

St. George's
Jesmond



A worshipping community: inclusive, nurturing, engaged

THE LANCE

DECEMBER 2024



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Editorial

We are entering the waiting period of Advent with the joy and flurry of Christmas activity to come.

In this Christmas edition of the Lance, we celebrate our seasonal offerings from the Christmas Market to the Christmas tree lights 'Switch On' and St Hilda's Christmas Tree Festival.

There are pieces looking backwards through history. The large congregation burst out of its pews each Sunday, at St George's, over a hundred years ago. It was quite a service as it still is!! There are pieces very much in today's world, from articles about safe guarding to Quaker Peace initiatives and sewing charities in prison.

In November's issue, the wartime memories of two young children in Morpeth were not signed! We correct that now and name Erica Souter and her sister Barbara as the writers. Barbara may be included in the Dan Snow historical project, collecting filmed wartime reminiscences from those that lived through it.

We acknowledge the quiet work of the Pastoral Team.

There is a request from the Community Hub team to try and raise the sum of £15,000 this Christmas in order to qualify to apply to the big trusts for the larger elements of funding the HUB project.

With our new Vicar in place, we have much to look forward to in the New Year. May God grant us a period of renewal and hope. Happy Christmas from the Lance.

**Margaret, Graham and
Jonathan**

**Church of the Nativity,
Bethlehem - the traditionally
acknowledged place where
Jesus was born**



'Clergy' Letter

Greetings,

I have been conscious over the past few weeks of how much anger there is around.



Why is everyone so angry?

Footballers storm out of post-match interviews; tennis players hurl and break their rackets on the ground; politicians storm out of televised chat shows; presidential candidates hurl insults at each other; people respond to rejection with unimaginable violence; the streets are overtaken by mindless vandalism and fury; there is anger towards the emergency services as they go about their business of helping; and I gather that even the German wasps are angry..... according to a newspaper headline!!

All this is quite depressing!

So..... wasn't it refreshing to see the levels of achievement on show at the Olympic Games, by athletes who have, for years, dedicated themselves to becoming the best that they can be in their chosen sport. And wasn't it good to see the friendship between the athletes as they congratulated and supported one another..... win or lose. I watched much of the Olympics..... and it lifted my Spirit!

My Spirit was, and is, always lifted when I reflect on the words of the hymn, 'My Soul there is a Country', which I recall singing at school.

There was something about it even then, a beauty, a calmness which has stayed with me ever since. It speaks of sublime peace; at the moment out of our reach, but solidly waiting there..... for our time.

That thought is echoed in its words:

'My Soul, there is a country, far beyond the stars;

Where stands a winged sentry, all skilful in the wars:

There, above noise and danger, Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles;

And One, born in a manger, commands the beauteous files.

If thou canst get but thither, there grows the flower of Peace,
The rose that cannot wither, thy fortress and thy ease.'

And during the season of Advent, it is this 'One, born in a manger' that we are waiting to greet once more on Christmas day. He is the One who heralds 'Peace on earth, and goodwill towards mankind.' The One who calls us to peace and a reaching out in friendship, instead of harbouring bitterness and anger towards one another.

The season of Advent calls us to look even further ahead, to that time when, 'the One born in a manger' will come again, showing us 'another country' as described in the second verse of the hymn 'I vow to thee my country'.....

'And there's another country, I've heard of long ago;
Most dear to them that love her, most great to them that know.
We may not count her armies, we may not see her King;
Her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride is suffering;
And Soul by Soul, and silently, her shining bounds increase;
And her ways are ways of gentleness, and all her paths are peace.'

Here we are shown something completely different....

'A country without armies, nor weapons or machinery of war; no King or Dictator;
But only faithfulness to protect her, and pride demonstrated in suffering.
A country whose cornerstone is gentleness and peace.'

And I wonder..... is this what we are praying for when we ask,
'Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven'?

So, reflect on those words again.....

