

St. George's
Jesmond



A worshipping community: inclusive, nurturing, engaged

THE LANCE

FEBRUARY 2024



www.stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk



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**Articles for publication to: mmvane31@gmail.com
by 15th of every month**

Editorial

As we approach Easter, the news is dominated by wars and conflict. It all appears devoid of hope and yet, there are people and organisations quietly building bridges and actively listening to the parties. It demands much bravery and stoicism to do this, to deal with the disappointments and misunderstandings which often sap good intentions.

Christians have much to offer. From the two, successfully negotiated peace settlements in Northern Ireland and in post-apartheid South Africa, both countries steeped in Christian teaching, to interventions in the Middle East and beyond.

One northern outpost of teaching peace through reconciliation is the Rose Castle Foundation, based outside Penrith in the former home of the Bishop of Carlisle. In 2023, the foundation, through its partnership with Princeton University, taught over 350 individuals and created a critical forum for resolving tensions on campus and out in the world.

Their 'Impact Report' talks about other participants on fellowships, who, having met in the UK last year, then travelling to Egypt experiencing the challenges peacebuilders have there. Many of these young people were training to be faith leaders, Muslim, Christian and Jewish. Hope like the snowdrops of Spring is ever present.

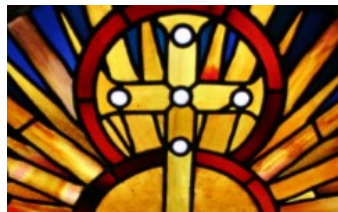
Blessed are the peace makers.

Margaret Vane



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Letter from the Clergy



***And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.'***

***And he replied:
'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'***

***So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.
And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.***

Well, though it's February now, it's probably just about OK to describe ourselves as being still "at the gate of the year" – and I've certainly been reflecting on looking forward and looking back recently. As our celebrations of the Nativity drew to a close with Candlemas at the end of last month, this year's early Easter means that it's barely a fortnight now until Lent begins. (Those of us who observed a "dry January" and intend to give up alcohol for Lent too might as well just stay on the wagon!)

It's a new beginning also for the small group of adults from St George's, who are just starting their preparations to be baptised and/or confirmed later in the year, and I've been enjoying reading ahead in the book we'll be using together. It's a course called "Being With" – which Fr Ollie recommended, having used it with the 18-30s group recently. The premise of the course is that "being with" is at the heart of what the Christian Gospel is about – God "being with us" - in the person of Jesus, and by the presence of his Holy Spirit, living in our hearts. This living relationship with God is what we should find, and embody, in the Church – and so the "Being With" course is an opportunity to model that relational way of being, with God at its heart, in a small group, exploring the Christian faith.

The first session encourages us to reflect on the things that hold us captive: things that we regret but can't change, in the past - and things known or unknown, that we

are fearful of, in the future. The book suggests that Christianity offers two promises of freedom from this captivity.

The conviction about the past that Christianity offers is that of Forgiveness. Sam Wells, who co-wrote the course, says "Forgiveness doesn't rewrite history. But it prevents our histories asphyxiating us." What a powerful phrase! It's a reminder that while there is plenty we can't change about our past – dragging it on and on into the future is only going to suffocate us in the end. Whether it's we who need forgiveness, or others we need to forgive, this is true for us as individuals, and also as a Church community.

The conviction about the future that Christianity offers, by contrast, is that of Everlasting Life. It doesn't promise that there will be no suffering, or death, or evil – but reminds us that our faithful God is with us in the pain, waiting for us beyond this life. God will have the last word over injustice and hatred. We need not be afraid.

During Lent, we'll be exploring all sorts of themes like these through the lense of the Psalms – in the Sunday morning sermons and in our weekday Lent Groups. If you'd like to join the conversation – or just listen and reflect, do come along! Details are elsewhere in this magazine.

And in the meantime:

'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'

With love and prayers,

Canon Clare



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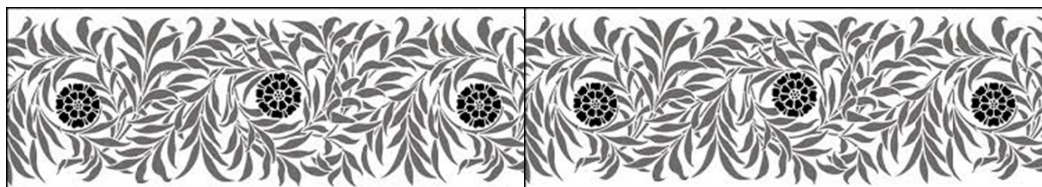
Lent Course: "Living with the Psalms"

St George's will be offering a series of sessions about the Psalms over Easter. They will be based on the book of the same name by John Bell of the Iona Community. (It is not necessary to have a copy to participate.)

Evening sessions on Zoom every Wednesday 7.30pm-9pm, and a daytime in person repeat of the same session every Friday 2-3.30pm.

Week commencing Lent 1 "Introduction to the Psalms"	Wed 21/2 and Fri 23/2	Malcolm leads
Week commencing Lent 2 "Praying with the Psalms"	Wed 28/2 and Fri 1/3	Izzy leads
Week commencing Lent 3 "Despair in the Psalms"	Wed 6/3 and Fri 8/3	Bryan leads
Week commencing Lent 4 "Forgiveness in the Psalms"	Wed 13/3 and Fri 15/3	Clare leads
Week commencing Lent 5 "Jesus and the Psalms"	Weds 20/3 and Fri 22/3	Joan leads

Those who wish to join on Zoom, need to ask Bryan for a copy of the Zoom link by email: bryanvernnon@cantab.net It will be the same link each week.



