

June 2025 to July 2025

CONTACT



St. George's U. R. C.

Newton Road High Heaton

The God who never sleeps

“I will look up towards the hills- from where will my help come? It comes from the Lord, maker of heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to stumble, for he who keeps you will not slumber. The one who guards Israel never slumbers and never sleeps. The Lord is your guardian; a shelter at your right hand. The sun will not beat upon you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will protect you from all evil; he will watch over you, body and soul. The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in, now and always” Psalm 121.

Are you any good at working into the small hours of the morning? Reading, writing something on the computer perhaps? Or watching a film till the end. You might start out to do “just this next bit” then your eyes begin to droop and your head nods. And reluctantly you need to turn in for the night. Few of us are able to stay awake too many hours before the urge to sleep proves irresistible.

According to the writer of Psalm 121, God is different. He is the one who never slumbers, the one who, by day or by night, is constantly watching over us, guarding us against evil. That does not mean nothing unpleasant can happen to us or that we are safe from danger, for Christians have no more guarantee of that than anyone else. What it does mean is that God will be there when we need him, to give us strength and to surround us with his love. Whatever we may face and however things may seem, he will be with us- at all times, in all places, always!

Ask yourself: Have you lost sight of the fact that God is always keeping watch? Have you mistakenly imagined he has turned his back on you or is no longer interested in your welfare?

Pray: Living God, help me to remember that you are a God who never sleeps; a God on whom I can depend in any and every situation. When I feel lost and alone, teach me that you are there. When I feel overwhelmed by trouble, unsure of my ability to get through, help me to remember that you are close by. When I feel uncertain of the way ahead, fearful of what the future may hold, teach me that you are watching over me. Help me to understand that whatever I may face, you will guide and guard, protecting me from evil and enfolding me in your everlasting arms, and in that knowledge may I meet every day with quiet trust and glad thanksgiving, in Christ’s name. Amen

Gracious God, for the constancy of your love, the faithfulness of your guidance and the certainty of your help, receive my praise, in the name of Christ. Amen.

Adapted from “Daily Prayer” by Nick Fawcett.



Christian Aid. 80 years old.

In May we celebrated 80 years since the end of the second World War. But do you know that

Christian Aid was set up as a direct response to the poverty and problems caused by the war?

Our groundbreaking work began in 1945, when we were founded by British and Irish churches to help refugees following the Second World War. For 80 years, we have provided humanitarian relief and long-term development support for poor communities worldwide, while highlighting suffering, tackling injustice and championing people's rights.

80 years of hope For decades, hope has united us in the fight against poverty and injustice.

1940s

We helped refugees in need at the end of the Second World War. We raised more than £80,000 (£3 million plus in today's money) for emergency supplies in mainland Europe. We supported, equipped and enabled partner churches there to meet the needs of their people.

1950s

We launched Christian Aid Week to raise extra funds. We continued helping refugees in mainland Europe as well as those from Palestine, Korea and China. We supported the establishment of the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) to enable young people to make a difference, and offered help to churches in countries moving from colonialism to independence to meet the needs of poor people.

1960s

We made a difference in crises affecting Nigeria/Biafra, Kenya and India. We created the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) so that development agencies were seen to work together in times of humanitarian crisis. We helped set the World Development Movement to encourage political campaigning. We addressed racism and poverty in the United States as well as advising Martin Luther King while he was in the UK.

1970s

We drew a link between educating supporters at home about the root causes of poverty and work

with partners overseas to eradicate it. We popularised world development issues by providing seed money to establish the New Internationalist magazine. We explained the connection between our consumer culture at home and the global food crisis by launching a campaign to live simply.

1980s

We fed hungry people during the Ethiopian famine and those experiencing drought in Mozambique. We led a mass lobby of parliament to call for more official development aid. We created the Southern African Coalition to demand an end to apartheid.

1990s

We linked work in 50 poor countries to campaigns on developing world debt, fair trade and the policies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. We challenged the stigma and discrimination experienced by people living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa. We stood up for and provided food for refugees in Kosovo.

2000s

We campaigned to make poverty history during a war against terror. We reached more than 500,000 people with food, shelter and healthcare after the Asian Tsunami. We publicised the fact that developing countries lose more money through the tax evasion practices of large corporations than they receive through official aid.

2010s

We inform about and campaign against climate change. We champion tax justice. We continue to work with local partners on the ground to make a practical difference to the lives of new waves of refugees locally while campaigning and advocating for change globally.

Theodor Davidovic: one refugee's experience

In the camps, it was Christian Aid that sent the parcels...feeding us for two-and-a-half years, and I never forgot it. Christian Aid helped me to survive and I feel I owe my life to Christian Aid. I vowed there and then to do my best as long as I live, and I'm still doing it

- Theodor Davidovic, Refugee and long-term Christian Aid supporter.



® the Fairtrade Foundation's response to the announced aid cuts in the Spring Statement

27 March 2025

Fairtrade is deeply concerned about the UK Government's announcement of cuts to Official Development Assistance (ODA) with immediate effect, with a view to reducing it to 0.3% of gross national income (GNI) by 2027. We urge the Government to maintain the ODA budget at 0.5% of GNI over the next two years and to honour its climate funding commitments.