'And Soul by Soul, and silently, her shining bounds increase;
And her ways are ways of gentleness, and all her paths are peace.'

Is this the eternal life to which we are called, and which we are promised?
Is this ultimately where our Advent reflections will take us.....

I believe it is!
Every Blessing, **Joan.**

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A Message From Our New Bell Captain

I was introduced to bellringing in the late 80s, shortly after I had been married and moved to the North East and relocated to Rothbury. My wife, an experienced ringer, heard the bells and was quickly welcomed to the nearly formed band there. I soon realised that I would need to learn the art if I were to see much of her in the future.



As part of the local association of bellringers, I have spent my time ringing at many churches in Newcastle and Northumberland, for fun and service. I acted as Tower Captain at Rothbury, for a number of years, until my move to Gosforth in 2007, where I became a member of that band.

I had to give up ringing for a number of years to provide care for my wife and during the Covid outbreak. However, my wife has now moved into full time care, and I am able to return to ringing on a regular basis.

I came along to St George's one Friday night, and was made very welcome, and have not left since. That was over a year ago now, and as Geoff decided to step down as Tower Captain, this summer, I was asked to take on the role.

My plans are to continue ringing as well as teaching, I enjoy encouraging others to develop and progress to the best of their ability.

If you are wondering whether you could learn to ring, please do get in touch and have a go! Details are in the Pew Sheet or the Lance.

John Markham, Tower Captain



Geoff, our retiring Bell Captain



Christmas Market

SATURDAY, 7TH DECEMBER
12-3PM

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH HALL,
JESMOND NE2 2TF

CHILDREN'S ROOM WITH MOTHER CHRISTMAS,
FACE PAINTER (2-3PM), CAKES, CHRISTMAS
PLANTS AND GIFTS, CHRISTMAS CARDS AND
LOTS MORE

TURKEY SANDWICHES, AFTERNOON TEAS,
MINCE PIES AND MULLED WINE
GRAND RAFFLE

St. George's
Jesmond



St. George's
Community Hub

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St George's Church: Changes Over the Years - Sunday Church

This extract does, I think, give a sense of the differences in going to St George's in the 1890s to going to St George's today. It is up to you to judge. This extract comes from a book by Martin Armstrong and relates his childhood memories in the early days at St George's Church. He lived in a terrace at 4 Jesmond Gardens, the lower end of Collingwood Terrace.



"On Sundays there was no "Prayers": all our energies were concentrated in getting off in time for Church". [Obviously there were no distractions in those days - no football or rugby practice and no shops open] "Preparations began directly after breakfast: Prayer Books and hymn-books were fished out of the glove-and Prayer-Book drawer in the hall: there was a good deal of shouting up and down stairs. Come along! Hurry up! We'll be late if we don't start at once." (If you read the article last month on pew rents you will realise that if they were late they would lose their seat). It was a walk of about a mile, through a district half-country, halfsuburb (quite different from today). We were all rigged out in our best: our father in tail-coat and top-

hat (if you look under the pews you will see where he put it when he took his seat); our mother in a small fashionable bonnet, tight-fitting bodice with leg-of-mutton sleeves, full skirt and parasol; my sister in a white silk dress, elaborately smocked, her face almost lost inside a vast coal-scuttle bonnet made of pleated white silk on a wire frame; I, in a white duck sailor-suit with long trousers, silk scarf, lan-



yard, and whistle complete, and a wide straw hat with up curving brim and surrounded by a navy-blue ribbon inscribed in gold with H.M.S. Something-or-Other. This, of course, was our summer rig-out; for winter it was modified in accordance with the prevailing fashion". (Quite different from our form of dress in today's world I would suggest!!!).