Spotlight on Service:

Wednesday Prayer Meetings for the Sick and Other Concerns.



Since 2018 when this service started, I offer a warm welcome to any members of the St George's family, their friends or relatives to Wednesday morning prayer meetings.

We meet at 10 a.m. every Wednesday at 3 High Laws, NE3 1RQ, near the Freeman Hospital and just off Castle Farm Road. I can provide free parking for three cars, or arrange for more if necessary. On the rare occasions when I have to cancel a meeting, there will be a note in advance in the weekly notice sheet.

Please feel free to come just once or to come more regularly.

We use a purpose-designed form of liturgy during which there are opportunities to raise, in addition to prayers for the sick, any issues of concern, whether arising from the news, matters concerning the church, preparation for the seasons of the Church year or more personal issues.

Our prayers last about half an hour.

All are welcome to stay on for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat.

If you would like more information, ring me on 0191 285 8918.

Mike Oswald.



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Wassailing in Jesmond Community Orchard

Jesmond Community Orchard has adopted the traditional ceremony of Wassailing, performed to bless the fruit trees and encourage a bountiful harvest. Held around Twelfth Night, the participants gather in the orchard, sing carols and make noise with percussion to scare away evil spirits.



One of the volunteers dresses as the Green Man to lead a procession into the orchard where he repeats incantations to the trees and is then joined by the choir of Jesmond Sings and others to perform some traditional and new wassailing songs.



The term “wes hal” is Old English for “be healthy”, or “good health”, and refers to two separate traditions, the first of which involved villagers going from door to door to wish their neighbours good health for the coming year. The well-known carol “Here we come a-wassailing” belongs to that tradition. Orchard wassailing is a separate tradition, which performed in cider orchards, specifically aimed at encouraging the fruit trees to bear a good crop. A key element is pouring a wassail drink, often consisting of cider or ale, onto the roots of the trees. This ritual is believed to bring good fortune and fertility to the orchard.

Although the North East is not known for its commercial orchards, it is a fun tradition and has been celebrated locally for the past few years. Recently Jesmond Community Orchard has hosted two separate events, one for the general public and another for children from West Jesmond Primary School. This year about 40 people attended the public event on Saturday 6 January, and Year 4 came a few days later with some school staff who had taught them a traditional song known as the Gloucestershire Was-sail.



Two years ago, Jesmond Community Orchard held a competition as part of the Community Festival to write a new wassailing song, as there are not many widely known. This resulted in a lovely melody with several verses dedicated to our town orchard, very easy to learn and to sing along. Another local group, the Elderly Brothers, also wrote a song which we perform at the event.

This celebration seems to grow every year. Whether it benefits the fruit trees is debatable, but it helps community cohesion and gets people out into the fresh air just after Christmas.

Fiona Clarke



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Loose Ladies and Agatha

It has become a bit of a tradition that Epiphany is celebrated by Loose Ladies in going to see an 'Agatha' at the People's Theatre each year, calmly organized and marshalled by Alison Mattinson.

This year was a Poirot double bill. 'The Wasp's Nest' and 'Yellow Iris' saw our favourite Belgian sleuth once more solve impossible crimes with a sleight of hand.

I have seen many productions at the People's. Some have been brilliant. Others have left me feeling that I wanted to file a Victim Impact Statement! Certainly, these two productions were ambitious, with art deco staging, large casts and authentic costumes. The problem was that we just didn't give a fig for any of the sinned against or indeed, the sinners. Like a shadow play from another century, the threatened, well-heeled existence of these creatures passed us by, even when cyanide appeared. And that is of course, the point.

In this present, dismal world of conflict and climate change, we had come to be entertained and not to be challenged or disrupted. And it was indeed, very entertaining, and not always for the right reasons. Poirot announced sententiously 'very few of us are what we seem' and, looking at those that purported to be dancers, that was quite clearly the case. Delighted giggles erupted along my row at the awkward and painful dance steps, some actors, rigid with fear of a mis-step. Foreigners were lambasted for showing emotion. Accents slipped. Soulful songs, full of longing, were sung. A fur-clad Agatha smiled benignly from the stage. All was well with the world. And we voted for this. The production was sold out! Row upon row of audience members sat in the darkness, wrapped in their winter coats enjoying the ritual and coziness of our Agatha.

Thank you, Alison. We will all be there next year!





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St George's Community Hub Update



St. George's
Community Hub

Recently, we had another meeting with our Patron Sir Alan Craft and fund-raising consultant, Paul Baird, with whom we shared our positive progress.

Three project meetings have taken place and tender drawings are being prepared for the church work. These will be available at the end of January. For the hall, in order to fulfil planning conditions, and with the PCC's consent, new window details for upgraded, electronically controlled, roof lights are being prepared for action before the February deadline to fulfill existing planning conditions.

Sir Alan suggested approaching some local trusts known to him, as yet not contacted, and proposed we discuss the use of the Green with Urban Green, the charity who now run the parks and open spaces in Newcastle.

You hopefully will soon see a large thermometer at the back of church showing the progress of local fundraising, against the total local fund required (presently a very promising 40%).

