- Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.
- Some days are better, some days are worse. Look for the blessing instead of the curse. Be positive, stay strong, and get enough rest. You can’t do it all, but you can do your best.
Serenity, Calm and Peace.
- At the end of the day, what really matters is that your loved ones are well, you’ve done your best and that you’re thankful for all you have. *Wisdom Whispers*
- A good friend and a hot coffee. Priceless !
- The sad part about getting older is that no one can see you’re still young on the inside.
- Be thankful for what you have. You have no idea how many people would love to have what you’ve got. *Blessings on your way.*
- A gentle reminder. If you don’t schedule a break, your body will take one for you, and it probably won’t be at a convenient time.

The above quotes are freely available on the Internet, and where possible, authors are acknowledged.

News of the Church Family

St George’s was sad to learn of the death of Clare’s mam, Merle, in December last year. The funeral took place in January and was well attended by family and friends. Our condolences, love and prayers continue to be with you all.

Christmas was very busy with our services, visits of the local school’s reception classes, and Pre-school parents for the Pram service. The children (and staff) were delighted with their knitted Christmas puddings- with Tunnocks Tea cakes inside. A big thank you to those folk who knitted the puddings, and those who supplied the tea cakes. Thanks too to the folk who helped to decorate the church- then take the decorations down; and the readers and musicians who took part in our worship. A special thank you to Liz for all your work in preparation and leading our services.

We are delighted to learn that Margaret Storey, a Local Preacher and friend of many of us here, was awarded the MBE in the King’s New Year Honours List. This is for her volunteer work for Seed International Fund Trust in Bluefields Nicaragua, for services to the local community. Margaret has worked for SIFT for many years.

There have been some notable birthdays so far this year. Back in January, Julia Watson (and Pamela, of course), celebrated a “Big 0” birthday while Norman N & Alison H have a “Big 0” birthday in February. We send our best wishes to Julia, Norman and Alison – and all the other church folk who have a birthday in February and March. (And there are several!)

Hello from Allendale to our friends at St George's

The Christmas and New Year celebrations are now behind us so I thought I would send you some notes from Allendale.

Many of the village trees and posts were decorated with twinkling Christmas lights all of which were battery powered. The battery packs were simply tied to a tree or convenient post. They were there over the whole period and not once were they touched or interfered with. Had it been Newcastle I would have thought the lights and battery packs would have had a life expectancy of about 15 minutes. The hamlet of Catton, and their tiny church is about 15 minutes walk from our house. On the Sunday before Christmas Julia and I joined a pre Christmas service in the church and we sang lots of carols. It was especially pleasing for me because the musical accompaniment was provided by an electric accordion, which I love. On Christmas eve, we joined about 40 folk when we went to Catton again but this time we sang carols on the village green before going to the pub to sing more carols. One of the pre Christmas events in Allendale village was another carol service in the village square and the Backworth Colliery band provided the music. Hot mince pies and mulled wine were in abundance. The wind that night was quite blustery but it all went off spectacularly well. When it was finished Julia and I walked the ten minutes up the bank to home and I seem to recall I had a glass (or was two ish) of my favourite Auchentoshan whisky. Although I thought the high winds and lashing wind would have cancelled the traditional New Years eve parade of the burning tar barrels and bonfire, but it did in fact go ahead. It has never been cancelled in 175 years and not even Covid stopped it. Julia and I did not go since we both had coughs and cold and the thought of standing in high winds and getting lashed by horizontal rain dampened my enthusiasm (no, I am not a wimp, I was protecting Julia - honest) The cold weather has brought home to me the water temperature difference between Allendale and Newcastle. I take a cold shower every morning but since coming to live in Allendale I have noticed a drop in the water temperature. Currently though it has gone from, 'bracing' to 'blooming freezing'. I hasten to add Julia does not take cold showers. There is a seat on a track 10 minutes walk from our house. It is the most sturdiest seat I have ever seen. Parts of it have been carved from a large slice of a tree. It is interesting in that the back of the seat is carved as a Guitar. It is a memorial to some local musician who died in 2015. It is inscribed with a line, 'enjoy the west sunsets' and I do agree there are some really stunning sunsets here, and sitting on that seat is very peaceful, with views down into the Dale and over to the Pennines. The path on which the seat is placed is one which Julia and I regularly walk on our favourite 4 mile stroll. It takes us in a circular route climbing to about 320 metres (from a start of 240 metres) directly above Catton and then circles back descends into Catton then along the road to Allendale. Come and visit us and we can all complete the walk or any of the many others together. A surprising amount of social and entertainment activities take place around the many small villages and of course in Hexham. Julia and I went to see the Nutcracker ballet (again!) which was being shown on the cinema screen in the Forum (a cinema part owned and ran by the council). It was enjoyable but very informal and can you believe I went there without a suit and tie! Well it was only a cinema. Ashleigh and Fiona thought I had flipped.