"As we approached St George's Church, that brand-new Italianate edifice with a towering campanile, other families sumptuously dressed, were converging upon it from every direction." (No cars - no parking problems?) "When we entered, the air was already saturated with organ-music: a black-robed verger, with utterly impassive face, showed us to our pew." (There was still such a verger in the 60's - the last was called Jim Peters). "The service was a slap-up affair". (It still is!). "There was a fine organ, a highly-skilled organist, a highly trained choir" (as today). "The psalms went with a swish, the organ thundering or boiling or fluting in accordance with the context. The hymns went up in surging waves of sound fit to take the roof off. Whenever I knew the words and whenever the music was loud enough for me to sing incognito, I joined in at the top of my voice" (likewise). "I couldn't , of course, cope with the words of psalms and canticles, except in the case of the endlessly repeated refrain of the Omnia Opera I which I used to sing inaccurately - Paycified, magnified Him for ever - I used to sing at the end of every half-verse.

When we got home our parents always drank a glass of liqueur. A strange time of day, one would think, for liqueur drinking, but they felt, I think, that after the long, exhausting ordeal of Church, body and mind demanded a strong and highly flavoured pick-me-up."

Barbara Peacock



LGBTQI+ Lead Chaplain Announced for Newcastle Diocese

The Bishop of Newcastle is pleased to announce that the Reverend Emma Duff has been appointed to lead our chaplaincy service for LGBTQI+ communities within Newcastle Diocese.



The service will provide a safe space for people to talk about matters relating to sexuality and the church, and will also assist parishes and deaneries in fostering radical Christian inclusion and welcome. It will listen to, support and offer prayerful affirmation for those who identify as LGBTQI+ and their loved ones, helping them to feel confident about being part of diocesan and church life.

Emma, who will be licensed by the Bishop to carry out this work, was a lawyer before being ordained in 2014. She was Curate in the Willington Team for four years, then Priest in Charge at Wallsend St John's until 2023. Emma will take up her new role from 1st November and will be contactable at: e.duff@newcastle.anglican.org

Commenting on her appointment, Emma said: "I'm delighted to have been appointed as Lead LGBTQI+ Chaplain and am looking forward to recruiting a team to provide welcome, support and safe spaces.

"In our churches and in society at large, LGBTQI+ people face discrimination and danger. Recent Stonewall research found that less than half feel safe holding their partner's hand in public. Church of England bishops have acknowledged that we have often received a hostile and homophobic response in churches and apologised for not loving us as God loves us. The bishops' recent apology is very welcome, and this chaplaincy has grown from a desire in Newcastle Diocese to live out that apology and make it a reality. I am looking forward to getting started and putting into action my belief that we are all beloved children of God."

The Right Reverend Dr Helen-Ann Hartley, Bishop of Newcastle, said: "I am delighted that Emma has been appointed as LGBTQI+ Lead Chaplain in our Diocese. A major part of this new role will be to establish a chaplaincy service that provides a safe space for people to talk about matters relating to sexuality and the church and will also assist parishes and deaneries in fostering radical Christian inclusion and welcome. This chaplaincy role is a visible demonstration of our desire to ensure that we are resourcing and celebrating the inclusion of those who have too often been marginalised and silenced by the Church's debates and practices. In this year of Seeking, I am particularly pleased that this chaplaincy is breaking new ground in nurturing God's Kingdom in all its fulness and am excited for what God will reveal to us through its work and we strive for a church that is welcoming of all God's people. Please pray for Emma as she takes up this role, and for all whom she will connect with in the coming weeks and months as the chaplaincy takes shape."

[Taken with thanks from the Church of England , Diocese of Newcastle, website]

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Safeguarding: An Update

[Safeguarding in the light of the Jay report (2024), Archbishop Justin Welby and the Church of England today.]

It may be a little early to write this; we are still in the deep mud as a church.

Archbishop Justin Welby resigned last week after the exposure of his, and many other senior clergies' involvement, in various degrees, in the mishandling and apparent cover up of the appalling abuse of many young men by Smyth in the 1970s and the 80s. The recent exposure of this dreadful behaviour by the report, written by Makin, concluded that Smyth could have been brought to justice had this abuse been formally reported to the police when it first came to light in the earlier Ruston report (regarding the abuse by Smyth of numerous young men.)