As already reported, one of our sponsoring bodies is the James Knott Trust which has committed £30,000 over a 3 year period. The first tranche has recently been received.

We now plan to approach various local individuals who have given significant sums to charity in the past, invite them to the church to see the plans and explain how we hope to enhance community life and church life in Jesmond with the changes.

Church based fund-raising continues after a successful Dickens night, and Burns Supper. There are plans for an Elvis tribute act singing gospel, and an antiques themed day. Lectures, talks at the Jesmond Library and approaches to users are also in the pipeline.



Congregation News

There is to be a joint meeting in 12/3/24.

An open meeting will be held in the church hall on Saturday 20th April 11.15 – 12.45 at which present plans will be displayed and questions answered. All are very welcome.

The Hub is very grateful to all those who have contributed so generously to the Fund.

Janet and Margaret on behalf of St George's Community Hub Group.

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SGCH Burns Night Supper: A Night to Remember

St George's has a great history of parties and dinners, from FSG dinners, to Brent and Ella's wine tasting, to ceilidhs and celebrations, and the SGCH Burns Night Supper held on 20th January was in this fine tradition.

Our churchwarden, Janet, being proudly Scottish, conducted proceedings, securing the haggis, the cranachan, the tablet, the musical offerings, the piper, and then pressing her talented family into several roles on the night with well-known, gentle, Scottish coercion!

We stood for the Haggis, a splendid fellow from Donald Gilbert, the butcher, as he was piped in by Piper Derek Corbett in full regalia.



Canon Clare performed the dramatic traditional 'Address to the Haggis' from memory, which was a feat, and after 'The Selkirk Grace' from Dr Stephen Budas, we tucked into haggis, bashed neep and chappit tatties.



Margaret Baron had secured the mountains of potato and neep required for the sell-out audience, and 'The Staff' of Hilary Pitkethley and Cullingford, Lesley Wilkinson and Margaret Vane served it up with gusto, channeling a school - dinner vibe.



Burns Airs were performed by Canon Clare accompanied by Dr Emily Frier on the piano with such sweet sorrow, and then Dr Chris Goulding explained and then performed the 'Toast to the Immortal Memory of Robert Burns.'

The cranachan arrived with shortbread and there was a last call to buy raffle tickets, ably supplied by Christine Rowland. It was time for the quiz.

T'is never a good idea, on a friendly evening with plenty of wine, to try and answer quiz questions set by the captain of the winning team on University Challenge. [What was the name of the horse which won the Scottish Grand National in 2023? Anyone?] There

was a lot of baffled cries and muttered 'Away an bile yer heid'. Three teams drew after the answers had been marked, but still could not answer the tie breakers set by Christopher Vane. [Which Archbishop of Canterbury was born at Fyvie, Aberdeenshire?]. However, the agony ended eventually and the winners collected their prize.



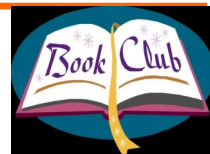


A mention must be made of some very smart Scottish outfits which appeared on the night. Can you spot who these wearers are?

More sweet Burns Airs followed, sensitively played and sung by our talented duo. Glad that they chose the cleaner versions!! After the drawing of the raffle, [many donated alcoholic prizes in the Scottish tradition] and coffee and home-made tablet, we all rose to sing 'Auld Lang Syne'. It was time for carriages, clogs and cycles.

So, many thanks to all those who performed so beautifully, those who helped and those who attended. Burns spreads a love and respect for the common person through all he writes, and celebrates our humanity with forgiveness and acceptance. His life, for all its contradictions, is well-worth celebrating. Haste Ye back.

Book Club



The February meeting is on Wednesday 21 February, the book being "The Marriage Portrait" by Maggie O'Farrell. Unfortunately I am away so please could someone volunteer to look after the evening.

Anne Clark

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What is Theos [a religious think tank]

Thinking About in Our Times?

The Archbishop of Canterbury has been quoting research undertaken by THEOS recently, and so the Lance decided to look into this think tank and influencer, and discover what its present concerns were for the Church of England.



THEOS conducts research, publishes reports and holds debates, seminars, and lectures on the relationship between religion, politics and society in the contemporary world. They style themselves a Christian think tank, based in the UK and are part of the British and Foreign Bible Society and a charity, based in London. The list of THEOS personal, and their culminative experience and academic credentials is impressive.

THEOS believe that faith, particularly Christianity, is, on balance, a force for good in society and that many of the problems facing society... immigration, mental health, climate change etc. have an inherent religious element. However, in the West they feel that religion is poorly understood and often feared, ignored, or ridiculed.

The research that the Archbishop of Canterbury quoted referred to the finding by Theos in November 2023 that only 47% of people in England wanted a funeral for themselves. Justin Welby said that society was forgetting how to 'cope with loss'. The poll of 2,569 people found that financial pressures and a dwindling faith led people to 'dispense with funeral rites altogether'. The report's authors, Madeleine Pennington and Nathan Mladin, noted that death is often something that is 'hidden' and takes place 'behind closed doors' much more than in the past, when it would have been common to gather at a loved one's deathbed in their final moments.

THEOS publish reports from time to time. Subject matter as diverse as the ethics of debt, religious-inspired violence and faith-based social action have all been rigorously researched and their reports published. There are debates and lectures, some streamed live and some available as downloads on their website.