FAIRTRADE

Our food security depends on the wellbeing and sustainable farming practices of smallholder farmers and agricultural workers in low-income countries, which are often supported by UK aid programmes. Given the scale of the challenges we face at Fairtrade, like rising costs to unstable markets, we champion a 'trade plus aid' approach. Aid is essential for addressing the causes of poverty and exploitation, that are at the root of human rights abuses and environmental harms. Without it, those farmers and agricultural workers who are most in need will struggle to make a living and support their families.

Restoring the aid budget is also a critical step in honouring the UK's International Climate Finance (UKICF) commitments. Climate finance must support those most vulnerable to climate impacts, ensuring that smallholder farmers and agricultural workers can adapt and transition to more sustainable and resilient practices.

At a time of global challenges, the UK should lead international aid. We call on the government to restore aid funding now.



Frog story

A frog goes into a bank and approaches the cashier.. He can see from

her nameplate that her name is Patricia Whack.

"Miss Whack, I'd like to get a £20,000 loan to take a holiday."

Patty looks at the frog in disbelief and asks his name. The frog says his name is Kermit Jagger, his dad is Mick Jagger, and that it's okay, he knows the bank manager.

Patty explains that he will need to secure the loan with some collateral.

The frog says, "Sure. I have this," and produces a tiny porcelain elephant, about an inch tall, bright pink and perfectly formed.

Very confused, Patty explains that she'll have

to consult with the bank manager and disappears into a back office.

She finds the manager and says, "There's a frog called Kermit Jagger out there who claims to know you and wants to borrow £20,000, and he wants to use this as collateral."

She holds up the tiny pink elephant. "I mean, what in the world is this?"

(folks, you're gonna luv this)

The bank manager looks back at her and says...

"It's a knickknack, Patty Whack. Give the frog a loan, His old man's a Rolling Stone." (You're singing it, aren't you? Yeah, I know you are.....)

Come on now, you grinned, I know you did!!!

Never take life too seriously! Nobody gets out alive anyway.



Early Summer notes from Allendale

Greetings once more from Allendale. The true summer is upon us and

everything has responded to the warmer weather, although, as I write we are still having frosts and as a result I cannot get my plants in the garden. The greenhouse is full to overflowing. The end of spring has rewarded us with lots of flowers and birds which are flying around picking up nesting materials. It has also seen the return of the Curlews which often sweep over the meadows at the top of the street. They have a distinctive call. Julia and I drove to the Dryburn Moor, which is about 3 miles from the village, and walked to the ruins of the Allendale Chimneys, a relic from the lead smelting mill. On the moor there were lots of Curlews swooping and diving. Their return is also good for me because the local brewery make a beer called the Curlews Return which I am very partial to. We have settled into the Methodist church in the village. Lovely people but as I have written once before, there is no one to play the organ, so a system of pre-recorded hymns are used with the words projected onto a screen. The problem is that almost everything is played at the tempo of the Steptoe theme tune. The church we truly liked, because of the organ and the hymns, was Haydon Bridge. However, with the winter we have just had, which was difficult but not too bad for this area, I thought I would not like to drive to HB through drifted snow so we settled on the village church which is only 10 minutes walk from our house (or 4 minutes if you ski down the bank)

In early May the village held a three day annual May Fair which was well attended with stalls and organised events including an ecumenical service in the village hall. The climax of the Saturday was an evening 'Rock Concert' and we never even thought of going to that - definitely not our style.

I am constantly looking for things for Julia to do which stimulate her mind and exercise her body. When we lived in NCL she went twice each week to the supervised gym and to a very strenuous zumber class. So, I recently took her to a zumber class in the village. She was a little timid at first but the other ladies warmly welcomed her and took her in hand

and at the moment she is coping with the class. I also took her to a Circle Dancing session. Ever heard of it? No, neither had I. Since we both liked dancing I thought we should get involved. Well circle dancing is just that. There was a lighted candle and a few flowers on the floor and folk held hands, and danced, some in bare feet, to the sound of relaxing music, around the candle. First one way and then the other. Occasionally, there was also a jump of sorts. As I would get more pleasure out of watching wood warp, we politely said our goodbyes.

I have previously written about the honesty of the local folk. For the May Fair there has been a raffle to raise funds for a local children's club. The tickets were put through every letter box in the village, I bought a book or two and the instructions said leave the stubs in the Co-op shop. I took mine to the shop and asked where I should deposit them and was told just put them and any money in the bucket by the door. No checks, locks or chains. Just a bucket!

Amongst the things I have missed since moving across here, apart from our many friends, is the radio. I only ever listened to Classic FM and radio four, either in the house, the car or my workshop, but sadly I cannot have either here, there is no signal. My daughters fixed me up an Echo dot (Alexa), on which I can get both stations but with my hearing problem, the sound is dreadful. Of course we cannot have terrestrial TV either since there is no signal, so we have to have a Freesat box. Similarly, the mobile reception is very poor and as we have no land line for the telephone I have had to buy a system that works through the router. I have bought some semaphore flags as a back-up. If I use those, and put some bells on my ankles I could make a good impression of a Morris dancer (and there is a group in the village.)