In the past decade, the Church of England has embraced making the Church a safe space for everyone, not just children. This has been done by acknowledging previous failures, listening to the abused by rigorously providing formal education about abuse, commencing the safer recruitment of volunteers, and providing rigorous training of clergy and volunteers who are involved in face-to-face situations with young people and vulnerable adults. However, this has often been fraught with problems. People are reluctant to do further training which seems excessive to them.

The Jay Review published on 21 Feb 2024 about safeguarding in the Church of England, (and to which I gave evidence) was presented to General Synod a few months ago. It recommended that the church should outsource all its safeguarding to an independent body, concluding that it's never a good thing to mark your own homework. This is what currently happens since safeguarding training is run from within the national church body. Sadly, the recommendations of Alexis Jay were not universally accepted by General Synod (although it is notable that our own Bishop supported it) and it is currently being discussed before a final decision is made.

The one thing that remains clear is that we should be providing the safest environment for everybody, and that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. This means we need to continue to be trained rigorously and the church should sort itself out and openly acknowledge its mistakes. Many of us hope this will result in safeguarding

being externally lead. Our own Bishop Helen Anne has boldly and courageously taken a strong view on the current injustice, and has spoken out openly on the need for a honest acknowledgement of abuse. Survivors must be centre stage in this.

The legacy of a lack of safeguarding has resulted in many survivors suffering at the hands of the Church, often sadly, from clergy actions. Survivors deserve full support from all of us. This diocese has a robust system of providing support, and has recently appointed a Chaplain to Survivors. Sadly, abuse seems to have thrived in many institutions, not exclusively churches. I do not want to be a member of any institution which condones abuse by its silence and am delighted we are blessed to have a bishop who has stood her ground firmly on this matter.



Safeguarding is the responsibility of all of us at St George's, I have been blessed with your support in fulfilling this role and with a Vicar who is also experienced in parish safeguarding. We have a belief that St George's can be a safe space and that you will help us to continue to make it so.

If anybody wants to discuss this, or has any concerns please do not hesitate to contact myself or Rev'd Debbie.

Dr Sue Vernon

Parish Safeguarding officer

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Statement from the Archbishop of Canterbury

12/11/2024

Having sought the gracious permission of His Majesty The King, I have decided to resign as Archbishop of Canterbury. The Makin Review has exposed the long-maintained conspiracy of silence about the heinous abuses of John Smyth. When I was informed in 2013 and told that police had been notified, I believed wrongly that an appropriate resolution would follow.

It is very clear that I must take personal and institutional responsibility for the long and retraumatising period between 2013 and 2024. It is my duty to honour my Constitutional and church responsibilities, so exact timings will be decided once a review of necessary obligations has been completed, including those in England and in the Anglican Communion.

I hope this decision makes clear how seriously the Church of England understands the need for change and our profound commitment to creating a safer church. As I step down I do so in sorrow with all victims and survivors of abuse. The last few days have renewed my long felt and profound sense of shame at the historic safeguarding failures of the Church of England. For nearly twelve years I have struggled to introduce improvements. It is for others to judge what has been done. In the meantime, I will follow through on my commitment to meet victims. I will delegate all my other current responsibilities for safeguarding until the necessary risk assessment process is complete.

I ask everyone to keep my wife Caroline and my children in their prayers. They have been my most important support throughout my ministry, and I am eternally grateful for their sacrifice. Caroline led the spouses' programme during the Lambeth Conference and has travelled tirelessly in areas of conflict supporting the most vulnerable, the women, and those who care for them locally.

I believe that stepping aside is in the best interests of the Church of England, which I dearly love and which I have been honoured to serve. I pray that this decision points us back towards the love that Jesus Christ has for every one of us. For above all else, my deepest commitment is to the person of Jesus Christ, my saviour and my God; the bearer of the sins and burdens of the world, and the hope of every person.