THEOS is funded by individuals and trusts, including family trusts such as the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trust. THEOS receives no funding from governments, corporations, or religious denominations. They do, however, carry out consultancy research for individuals and companies.

Religion is not going away. Some 84% of the world population are religious and it has been predicted that this figure will rise to 90% by 2025. THEOS is a useful and authentic interface between those who practice religion and those who don't so that they may understand each other better. Should you be interested in their current research, you can sign up to regular emails by signing up on their website.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has!!

THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL COHESION

Why is this important to Building Back Better?

Thursday 26th November, 10:30 - 11:30am

Join us for the virtual launch of this report from the **Free Churches Group** assessing the impact of churches on social cohesion in the UK.



Introduction
Hugh Osgood, Free Churches Group



Presentation
Madeleine Pennington, Head of Research, Theos



Panel Response
Chaired by Stephen Timms MP

Questions and Answers

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Free Churches Group
Engaging in the Public Square



THEOS



appp
faith and society



FaithAction



BUILDING BACK BETTER
The Role of Faith

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Baby News

Caroline and Graham are delighted to introduce to the congregation their first grandchild, Carly Doreen, born to Rosalind and Frank on 9th December 2023.



The little girl is named Carly because it was the pet name, used by her father, for Caroline. Doreen was Frank's grandmother, who passed away recently.



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**"Letters
Column"**



To the Editor,

Please pass on my thanks to everyone concerned for the copy of The Lance delivered to me every month. I am most grateful. And a huge Well Done to you for such an excellent publication.

With all good wishes,

(Fr) Michael Campion

The Church of the Holy Name

7 North Jesmond Avenue, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 3JX

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Dear Editor,

I was interested to read Malcolm Toft's article in the January edition of The Lance in which he suggests a number of helpful resources to help those who wish to get to know the Bible better. Of the commentaries Malcolm mentions I have found those of Tom Wright particularly accessible and helpful.

I would like to draw to the attention of your readers resources I regularly use, namely the publications of the Bible Reading Fellowship. The BRF publishes a wide variety of resources, for example a new Bible study course for Lent and Advent each year, books on Celtic spirituality, including books on Cuthbert, Aidan and other Northern saints. I have recently finished the 2023 Advent Book which I found challenging but fruitful. The Lent Book for 2024, *My Neighbour: A Lenten Journey*, is now available.

There are several sets of daily Bible reading notes. All these are published three times a year and are available in January, May, and September. I have used Guidelines for more decades than I care to remember, but I know that New Daylight is popular. Other titles are also available.

New Daylight. These notes are ideal for those looking for a devotional approach to reading and understanding the Bible. Notes are written by representatives of a stimulating mix of church backgrounds, and each day's reading provides the text of a Bible passage, helpful comment and prayer or thought for reflection. The readings themselves are printed in the booklets. £19.05 for a year, postage included.

Guidelines. These notes offer in-depth study and are written by scholars from around the world who represent a stimulating and thought-provoking breadth of Christian tradition. Each weekly unit is divided into six sections, and there is an introductory section giving the context of the passages to be studied, and a final section of points for thought and prayer. The Bible passages themselves are not included. £19.05 for a year, postage included.

The Bible Reading Fellowship also supports Messy Church, Anna Chaplaincies, Parenting for Faith, and Living Faith. For more information go to brf.org.uk, BRF Ministries, 15 The Chambers, Vineyard, Abingdon, OX14 3FE or ring 01865 319700.

Mike Oswald.

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Thank You and Goodbye to Two Longstanding Choir Members

On Sunday 21st January, following the end of Choral Evensong, the choir of St Georges were able to give thanks and offer their appreciation to two longstanding members who had both left our ranks in the Summer of 2023.

Hilary (Pitkethly) has been with us since completing her term of office as Churchwarden in 2012. After almost 12 years of being an ever constant in the soprano section, she decided after much deliberation to hang up her singing boots and "retire" to the congregation.

Roy (Sanderson) arrived at St Georges around 1990 and became an integral member of the tenor department, as well as so many other aspects of St George's life. As time waits for no-one, Roy made the decision to start organising his life for his future retirement. An opportunity arose for the purchase of a new home, and in the summer, he headed North to set up his new home and life in the parishes and community of Morpeth.

In the same way that Drew does now with our new choir members, both of them were no doubt originally encouraged by the enthusiasm and friendliness of Frederick and his outstanding musicianship. It was noted that whilst Frederick was sadly missing from proceedings, Barbara was there representing him. He is very much in our thoughts and prayers.

It has been a significant endeavour to make this event happen. Due to a series of unfortunate events as Lemony Snicket would say, this has been in the making since first attempting same in September



and then again at the beginning of Advent. Even on the day, Roy had us in complete suspense as he went off radar, and only at the last minute did we thankfully breathe a sigh of relief when we found he was on his way. It was wonderful to have them both sing with us at the service completely unaware of the celebration thereafter.

As Hilary and Roy's characters both have a "no fuss please" attitude, they left almost immediately, through the back door. To have given the service and dedication they have, both to the choir and indeed the parish, we couldn't let this happen and we finally put the record straight with a big thank you, a toast, and a few gifts (partly thanks to Peter Rogers and one of his lovely prints).