Many of you may recall that I do like gardening (if the good Lord made anything better he kept it to himself). I did not have the time after we moved in to do anything to the gardens we have, but this year, I have put a lot of work into the soil, and I am pleased with the results. All I need is frost free weather and I can plant out.

Take care folks, we send lots of love and keep you all in our daily prayers.

Julia and Dennis

Who are we?

The United Reformed Church (URC) is a family of Christians who meet in local churches across England, Scotland and Wales, part of the worldwide family of Reformed Churches, a group of more than 70 million Christians.

The URC has around 42,000 members in about 1,200 congregations with more than 600 ministers. More than 48,400 people worship in our churches each week, and many more take part in the weekday activities of the churches.

What we believe

God loves you. And as Christians, we do too.

Regardless of who you are, your background, your family, your past, your present or future, we are in this church because we believe that God is alive and listening to us through prayer, guiding and speaking to us through the Bible, forgiving us for what we have done wrong, and waiting for us in Heaven after we pass away.

We believe that each and every one of us can find contentment through loving and serving Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

A lack of hierarchy, and a respect for individual principles, means that the URC is not rigid in the expression of its beliefs, and embraces a wide variety of opinions.

At the same time, in the words of the URC's [Statement of Nature, Faith and Order](#), together we are committed to 'God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit – the living God, the only God, ever to be praised.'

You are welcome here

We are proud to be an intercultural Church, where people with varied ethnic and cultural roots meet, worship, discuss and learn from one another.

We were pioneers in ordaining women – our first female minister was ordained more than 100 years ago in 1917.

Most jobs and roles in the URC, whether voluntary or paid, are open to all.

Our roots

Being reformed sets us in a stream of tradition that goes back 500 years. In 1517 Martin Luther launched a movement of challenge in the Church that we call the Protestant Reformation.

Changes came quickly. Bibles were translated and printed in languages everybody used (not just in Latin). There was a new emphasis on the importance of the whole church and everybody in it – members and ministers together.

Being reformed is part of our DNA. It reflects our continual aim of reforming ourselves to be a Church for the present day.

Being reformed means that we delight in exploring the Bible, we do not fear change, and we try to run our churches in ways that take everyone's insight and contribution seriously.

The history of the URC

The creation of the United Reformed Church in 1972 formally merged the Presbyterian Church of England and the Congregational Church in England and Wales. One Member of Parliament at the time described this merger as: "one of the most historic measures in the history of the Christian churches in this country."

The denomination expanded when Churches of Christ joined it in 1981, followed by Scottish Congregationalists in 2000.

The URC is a nonconformist Church. Put most simply, this means that we are not an 'established' Church, with a formal link to civil authority like, for example, the Church of England has.

However, the URC is committed to working closely with Churches of all traditions, in prayer and social action, and many of our local churches are now united with local churches from other traditions (Baptist, Church of England, or Methodist to name a few).

Our organisation structure

The URC has a three-tier structure, which is open for everyone to participate in.

Local churches have an Elders' Meeting, in which the Ministers and Elders share pastoral and spiritual oversight and leadership, and a Church Meeting, where all members gather to seek God's will and to discuss the life and work of the church.

At a wider level, the URC has 13 Synods: the national Synods of Scotland and Wales plus eleven regional Synods across England. Each provides oversight of about 100 local churches and is led by a Synod Moderator.

The General Assembly of the URC is its ultimate decision-making body. It meets every year to celebrate, discuss and make decisions about the life and work of the church.

Church members commit to supporting the church through giving, action, and by taking part in the Church Meeting, as well as through regular attendance at worship.

Just a reminder- your Elders are Dorothy Barker(Church Secretary); Sharon Cowey, Judith Das, Alison Hall, Tony Hall (Assistant Secretary); Babs Hall; Val Kane; and Audrey Matfin.



Bible a Month: The Gambia



“ I pray that Christ will make his home in your hearts through faith. I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love, so that you, together with all God’s people, may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep, is Christ’s love”

Ephesians 3, vs17-18 (GNB)

The Gambia is a small country on the west coast of Africa, and is sandwiched between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. It has a short coastline.

It covers an area of 4300 sq miles (the UK is 94,000 sq miles). The population is 2.5 million and languages include English, Mandinka, Wolof, Fula plus many other local dialects. The literacy rate- people who can read and write- is 58.1%. Thanks to Bible a Month members, Bible Society in The Gambia is able to make several life-changing projects happen for thousands of Gambian people who need God’s love.

Bible-based literacy classes for women are thriving in this country where women are typically the head of the household. It’s important that they are able to read their local language so that they can teach God’s word to their families and support them.

Translating a Bible takes a team many years. Regular giving from Bible a Month has enabled the Bible to be translated into Jola for 60,000 people who speak the language in The Gambia. A translation into another local language, Wolof, is still underway thanks to your regular support. This Bible will be a blessing to more than 300,000 Wolof speakers as they’ll be able to read the Scriptures in their own language.

Also, in nine African countries including The Gambia, the Open the Book ministry is taking Bible storytelling into more and more schools thanks to your donations.