Milk is still delivered in bottles to houses in Allendale and often eggs and bread too which are left on the door step. The bottles still come with foil caps on. Do you remember those caps? We used to place them between upturned fingers and make them go like flying saucers and often get a whack from our school teacher for doing so in class. Happy days.

You will always get a welcome at our door (we won't let you in!) should you wish to visit. Just give a call before you do. I'll send you directions to the Watson towers.

God bless and do please take care. J & D

The Geordie Thermometer

Many of us have seen something like this, but in view of our recent freezing temperatures and possibly more cold weather to come, it is worth a repeat. A friendly look at the North/South divide.

- 50 Degrees. Southerners turn on their heating. Geordies plant their gardens.
- 40 Degrees. Southerners shiver uncontrollably. Geordies sunbathe on the Toon Moor.
- 30 Degrees. Southern cars will not start. Geordies drive with their windows down.
- 20 Degrees. Southerners wear coats, gloves, and woolly hats. Geordies throw a T shirt on.

- 10 Degrees. Southerners begin to evacuate. Geordies go swimming in the North Sea.
- Zero Degrees. Southern England closes down. Geordies have the last barbecue before it gets cold.
- Minus 10 Degrees. Southerners cease to exist. Geordies throw on a lightweight jacket.
- Minus 80 Degrees. David Attenborough makes a new programme. Geordies dig the first leek trench of the year.
- Minus 100 Degrees. Santa Claus abandons the North Pole. Geordie lasses put on more lip gloss.
- Minus 173 Degrees. Alcohol freezes. Geordies drink at home because the pubs are shut.
- Minus 297 Degrees. Microbiological life starts to disappear. The cows on Newcastle Town Moor complain of vets with cold hands. Geordies think about T shirts with sleeves.
- Minus 460 Degrees. All atomic motion stops. Geordies start to stamp their feet and blow on their hands.
- Minus 500 Degrees Hell freezes over. Sunderland FC qualify for Europe.

Author(s) unknown.

Lectionary readings from 2nd February to 13th April 2025

- 02-Feb-25 Jeremiah 1 vs 4-10, Psalm 71 vs 1-6, 1Corinthians 13 vs 1-13, Luke 4 vs 21-30
- 09-Feb-25 Isaiah 6 vs 1-8, (9-13), Psalm 138, 1Corinthians 15 vs 1-11, Luke 5 vs 1-11
- 16-Feb-25 Jeremiah 17 vs 5-10, Psalm 1, 1Corinthians 15 vs 12-20 and Luke 6 vs 17-26
- 23-Feb-25 Genesis 45 s 3-11, 15, Psalm 37 vs 1-11, 39-40, 1Corinthians 15 vs 35-38, 42-50, Luke 6 vs 27-38
- 02-Mar-25 Exodus 34 vs 29-35, Psalm 99, 2Corinthians 3 v 12 - ch 4 vs 2, Luke 9 vs 28-36, (37-43)
- 05-Mar-25 Joel 2 vs 1-2, 12-17, Or Isaiah 58 vs 1-12, Psalm 51 1-17, 2Corinthians 5 vs 20b-Ch 6 vs 10, Matthew 6 vs 1-6, 16-21
- 09-Mar-25 Deuteronomy 26 vs 1-11, Psalm 91 vs 1-2, 9-16, Romans 10 vs 8b-13, Luke 4 vs 1-13
- 16-Mar-25 Genesis 15 vs 1-12, 17-18, Psalm 27, Philippians 3 vs 17 - ch 4 vs 1, Luke 13 vs 31-35
- 23-Mar-25 Isaiah 55 vs 1-9, Psalm 63 vs 1-8, 1 Corinthians 10 vs 1-13, Luke 13 vs 1-9
- 30-Mar-25 Joshua 5 vs 9-12, Psalm 32, 2 Corinthians 5 vs 16-21, Luke 15 vs 1-3, 11b-32
- 06-Apr-25 Isaiah 43 vs 16-21, Psalm 126, Philippians 3 vs 4b-14, St. John 12 vs 1-8
- 13-Apr-25 **Palm:** Luke 19 vs 28-40, Psalm 118 vs 1-2, 19-29
- Passion:** Isaiah 50 vs 4-9a, Psalm 31 vs 9-16, Philippians 2 vs 5-11, Luke 22 vs 14- Ch23vs, 56 OR Luke 23 vs 1-49