We are lucky to have Hilary still with us in the congregation, and Roy is only but a short drive away but we miss them both swelling the ranks of the choir. Look forward to seeing them join us at future evensongs in a cameo role.

Being part of the choir for such a long period is a life-style choice which they fully committed to.

Thank you so much Hilary and Roy for being part of our choir family, and we wish you well for the future.

Derek Nicholson

On behalf of the choir



An Epiphany Party and Crowning and a Disappearing Epiphany Cake!

Christmas does not end on Boxing Day at St George's. We held our Epiphany Party in January, in the church hall, and the spread of goodies was up to the usual luxurious and deeply calorific standards of St George's.

Amongst the cakes, baked offerings and tasty nibbles was a traditional Epiphany Cake, made to the established recipe from France and incorporating almonds

and eggs and sugar. But is also concealed something else; the 'feve'. This is either a bean or a ceramic baby Jesus or a coin and in this case it was a 50p [big enough, hopefully, for someone to NOT swallow it]. The person who found the feve in their slice of cake is crowned, and becomes a King or Queen for a day, blessed with good luck. And that person this year was Fourat!!



But why does England not have an Epiphany Cake anymore? Because it has migrated! While England used to celebrate the 12 days of Christmas, including Epiphany, Victorian shopkeepers and factory owners forced their workforce back to work after Christmas Day. The holiday and the tradition were lost. And what of the Epiphany

Cake? Well, the tradition was not lost but migrated backwards and is, in fact, our Christmas pudding! And that explains why we put silver threepences and coins in our puddings. They are the English version of the 'feve'.



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Getting away from fossil fuels in our church:

Combatting Climate Change by getting to Net Zero

Climate change as a result of burning fossil fuels is now undeniable. All of us are going to be affected in the way we heat our homes, travel and spend leisure activities. St George's will also have to change. The Church of England has mandated that all churches must meet net zero emission of carbon dioxide by 2030. The PCC has duly accepted this challenge and the Eco Group has spent the last two years formulating proposals and carrying out improvements to the hall heating system and insulation, with a major reduction in gas usage. More importantly, the Eco Group developed what we see as a way ahead for heating the church in the future.

The church is currently heated by a pair of gas fired boilers. These, in turn, use a series of fan convector heaters and radiators to distribute heat to the building. The building is massive and uninsulated, and the pews are cold, hard and uncomfortable. We spend nearly £8,000 (105,000 kWh) each year trying to warm the building, starting the boilers early in the morning to try and reach a habitable temperature by the time services start. As a result, we annually emit around 22 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

In May 2023, an energy audit and review was carried out by ESOS Energy Ltd, a consultant experienced in church energy use. The cost of the work was subsidised by our Parish Buying. The main recommendations were:

1. Changing to heating people, instead of the space, using electric under-pew and far infra-red radiant heaters. These would use electricity from renewable resources (as per our present electricity supply) and are thus zero-carbon.
2. Moving to LED lighting throughout.
3. Fixing the draughty main door

The first recommendation is perhaps seen as controversial, the wide perception being that electrical heating is expensive to run. What is not realised by many of the congregation is that the main body of the church is only occupied for about 8 hours a week and much time is spent heating an empty building. Examples of electric heaters are shown below:



Many country churches, for instance Doddington and Ingram in Northumberland to name a couple, use electric under-pew heaters in combination, where needed, with infra-red panels.

In the case of St George's, it would be expected that the heaters are switched on half an hour before the service and turned off shortly before the end of the service. Also, it is most likely that the church would be zoned such that, depending on the attendance, only occupied pews would be heated. As an addition to comfort, it is also proposed that pew runner cushions would be provided. We are sure that these would be appreciated even with the present heating system! Since the proposals may be seen as controversial, we anticipate questions, some of which are considered below:



What about the organ?

The organ prefers a steady temperature with slow heating/ cooling cycles which is not provided by our current heating. We may need to control the humidity with a local electrical heater if necessary.

What about the wardens at the back?

Propose infra-red heaters mounted on the back of the last pews.

What about concerts with performers in the area in front of the pews?

Propose far infra-red heaters mounted on the front row of the pews.

What about the choir standing up and singing in cool air?

There is no heating in the chancel at present.

Analysis of the likely operating costs shows that we could actually make savings on heating costs. This is because the operating period, when the electric heating would be used, is considerably less than the present mode of use of our gas boilers. From the proposals put forward by ESOS, we also took advice from the head of the Diocesan Advisory Committee, who is also a technical expert. The view was that our proposals are the most appropriate for the type of building and occupancy which we have at St George's.

We did look at a number of other options that are technically possible, some of which are illustrated below:

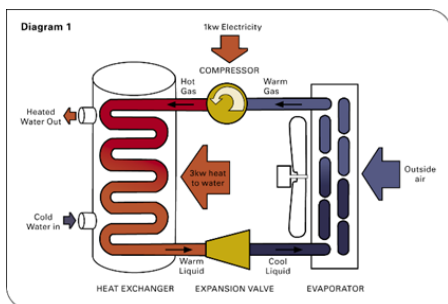
1) Turning the heating off and providing blankets or thick capes. This would make the building unattractive to visitors.



2) Heated pew cushions throughout the church. We tested this and it provided insufficient heating to people's feet and heads.



3) Radiant heaters throughout the church. This would impact negatively on the aesthetics of the Grade 1 church building .