• Prayer Pointers

- Thank God for the success of the Bible Marathon (see Eyewitness Report) and ask that it will spread across The Gambia, drawing more people closer to Him.
- Praise God that the Jola Bible translation has been completed. Pray that Jola Christians will be refreshed reading the Bible in their heart language, and also inspired to evangelise to others.
- Pray for the leaders of the Bible Society in The Gambia, that they would be strengthened in the Lord and encouraged in the vital work they are doing. Ask God to provide deeper Bible study times that give them even bigger hearts for the Gambian people they serve.

Interesting Oxymorons

(an oxymoron is a figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms appear together)

Assistant supervisor

New tradition

Original copy

Plastic glass

Highly depressed

Live recording

Authentic reproduction

Partial cease fire

Limited lifetime guarantee

Dry lake

Thank You



At the end of March a lent lunch was held at St Cuthberts, with the assistance of St George’s. There were 31 attendees and £174 was raised. Thank you to all who attended or supported with donations, or were able to help serve and clear up afterwards.

The money has been forwarded to Christian Aid.

Eyewitness Report from The Gambia

By Noel Amos, Fundraising Officer of the Bible Society.

Joseph reaches his hand into a basket and draws out a small folded piece of paper. He reads it aloud. "Matthew 8". There is a pool of 30 questions on Matthew 8 and the 15 year old randomly picks question 5. The quizmaster reads into the microphone, "In which city did a Roman officer come and beg Jesus to heal his servant?"

A moment of silence and the chatter of over a hundred students who, along with the local Bible Society team, are seated in a large hall in The Gambia Methodist Academy in Bakau, The Gambia. The students flip through their new Bibles to find the answer to a question. It's a Saturday afternoon and we're all here for one reason: the Bible.

Thanks to your Bible a Month support, Bible Marathon is thriving in schools and churches across The Gambia, a country that is 96.5 % Muslim and just 3.5% Christian. It's a programme that invites people of all ages to study and be quizzed on the Bible and it has also been successful in other African countries like Gabon and Nigeria.

For today's quiz, students in years 1-7 from three local schools have gathered to compete. They were given a free copy of the New Testament (with Psalms and Proverbs) and one month to study Matthew's gospel. Twelve of them were chosen at random on the day of the competition to be the quizzers.

After a few seconds of thought, Joseph answers "Capernaum". He's got it right and his peers break into a big applause. As Joseph sits down and the next quizzer reaches to draw from the basket, suspense fills the room again.

I took part in a similar Bible quizzing programme as a kid and it helped me to develop a love for the Bible. I could see that same love growing in the kids I spoke with after the quiz.

Angel, another one of the quizzers, is 15 and she's struggled with depression and being able to forgive others. "I read Matthew 5 where Jesus talks about loving your enemies, and at first I was angry" she says. Angel spoke to a leader about it and the importance of forgiveness resonated with her for the first time.

Esther, another student, tells me that a verse she learned during Bible Marathon helped her to deal with fear. "I've always been shy, and I stammer" she says. She read Matthew 10, vs 19-20 where Jesus tells his disciples that if they are put on trial the Holy Spirit will give them the words to say. "I felt renewed when I learned Jesus will be always with me. I'm not shy any more. I'm bold and I'm so happy I have this Scripture to talk about"

Moses, an electrician who works part time for Bible Society in The Gambia wrote the questions for today's quiz. He says, "I've been a Christian for many years and most of the time we only hear the Bible from the pulpit. Its time for us to know God ourselves. How do we know God? The Bible"

Throughout the afternoon the twelve quizzers answer Bible questions. One by one, they're eliminated for a wrong answer until only one quizzer remains: Shaun. "For a long time I was reading the Bible like a novel" he says after his win. "But through the holy Spirit I've been able to understand scriptures that have helped me grow in my faith".

The question he won on was "What food did John the Baptist eat?"

Do you know the answer?

From Bible a Month Prayer Letter, May-July, 2025.



Dear friends,

We were delighted and humbled that so many of our church family were able to join us to help celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary recently.

Thank you all for the lovely cards with kind wishes, the generous gifts and particularly the donations to our local charity reNEw – we were pleased to be told that the collection tins we had on the day contained £221.50 and we are aware that others intended to donate directly online, such that we expect there

will have been more raised. This generous sum will help our friends at reNEw continue their work with young folk in the North East, so thank you for your contributions which are all much appreciated.

We and our family very much enjoyed the day. Thank you for making it so special!

Stewart and Barbara



URC responds to legal definition of a woman

The United Reformed Church upholds the worth and dignity of all human beings as created in the image of God regardless of their sex or gender.

Like any diverse group within society, we understand and live with the enormous challenge of protecting the rights, beliefs and freedoms of all people without putting some at risk or treating them less equally.

Therefore, we lament that the Supreme Court ruling on the legal definition of a woman, attempting to clarify equality legislation, should have a negative impact on the lives of trans, intersex, non-binary/gender non-conforming people, who already experience significant marginalisation and misunderstanding within our society.

The traditions that make up the URC have been at the forefront of challenging long-held barriers to inclusion and equality: Constance Coltman was the first woman to be ordained as a minister in the Congregational tradition in 1917.