Northern Synod Prayers

Please join in prayer with others in the synod for the churches and people mentioned below.

February

2nd Assembly Executive.

Remembering churches: Wooler; St James's Alnwick; St Mark's Amble; St Andrew's Glanton; Longframlington; and Rothbury. Ministers Rev'd Ed Butlin, Rev'd Alison Mills, and Fliss Barker, CRCW.

9th Racial Justice Sunday; Our Advocate Pat Poinen.

16th Trinity Ashington LEP; St Andrew's Monkseaton; Minister Rev'd Louise Sanders.

23rd The Trust, all members, its various sub-committees, Convenor Rev'd Alan McGougan. The work of the North East District Council.

March

2nd Church Action on Poverty.

Trinity Bedlington LEP; St Andrew's and St Mark's Newbiggin LEP; Seaton Delaval LEP; Minister Rev'd Alan McGougan.

9th Preparation for the Synod Meeting (15th). Moderator Rev'd Kim Plumpton; Synod Clerk, Rev'd Dr Trevor Jamison; Staff Team Andrew Atkinson, Lisa McAvoy, Wendy Watson, Gordon Wanless, Helen Hgg, and Ragen Ashworth.

URC Youth Assembly.

16th Widdrington; St George's Morpeth; Great Bavington; Minister Rev'd Julian Sanders.

23rd Our work with Northerly Synods; Moderators Jamie Kissack, Lindsey Sanderson, Geoff Felton, Clare Downing.

30th St Aidan's Hexham; Local Church Leader Linda Gowland.

April

6th The work of Rev'd David Haslam, forces chaplain RAF Boulmer; North East Industrial Mission (NIM), Fiona Usher.



Smile

- How do you know where the North East of England begins? It's the line north of which people know that the name of Bob's wife in the Likely Lads was Thelma and not Thelmapet.
- Old age has come at a bad time. Just as I was beginning to know everything, I'm now forgetting everything I know.
- I ran into a lamppost today. Fortunately I only sustained light injuries.
- I have a pet termite. I named him Clint. Clint eatswood.
- I used to go out with a girl called Lyndsey Doyle. Canny lass but smelt like a cricket bat.
- If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.
- My new car has a button for pretty much everything. There's even one that says, "Rear Wiper". I'm still too frightened to try that one.
- I know mirrors don't lie. I am just grateful that they don't laugh!
- Committee: a body that keeps minutes and wastes hours.

Taking part

At previous Church Meetings, mention has been made of the limited number of volunteers to help in the various rotas. We are now at the stage where the same people are actively helping in rotas and, being honest, they would like extra helpers so they can have some time off. The more helpers there are, the less often your turn comes around. So the task is shared.

This is YOUR church. Please could you seriously consider helping as a door steward or making tea? If you are unsure of what duties would be involved in each rota, the guidelines below might help you.

Door Stewards.

Before the service.

- Open the church doors at approx. 10.am.
- Put out the “No parking” signs on the pavement beside the church door. (This doesn’t mean that people will take notice of them, but some members need to be dropped off close to the door, to minimise the amount of walking)
- Put a fresh glass of water in the vestibule and on the lectern shelf.
- Make sure there is an offering plate in place on the table at the back of church.
- Hand out hymn sheets and notice sheets (not everyone will want these as hymns are on the screen).
- WELCOME everyone. Open the interior doors for people if required.
- Keep vigilant for people arriving at different times! (or even after worship has begun).

During the service.

Take the offering to the minister/preacher for dedication. (The counting is done by others).

After the service

- Collect in any sheets left on seats.
- Take in “No Parking” signs.
- Lock up the church after people have left or make sure someone else will do it. (usually DB)
- Ensure that all the lights and heaters have been switched off.