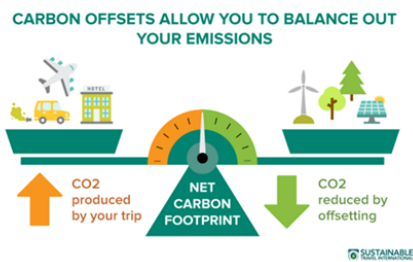


4) Replace current boilers with heat pumps. Unsuitable to current heating pipework and heat emitters, and our low building occupancy rate. Very high capital, increased running costs compared to gas. Would have to remove pews and dig up floor for underfloor heating.

5) Pay each year to offset the carbon we emit – @ £70 per tonne, this costs £1,500 per year just for the church. This is feasible, however, this approach tends to be considered

by some as “green-wash” and something of a scam. CoE guidance suggests a maximum of 10% of emissions should be offset.

The second and third recommendation from ESOS, namely lighting and draughts, might be seen as trivial, however the reasons for their inclusion are as follows:



Lighting: The present bulbs and fittings in the main chandeliers are now obsolete. The high-level spotlights are an access and maintenance problem. The energy use is several times that of modern LED bulbs.

Door and Draughts: Draught-proofing the main door and attention to other air leaks is a cost effective means of reducing energy usage.

How much will these proposal cost and how will we pay for it?

The proposals will come at a cost. Initial considerations suggest a total of around £240,000. A breakdown is provided below.

Item	Cost	Data source
Under pew electrical heaters, wiring and installation	£100,000	Audit report + £30k
Upgrade electrical power supply to 3 phase	£25,000	Northern Powergrid
Heated pew cushions in choir area	£5,000	Havener quotation 2022
Change light fittings to LEDs (becoming obsolete)	£12,185	Audit report
Draught proof external doors	£2,640	Audit report
PHASE 2/ EXTRAS		
Electric panel heaters in Vestry's, Lady Chapel (replacements) and Font	£10,000	Estimate
Lady Chapel glazing	£20,000	Estimate
Runners on the pews, for comfort	£15,000	Estimate
Contingency	£50,000	
TOTAL	£239,825	

Much of the funding we expect to come from grants, the sources are identified in the following table:

Item	Cost	Funding
Under pew electrical heaters, wiring and installation	£100,000	Grant
Upgrade electrical power supply to 3 phase	£25,000	Grant
Heated pew cushions in choir area	£5,000	Grant
Change light fittings to LEDs (becoming obsolete)	£12,185	PCC
Draught proof external doors	£2,640	PCC
PHASE 2/ EXTRAS		
Electric panel heaters in Vestry's, Lady Chapel (replacements) and Font	£10,000	Grant
Lady Chapel glazing	£20,000	Grant
Runners on the pews, for comfort	£15,000	Congregation
Contingency	£50,000	
TOTAL	£239,825	

Taking into account other demands on funding, particularly the two main fund-raising projects currently being pursued, we do not propose to ask for donations until 2025 at the earliest, and recommend that the PCC fund the conversion to LEDs and draught reduction in 2024.

To facilitate the changes, we would need to put together a project team, including the church architect, to obtain quotations and help with the selection of preferred contractors. A faculty would need to be obtained for the works. Northern Powergrid would need to provide the upgraded electrical supply, including digging a supply trench from the road. With the work to establish a Community Hub, and the church as a vibrant venue for concerts, exhibitions and events, we may wish to retain the gas boilers to give the option of heating the whole space. This would cost us £3,000 p.a. in gas supply standing charges and annual maintenance costs. The gas use would need to be carbon offset. We would aim be able to this cost as part of hire fees.

A presentation is to be given on Sunday 25th February, after the 9.30 service, on the proposals, please come along and ask questions and give us your thoughts.

John Clark and Kay Plumley on behalf of the ECO Team

Nicaragua:

Attacks on the Catholic Church get worse

The Lance has covered attacks on the Catholic Church by the Nicaraguan President, Daniel Ortega, his wife Rosario Murillo, and his Sandinista regime, in the past.

Since 2018, when anti-government protests erupted, an informal arrangement broke down between these two groups, amid Catholic claims of corruption and political abuses by the Sandinistas.



President, Daniel Ortega

The 2021 electoral landslide victory for Ortega was achieved largely by jailing opponents and disbanding political parties. This led to over 275 attacks from the government. Catholic radio stations have been closed, missionaries expelled, celebrations curtailed, clerical property confiscated, and there has been gunfire near churches and the arrest of clergy. Relations have been broken off with the Vatican. 94 Nicaraguans, including a former Ambassador, have been declared stateless by Ortega and cannot return to the country.

In an effort to silence all opponents, both individuals and organisations, the President has again stepped up persecution, arresting 4 Catholic priests in 3 days in December 2023. [Ortega has ruled Nicaragua since 2007.] Two of the priests had opened their doors to students in 2018 when their universities had been attacked. In total, 12 priests and Bishop Isidoro Mora have been arrested. In 2022, Bishop Rolando Alvarez was arrested and sentenced to 26 years in prison.

The Bishops had asked the President for justice for those who died during the protests. They also asked for early elections. In reply, Ortega accused the priests off organizing themselves and orchestrating a



Bishop Isidoro Mora

coup against him and of money-laundering. The police, the National Prosecutor's Office, banks, and financial task forces were asked to target the church in an extraordinary outburst in an effort to silence dissent and restrict religious freedom.