Gender is no longer an obstacle to serving and participating within the full life of the URC. We acknowledge that we are imperfect, but strive to be a place of inclusion, safety and genuine welcome for all.

The United Reformed Church continues to follow the example of Jesus, who sat with, listened to and uplifted the marginalised in society, and used his influence to challenge the powerful. We invite our own members and others to do likewise.

Notes

- On 16 April, 2025, the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom ruled that the legal definition of a woman is based on biological sex.
- Judges cautioned that the ruling should not be seen as a success for any group, and that transgender people continue to have legal protection from discrimination.

Last date for articles for the August /September 2025 issue of Contact

The last date for articles is Wednesday 16th July. Just give or send your articles to Bob Renton (bob@bobrenton.co.uk) or Dorothy Barker (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?

Where readings match URC 2025 diary they are highlighted

01-Jun-25	Acts 16 vs 16-34, Psalm 97 (or 2Kings 2 vs 1-15), Psalm 2, Revelation 22 vs 12-14, 16-17, 20-21, St John 17 vs 20-26
08-Jun-25	Acts 2 vs 1-21, (or Genesis 11 vs 1-9), Psalm 104 vs 24-34, 35b, Romans 8 vs 14-17, or Acts 2 vs 1-21, St John 14 vs 8-17 (25-27)
15-Jun-25	Proverbs 8 vs 1-4, 22-31, Psalm 8, Romans 5 vs 1-5, St. John 16 vs 12-15
22-Jun-25	1Kings 19 vs 1-4, (5-7), 8-15a, Psalm 42 <i>and</i> 43 (or Isaiah 65 vs 1-9), Psalm 22 vs 19-28, Galatians 3 vs 23-29, Luke 8 vs 26-39
29-Jun-25	2Kings 2 vs 1-2,(6-14), Psalm 77 vs 1-2,11-20, (or 1 Kings 19 vs 15-16,19-21), Psalm 16, Galatians 5 vs 1, 13-25, Luke 9 vs 51-62
06-Jul-25	2Kings 5 vs 1-14, Psalm 30 (or Isaiah 66 vs 10-14) Psalm 66 vs 1-9, Galatians 6 vs (1-6), 7-16, Luke 10 vs 1-11, 16-20
13-Jul-25	Amos 7 vs 7-17, Psalm 82 (or Deuteronomy 30 vs 9-14) Psalm 25 vs 1-10, Colossians 1 vs 1-14, Luke 10 vs 25-37
20-Jul-25	Amos 8 vs 1-12, Psalm 52 (or Genesis 18 vs 1-10a), Psalm 15, Colossians 1 vs 15-28, Luke 10 vs 38-42
27-Jul-25	Hosea 1 vs 2-10, Psalm 85, (or Genesis 18 vs 20-32, Psalm 138, Colossians 2 vs 6-15, (16-19), Luke 11 vs 1-13
03-Aug-25	Hosea 11 vs 1-11, Psalm 107 vs 1-9, 43 (or Ecclesiastes 1 vs 2, 12-14 and chap 2 vs 18-23) Psalm 49 vs 1-12, Colossians 3 vs 1-11, Luke 12 vs 13-21
10-Aug-25	Isaiah 1 vs 1, 10-20, Psalm 50 vs 1-8, 22-23, (or Genesis 15 vs 1-6) Psalm 33 vs 12-22, Hebrews 11 vs 1-3, 8-16, Luke 12 vs 32-40

Door Steward needed

Robert (Rob) Hailes is unable to do his door duty on Sunday 29th June. If anyone can offer to swap or do this duty could you please let Rob know. Thank you.



Northern Synod Prayers

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

June

- 1st World Environment Day (5th June). Climate change AND OUR RESPONSE TO IT.
- 8th Horsley, Bellingham, Wark: Minister Rev'd Roberta Ritson. Superintendent Rev'd Marie Beard.
- 15th Refugee Week (15th-21st); pray for all those seeking safety and security. Disability Awareness Week (17th-23rd). Synod tour (21st) at Hexham.
- 22nd Trinity Gosforth, minister Rev'd Alex Mabbs, Deacon Rev'd Jill Henderson; Superintendent Alison Wilkinson.
- 29th Synod Executive. Convenors of all sub committees.

July

- 6th General Assembly. Pray for the preparation needed, for open hearts, wise and fruitful discussions minds. Moderator Rev'd Paul Meadows. Church House staff.
- 13th Church of St John's the Evangelist, Kingston Park; Deacon Jill Henderson and the four ways ecumenical partnership.
- 20th Give thanks for all Church Secretaries, Elders, Stewards, Trustees of the church.
- 27th Churches: St Andrew's Kenton, St James's Newcastle, Jesmond, West End. Minister Rev'd Ryan Sirmons.

August

- 3rd Mission Projects; Redcar Missional house overseen by Rev'd Sue Walker. Grindon Community Church; John and Katie Whiteoak. The work of the Keld Centre and Chair of the Management group.
- 10th St Andrew's Benton, Rev'd Helen White.

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



Last Years Exam Questions (and actual 16 year old's answers)

Q. Name the four seasons.

A. Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar.