The Secretary is usually in church by 9.45, so no church key is needed for stewards. Use the Boundary Gardens entrance which has a door bell!

Can you make a cuppa ? If so, you could help on the Tea Rota

Before the service.

- Switch on the boiler (It is plumbed in. No need to fill up).
- Put some cups ready, milk and sugar, and put out cakes or biscuits. (All donated, or paid for by church).
- Put out dish for donations towards costs.

After the service

- Make and serve cups of tea or coffee. (The cups are recyclable, so keep them separate to other rubbish).
- There might be a **minimal** amount of washing up. (cutlery, milk jug))
- Put away biscuits and jars of coffee etc.
- Wipe the servery surface area with anti-bacterial spray.

Help will be given to new volunteers to show you where supplies can be found.

If you would like to volunteer, please speak to Alison Hall, Dorothy Barker or Tony Hall.

Musicians, computer operators/setting up, flower arrangers are still needed too!

Plus, readers for the Bible passages. Please speak to one of the Elders if you are interested.

DJB

Church Diary

February

2nd 10.30 am Worship will be led by our minister, Rev'd Liz Jewitt, and will include Holy Communion.

9th 10.30 am Worship will be led by Rev'd John Paul, retired URC minister.

11th 7.30 pm Heaton Churches Together meeting at Martha and Mary's.

16th 10.30 am Worship will be led by our minister, Rev'd Liz Jewitt.

23rd 10.30 am Worship will be led by Mrs Hannah Middleton, Synod's Children's Work Adviser.

March

2nd 10.30 am Worship will be led by Rev'd Liz Jewitt and will include Holy Communion.

9th 10.30 am Worship will be led by Harry Fawcitt, one of our Worship Leaders.

16th 10.30 am Worship will be led by our minister, Rev'd Liz Jewitt.

19th 7.00 pm Elders Meeting in the minor hall.

19th LAST DATE for the items for the April/May issue of Contact.

22nd Concert (NN)

23rd 10.30 am Worship will be led by Mr Peter Waugh.

30th 10.30 am Worship will be led by Rev'd Kate Hackett, URC minister.

April

6th 10.30 am Worship will be led by our minister, Rev'd Liz Jewitt.

St George's Mission Prayer.

God of mission, who alone brings growth to your Church, send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning, wisdom to our actions, joy to our worship, and power to our witness. Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you, and in service to our local community, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

February	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	March 2nd
Duty Elder	Val Kane	Dorothy Barker	Sharon Cowey	Tony Hall	Alison Hall
Door Stewards	Dorothy Coates & Alison Wilson	Sharon Cowey & Renee Croft	Ivy & Bob Renton	Babs & Tony Hall	Lesley Cadwallader & Judith Das
Communion Stewards	Angela MacKenzie & Judith Das				Dorothy Barker & Audrey Matfin
Flower Arranger	Ivy Renton	Clare Hutton	Dorothy Barker	Sandra Nossiter	Ivy Renton
Flower Donations					
Tea after worship	Clare & John Hutton	Ivy Renton & Judith Das	Babs & Tony Hall	Dorothy Coates & Val Kane	Clare & John Hutton
Screens Set up	Bob Renton	Alison Hall	Bob Renton	Alison Hall	Bob Renton
Screens operate	Anthony Armstrong	Alison Hall	Bob Renton	Harry Fawcitt	Anthony Armstrong
March	9th	16th	23rd	30th	April 6th
Duty Elder	Babs Hall	Val Kane	Dorothy Barker	Sharon Cowey	Judith Das
Door Stewards	Harry Fawcitt & Rob Hailes	Sharon Cowey & Renee Croft	Anthony Armstrong & Audrey Matfin	Ivy & Bob Renton	Dorothy Coates & Alison Wilson
Communion Stewards					Val Kane & Harry Fawcitt
Flower Arrangers	Clare Hutton	Dorothy Barker	Sandra Nossiter	Ivy Renton	Clare Hutton
Flower Donations					
Tea after worship	Ivy Renton & Judith Das	Babs & Tony Hall	Dorothy Coates & Val Kane	Clare & John Hutton	Ivy Renton & Judith Das
Screens Set up	Alison Hall	Bob Renton	Alison Hall	Bob Renton	Alison Hall
Screens operate	Alison Hall	Bob Renton	Harry Fawcitt	Anthony Armstrong	Alison Hall