The Vatican, while silent about Alvarez's detention, are hoping to influence matters, as they have done before through back channels, seeking peaceful dialogue. The Pope did mention Nicaragua in his New Year's Day address. Reconciliation, however, seems far away at present.

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COMPANY OF OTHERS
AND IN A WELCOMING
ENVIRONMENT, WHY NOT
MAKE FRIDAY CAFÉ
WHAT YOU DO?**

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

Send to:

mmvane31@gmail.com

Thank you, Margaret.



Maundy Thursday

Photographs of the Church from Nigel Russell-Sewell

In last month's Lance we credited some photographs of the church to Nigel Russell-Sewell. In fact, they were all taken by Canon Clare Maclaren.

This was not the first time that we had misattributed photos. In recompense and to say how sorry we are, we asked Nigel, known as a brilliant photographer, for five favourite photos taken by him last year. In addition, we requested him to supply the cover photo for this month's Lance.



Advent



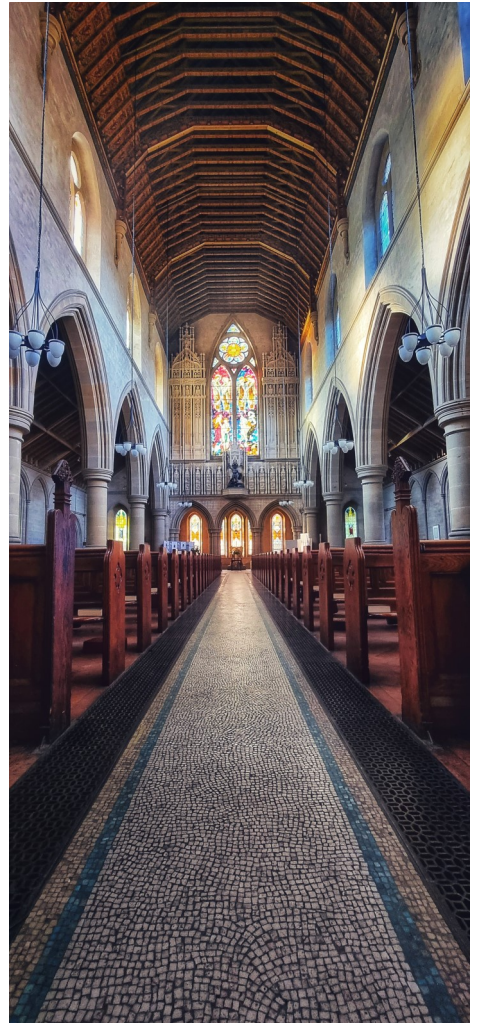
Christmas

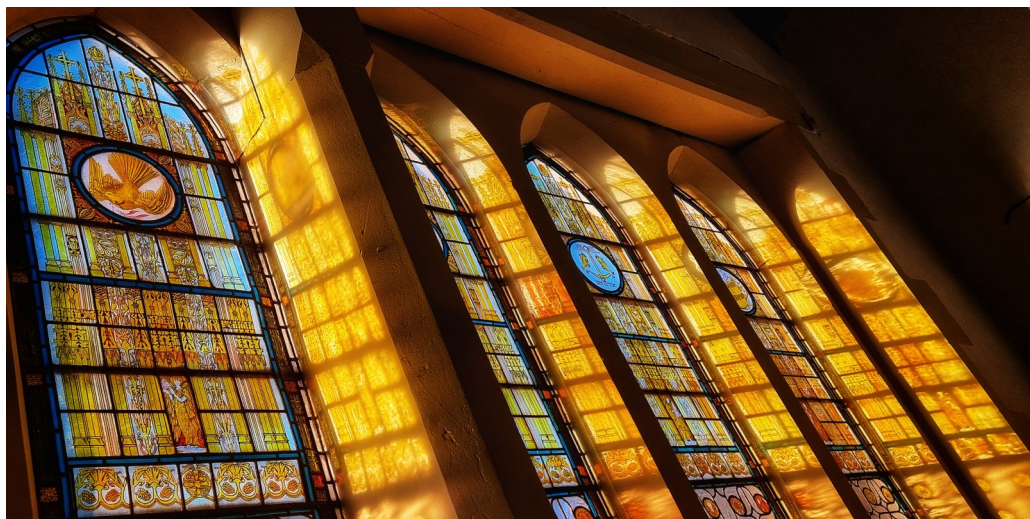
Nigel writes:

I've picked five photos from the last year, including one from each of the Maundy Thursday, Advent and Christmas festivals. I also include one looking west, down the nave - we are so focussed on the east end that we often don't appreciate the west end, which at St George's, is quite remarkable. I love the light playing with the stained glass. Many will be familiar with the light that comes in through the windows on the south side of the nave, but here are the choir vestry windows, caught at a perfect moment.

The cover photograph is something different. It is of the packed church at the Carol service on Christmas Eve.

Looking the wrong way





Choir vestry windows

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**St George's Are Pleased to Announce The Event of the Year:
The World Premiere of a New Rutt / Laidler / Hatt /
Cappleman / Tan play:**

*The Prince,
the Pauper,
the Princess,
and the Peas*



*A Pantomime dedicated to Barbara Gardner, a much loved member of our troupe,
who gave so much over the years*

Set in 1547, this play tells the story of two young boys who were born on the same day and are identical in appearance: Geordie Boy, a pauper, and Edward VI of England, son of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour...