Q. Explain one of the processes by which water can be made safe to drink.

A. Flirtation makes water safe to drink because it removes large pollutants like grit, sand, dead sheep and canoeists.

Q. How is the dew formed?

A. The sun shines down on the leaves and makes them perspire.

Q. What causes the tides in the ocean?

A. The tides are a fight between the earth and the moon. All water tends to flow towards the moon because there is no water on the moon and nature abhors a vacuum. I forget where the sun joins the fight.

Q. What are steroids?

A. Things for keeping carpets still on the stairs.

Q. What happens to your body as you age?

A. when you get old, so do your bowels and you get intercontinental.

Q. Name a major disease associated with cigarettes.

A. Premature death.

Q. How can you delay milk turning sour?

A. Keep it in the cow.

Q. What is the fibula?

A. A small lie.

Q. What does "varicose" mean?

A. Nearby

Q. What is a terminal illness?

A. When you are sick at the airport.

Q. What does the word "benign" mean?

A. Benign is what you will be after you be eight.

Q. What is a seizure?

A. A Roman emperor.

With thanks to LIVERNEWS, the Liver Patient Newsletter.

Quotable quotes

"A government which robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul"

George Bernard Shaw

"The only difference between a tax man and a taxidermist is that the taxidermist leaves the skin"

Mark Twain.

"We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office" *Aesop*

"The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning, and a good ending, and have the two as close together as possible"

George Burns.

"No man's life, liberty, or property is safe when the legislature is in session" *Mark Twain.*

My friend keeps saying, "Cheer up man, it could be worse. You could be stuck underground in a hole full of water" I know he means well.

And finally....did you know that

- The roar we hear when we place a seashell to our ear is not the ocean, but the sound of blood surging through the veins in the ear.
- The military salute is a motion that evolved from medieval times when knights in armour raised their visors to reveal their identity.
- In ancient times, strangers shook hands to show that they were unarmed.

Smile !



- On Monday we start Diarrhoea awareness week. Runs till Friday.
- What do electric cars and diarrhoea have in common? The fear of not making it home.
- I'm not messy. I'm creatively organised in ways only I understand.
- I'm at the age where the next day my body whispers to me, "Don't do that again!"
- The new Church Secretary had a meeting with the minister this morning. The minister said, "When someone leaves the church you are supposed to say, We removed them from the Membership roll, instead of "We dismembered them".
- "High sodium, high cholesterol, lots of toxins- your blood test is remarkably similar to a potato chip"
- Patient: Is there anything worse than waking up to go to the bathroom?
Doctor: Not waking up to go to the bathroom !
- I drank some invisible ink by mistake- I'm in A & E now waiting to be seen.
- The wife's new perfume smells faintly of cheese and cold sliced meats. She said it is delicate essence.
- I told my wife she should embrace her mistakes.....she hugged me.
- It is now Motown weather. Three degrees, four tops.
- Just saw my mate from Ashington in town. I asked him where he'd been on Saturday as I hadn't seen him in the pub. "Berlin" he replied. "I love it there", I said. "The Brandenburg gate is a masterpiece of architecture and the people, although still suffering the effects of the cold war and the Communism of East Germany, are warm and friendly" He looked at me, puzzled, for what seemed like an age before he said, "Nar Marra, ten pin berlin!" (Geordie joke).
- I've just phoned for an ambulance and said, " Come quick, my mate has been bitten by a wolf" Operator: "Where?" Me- "NO, just a normal one"
- Went to the GP today and told him I've got a problem with the hearing in one of my ears. He said, "Are you sure?" . I said, "Yes, I'm definite".
- Sometimes I wonder what happens to people who ask me for directions.
- The inventors of the brochure have sadly died. R.I.P Pam Flett and her husband Lee.

The first half of the above are available online, while the rest are from LIVErNEWS, the Liver Patient Support Newsletter.

Happy Retirement Liz

I would like to wish Liz a well deserved happy retirement. Not only has Liz reunited our church family and returned St George's to the friendly and welcoming church of old, she has increased our membership through her preaching and leadership. I think I speak for the whole church family when I say, we are delighted both Liz and Colin feel so much at home that they are staying at St George's as members.

With my grateful thanks Liz.

Audrey



Church Diary

June

- 1st 10.30 am Worship will be led by Dr Ann Sinclair, URC accredited Lay Preacher. We will share Holy Communion at this service.
- 8th 10.30 am Pentecost Sunday. Worship to be led by the Elders
- 14th 3.00 pm Church Tea
- 15th 10.30 am Trinity Sunday. Worship will be led by Mr Keith Jones, Methodist Local Preacher.
- 22nd 10.30 am Worship will be led by Rev'd Yvonne Tracey.
- 29th 10.30 am Worship will be led by Rev'd David Grosch-Miller, our Interim Moderator.

July

- 6th 10.30 am Judith Das, one of our Worship Leaders, will lead our worship today. (NO COMMUNION)
- 13th 10.30 am Worship will be led by Rev'd Yvonne Tracey. Holy Communion.
- 16th 7.00 pm Elders meeting
- 20th 10.30 am Worship will be led by Rev'd John Paul.
- 23rd 7.00 pm CHURCH MEETING
- 27th 10.30 am Worship will be led by Mrs Chris Carroll, Methodist Local Preacher.

August

- 3rd 10.30 am Worship will be led by Mr Peter Waugh. We will share Holy Communion.
- 10th 10.30 am Harry Fawcitt, one of our Worship Leaders, will lead our worship.

Answers to the quiz: (see page 15)

1. Nigeria 2. Ulm 3. Unicorn 4. Vitamin D 5. Sicily 6. Bird 7. Venus. It is also known as the Morning Star 8. She was the Agony Aunty of the Daily Mirror
9. 1990's. (1994 was the actual year) 10. Anchovy 11. Ottawa
12. University of East Anglia 13. English (with 200,000 plus) 14. 32. Made up of 8 incisors, 4 canines, 8 premolars and 12 molars. 15. Walnuts 16. Verdigris
17. 3, which are located in the middle ear, called the hammer, anvil and stirrup.
18. Hispaniola 19. Robert Louis Stevenson. 20. Ukraine

With thanks to LIVERNEWS, the Liver Patient Support Newsletter (LIVERNORTH)



NEWS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

A memorial service took place at St George's on April 10th, for the late Joan Davison who had died in January at the age of 101. Some distant relatives were able to make the journey to Newcastle and also in the congregation were two of Joan's carers from Wordsworth House in Jesmond, where Joan was being looked after. It was a lovely service led by our minister Rev'd Liz Jewitt.

In mid March, we learned that St Cuthberts LEP (Methodist/United Reformed Church) on Heaton road had voted unanimously to seek permission from Synod to close. There are various reasons for this- lack of numbers, increasing building costs, no one to take on responsibilities and so on. St George's is sad to hear this as many of us know folk from St Cuthberts and we shared a minister with them for 10 years in our last Pastorate. It will be a distressing time for their congregation. Please continue to keep St Cuthberts and its members in your prayers. The last service is expected to take place on August 31st.

What a delight it was to welcome our Pre-school Children into church for an Easter talk, following by the local school reception children the following day. The lively children certainly kept everyone on their toes, and some memorable conversations raised smiles. For instance, at each session, a child asked "What does risen mean?" And we can't forget a conversation about a blue Christmas tree! Liz was so skilled in answering the questions and returning conversation to the topic of Easter. The children loved their Easter gifts of a knitted chick- plus the chocolate inside, of course. Church Meeting thanks everyone who knitted and who bought chocolate. Hopefully in July there will be a Teddy Bears Picnic- a fun time before breaking up for the holidays.

Thank you to the group of folk who had given up some of their time to complete a Safeguarding Foundation Training in March or April via e-learning. The Intermediate Training (Face to Face) took place on May 9th and was attended by 12 members from St George's who gave up their time to attend. Certain roles within the church require such training. We've waited a long time for this to happen!

Those of us who have been members at St Georges for many years will remember the late Tom and Doris Hume, stalwarts of this church. We were sad to learn that their daughter Marilyn (Cairns) had passed away at the age of 76. Marilyn had her fair share of health issues but in latter years was looked after by her son Ben and his wife.

Finishing on a happy note- we are delighted to learn that Colin and Karen Wilkes became grandparents on May 11th. Their daughter Alice gave birth to a boy, Edward, weighing in at 8lbs. We send our love and best wishes to Alice and her husband William.

Congratulations to Ellie Hutton who has passed her "finals" and is now a dentist. Very well done!

Worship on Sundays

You will all recall, I'm sure, that during the Covid Pandemic, churches had to close their doors. Some services took place on zoom,(online), but not everyone was able to access that.

The national United Reformed Church decided to produce and distribute a weekly Sunday service. This was to support local churches. Services were recorded and accessed in different ways- some by

computer, others by CD download. A printed order of service could be sent out to members. The service was broadcast live at 10 am each Sunday- it was a wonderful feeling to know that other Christians all over the country were sharing worship with you.

The services have continued until this day. Each service has hymns, readings, prayers and sermon, which have been provided by ministers and churches around the denomination. Sometimes

there would be communion services. The production and organisation of these is in the hands of a URC minister, Rev'd Andy Braunston, who is minister for Digital Worship, and who lives in Orkney.

In the days of fewer and fewer ministers and local accredited preachers, churches are using these services each Sunday for worship. Our Elders will be doing this from time to time too. We might change some of the hymns or add others.

The whole of the services can be downloaded for churches to use on Power Point, - complete with music. It is used via a screen and laptop. We prefer to use live music if possible.

During the forthcoming Vacancy; there will likely be at least one of these services every other month. We will still have visiting preachers if that is possible, but there are fewer such people around for churches to call upon. If anyone would like to take part in a service- please let us know.

Incidentally, the United Reformed Church also produces a Daily Devotion and this can be sent to your phone or computer automatically each day. There is a reading, a short reflection, and a prayer. If you want to know more please speak to me.

Dorothy B

A bit of a quiz- Keep those brain cells working!