Friday 9th February 7.30 pm Saturday 10th February 3 pm & 7.30 pm

St George's Church Hall, St George's Close, Jesmond. NE2 2TF
tel: 0191 281 1659 or 07422693727 panto@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Tickets priced £5:00 from the Office, any cast member or on the door.
Includes interval refreshments.

Patrons are warned that it is a condition of entry that they whoop, inter-ject, laugh immoderately, and **ENJOY THEMSELVES** whether they like it or not.

Church of England Calendar January 2024

1	The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus
2	Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishops, Teachers of the Faith, 379 and 389 <i>Seraphim, Monk of Sarov, Spiritual Guide, 1833</i> <i>Vedanayagam Samuel Azariah, Bishop in South India, Evangelist, 1945</i>
6	The Epiphany
10	<i>William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1645</i>
11	<i>Mary Slessor, Missionary in West Africa, 1915</i>
12	Aelred of Hexham, Abbot of Rievaulx, 1167 <i>Benedict Biscop, Abbot of Wearmouth, Scholar, 689</i>
13	Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, Teacher of the Faith, 367 <i>Kentigern (Mungo), Missionary Bishop in Strathclyde and Cumbria, 603</i> <i>George Fox, Founder of the Society of Friends (the Quakers), 1691</i>
17	Antony of Egypt, Hermit, Abbot, 356 <i>Charles Gore, Bishop, Founder of the Community of the Resurrection, 1932</i>
18-25	<i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity</i>
18	<i>Amy Carmichael, Founder of the Dohnavur Fellowship, spiritual writer, 1951</i>
19	Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, 1095
20	<i>Richard Rolle of Hampole, Spiritual Writer, 1349</i>
21	Agnes, Child Martyr at Rome, 304
22	<i>Vincent of Saragossa, Deacon, first Martyr of Spain, 304</i>
24	Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva, Teacher of the Faith, 1622
25	The Conversion of Paul

26	Timothy and Titus, Companions of Paul
28	Thomas Aquinas, Priest, Philosopher, Teacher of the Faith, 1274
30	Charles, King and Martyr, 1649
31	<i>John Bosco, Priest, Founder of the Salesian Teaching Order, 1888</i>

Understanding the Calendar:

'Principal Feasts' and other 'Principal Holy Days' are printed in **Red Bold** type.

'Festivals' are printed in **Red** typeface; other Sundays & 'Lesser Festivals' in ordinary Black. 'Commemorations' are printed in *italics*.

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A Message from the Dalem Main Marmalade Festival

Huge thanks again, for being a Collection Point for entries to the Marmalade Festival.

We have had so many positive stories about people delivering jars to various points up and down the country. It makes a big difference to people who are worried about posting their entry.



We've already had some incredible looking entries (Seaweed Marmalade from Lundy Island and Sumo Orange & Jalapeno from the USA as well as jars from China, New Zealand, Hawaii and beyond) and we're really looking forward to seeing what everyone has delivered to you!

Hope to see you at the Festival on Saturday 20th April at Dalem Main.

The Diocese of Newcastle upon Tyne

Parish of St George, Jesmond

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

Interim Minister

Canon Clare MacLaren 07952 760168

clare@stgeorgesjesmond.org

Assistant Curate

The Revd Ollie Dempsey 281 7162

ollie@stgeorgesjesmond.org

Reader and Anna Chaplain

Mrs Joan Grenfell

grenfelljoan@yahoo.com

Reader & Air Cadet Chaplain

Dr Malcolm Toft

depchap.dnl@rafac.mod.gov.uk

Churchwardens

Enid Pearson 285 0958

enid@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Janet Wilson 07766 297359

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Parish Safeguarding Officer

Dr Sue Vernon 281 3861 / 07411099690

suejvernon@icloud.com

Director of Music

Drew Cantrill-Fenwick

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Organist Emeritus

Mr Frederick Peacock BEM 2814755

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Bell Tower Captain

Geoff White 285 1405

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Publicity

Margaret Vane and Hazel Jones-Lee

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Community Hub

communityhub@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Parish Secretary

Jonathan Richards 281 1659

office@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

PASTORAL CARE

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

ENQUIRIES CONCERNING BAPTISMS MARRIAGES FUNERALS

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

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

tel: 0191 281 1659

email: office@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

Website: www.stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Facebook: St-Georges-Church-Jesmond

Twitter: @stgeorgejesmond

Livestreaming of services

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

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



**Rehearsing
Can Be Fun**

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Welcome to St. George's Church Jesmond

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

Facebook: St-Georges-Church-Jesmond

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

SUNDAY SERVICES

08.00 Holy Communion

09.30 PARISH COMMUNION with

Sunday School / Smarties (age 4-16)

Children's corner available in church

11.30 Holy Communion (1st Sunday of month)

18.00 Taize (2nd Sunday of month)

18.00 Choral Evensong (3rd Sunday)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

08.45 Daily: Morning Prayer

09.30 Thursday: Holy Communion

Saints' Days as announced

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

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The Darling Dollies - Saturday 3rd February at 3pm in the church hall.

To arrange a subscription to THE LANCE, please ring the Parish Office on 2811659

Articles for publication to:

mmvane31@gmail.com

by 15th of every month