1. Michael Palin's latest travel programme on TV featured an African country. Where did he visit?
2. In which southern German city is the tallest church in the world located?
3. Which mythical creature represents Scotland on the UYK Royal Coat of Arms?
4. Cod liver oil is rich in Vitamin A and which other vitamins?
5. Which is the largest island in the Mediterranean?
6. What type of animal is a Nuthatch?
7. Which planet is known as the Evening Star?
8. The journalist Marjorie Proops was noted for being what?
9. In what decade was the Channel Tunnel opened to passengers?
10. What fish is included in Worcestershire sauce to enhance its flavour?
11. What is the capital of Canada?
12. Which university is located in the City of Norwich?
13. According to dictionary entries, which language has the most words?
14. How many teeth do most adults have?
15. What type of nuts are typically in a Waldorf salad?
16. What name is given to the green patina which develops on weathered copper?
17. How many bones are there in an ear?
18. What island contains the countries of Haiti and the Dominican Republic?
19. Who wrote the book, Treasure Island?
20. In which country is the Chernobyl nuclear plant located?

POINTS TO PONDER

- Not every smiling face is happy; some smiles are just an effort to hide the pain. *The Old Words*.
- Insecure people seek attention. Confident people are given attention without trying. *Inspiration Cabin*
- “It’s hard to get in shape spiritually if you only work out on Sunday”. *Pulpit quotes*
- The best way to start your day is with a positive attitude and a grateful heart. *Purpose in life*
- “I hope you wake up with love, love for life, loved for others, and most importantly love for yourself.”
Saint Maria Teresa.
- It’s okay not to be okay. Some days are just harder than others.
- At the end of the day it’s not about what you have or even what you’ve accomplished. It’s about who you’ve lifted up, who you’ve made better. It’s about what you’ve given back.
- I don’t need perfect people in my life. I just need honest, good hearted ones.
- Forgive people in your life, even those who are not sorry for their actions. Holding on to anger only hurts you, not them. *St Teresa*
- “Therefore as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourself with compassion, kindness, Humility, gentleness and patience.” . *Colossians 3, 12*.
- Always do good. It comes back to you in unexpected ways. Believe it. *Life thoughts*
- Trust takes years to build, seconds to break and forever to repair. *Still Moments*
- The way you treat people leaves a lasting impact. Long after words are forgotten, and actions fade, emotions remain. A simple act of kindness, a moment of understanding or a warm smile can stay with someone for a lifetime.

People may not always remember the details but they will always remember how you made them feel.

Life quotes

- Time and good friends are 2 things that become more valuable the older you get. *Power of Positivity*
- All the above quotes are freely available on the internet. Authors are acknowledged where they are known.*

In view of the huge rises in the church utilities bills, and following a review in March of the hiring rates for our church and halls, the new rates will now apply.....

Hire of Halls, Rooms and Church

Our premises are available for letting as follows:-

Regular Hires, based on a maximum 3 hour session:-

Large Hall: £60 Minor Hall: £45

Meeting room: £25 Church: £65

One-off hires, based on a maximum 3 hour session:-

Large Hall: £85 Minor Hall: £55

Meeting Room: £30 Church: £110

If you would like to book any of the above, or require further information, please telephone Mr Harry Fawcitt, 0191 240 3129. If any church members wish to hire the halls for private functions (at 50% discount), please check in the church diary first to make sure your date is free, then contact Harry to confirm booking. This avoids double bookings. A Hiring agreement will need to be signed – as required by Synod. There is no fee for church-related activities but in some cases a Hiring Agreement may have to be completed.

JUNE	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
Duty Elder	Tony Hall	Alison Hall	Val Kane	Dorothy Barker	Sharon Cowey
Door Stewards	Babs and Tony Hall	Lesley Cadwallader & Judith Das	Anthony Armstrong & Audrey Matfin	Sharon Cowey & Renee Croft	Harry Fawcitt & a.n.other
Communion Stewards	Dorothy Barker & Audrey Matfin				
Flower Arranger	Clare Hutton	Dorothy Barker	Sandra Nossiter	Ivy Renton	Clare Hutton
Flower Donations		Lesley Cadwallader	Renee Croft		
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
July	6th	13th	20th	27th	Aug 3rd
Duty Elder	Judith Das	Alison Hall	Tony Hall	Val Kane	Dorothy Barker-
Door Stewards	Dorothy Coates & Alison Wilson	Ivy & Bob Renton	Babs & Tony Hall	Anthony Armstrong & Audrey Matfin	Lesley Cadwallader & Judith Das
Communion Stewards	(no communion)	Angela MacKenzie & Harry Fawcitt			Sharon Cowey & Judith Das
Flower Arrangers	Dorothy Barker	Sandra Nossiter	Ivy Renton	Clare Hutton	Dorothy Barker
Flower Donations	Irene Ewart				Audrey Matfin
Tea after worship	Babs & Tony Hall	Dorothy Coates & Val Kane	Clare & John Hutton	Ivy Renton & Judith Das	Babs & Tony Hall
Screens Set up	Bob Renton	Alison Hall	Bob Renton	Alison Hall	Bob Renton
Screens operate	Bob Renton	Harry Fawcitt	Anthony Armstrong	Alison Hall	Bob Renton