Pantomime, Pantomime, Wherefore Art Thou, Pantomime?

In production as we speak, is the answer. What, not even written yet, I hear you ask?

Well yes, and no, and for several reasons. Firstly, here at St George's we adhere to an ancient tradition wherein the pantomime appears at Candlemas - presumably to denote the end of Christmas, unless, as with so many of our Christian traditions, it actually has its origins further back in pre-history. Who knows?

Secondly, because we have been overwhelmed this year by the number of actors who all want a part - a record 26. Or 27, if they all confirm. So, what we had writ needs to be re-writ.

So, what do our long-suffering audience have to look forward to?

Well, the play is based on an old story that you will all remember being told as children. Won't you? Yes, Chicken Licken and Henny Penny. But beware, it has a Geordie twist with Stotties and Trolley Buses all making an appearance.

Excited by the prospect? Can't wait until it comes? Well, make sure you enjoy Christmas and New Year first, but also make sure you put these dates in your diary now:

Performances: Friday 7th February 7.30 pm, Saturday 8th February 3 pm and 7.30 pm.

And if, by any chance, you have the energy and enthusiasm to help backstage please let Graham know. Someone needs to control all those animals while Graham makes a fool of himself onstage. And be reassured, he will...

grahamrutt@doctors.org.uk

07766567663.



Some of you may remember last year's "highlights"

Recycling...A Dilemma

Collection of used medicine packaging has proved the most successful of our recycling efforts. Readers may recall that I reported that Superdrug would collect, in exchange for an unspecified donation to Marie Curie. Over the summer months, I experienced some difficulty, in pinning down Superdrug, as to the exact donation from their shops nationwide, towards Marie Curie. I was further dismayed to be informed by Marie Curie that they no longer receive such donation, specifically linked with recycling. Further correspondence with Superdrug ensued, in which they assured me that Marie Curie is their "corporate charity", however, as far as I can tell, such donation is not linked with recycling.

So...the dilemma is this: are we happy to continue with the collection, in the knowledge that we are possibly contributing to Superdrug profits from recycling of aluminium and plastic from the packaging?

Correspondence to the Editor is invited.

Enid

P.S. There was no take-up on milk bottle tops, so I have abandoned that idea.

EVANS OF JESMOND OPTICIANS

WILLIAM R. MCCALL BSC HONS
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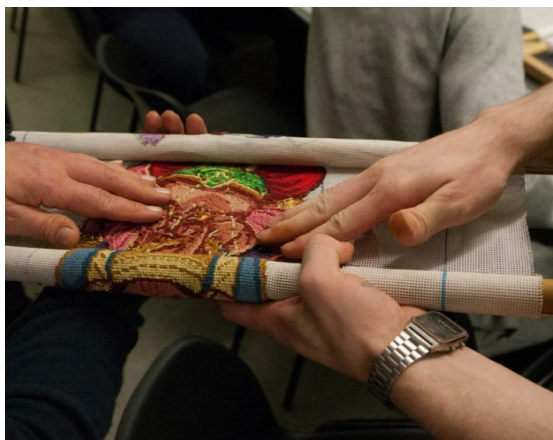
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Fine Cell: a rehabilitation charity for prisoners through making beautiful handmade products in prison.

Fine Cell is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. For all these years, it has been transforming the lives of over 8,000 prisoners and prison leavers it helps, a stitch at a time. It was founded by Katy Emck OBE and has a large group of Trustees. The Patrons are an interesting group, made up of some of the most famous designers and sewers in this country from Kath Kidson to Kaffe Fassett, Isabella Tree and the novelist, Tracy Chevalier. There is also a huge number of funders, from charitable trusts to worshipful companies.



The charity is supported by a number of renowned designers who create high quality, one-of-a-kind edition products for the prisoners to learn to stitch in their cells, hence FINE CELL. Kath Kidson is one, along with Cressida Bell, Kit Kemp, A. A. Gill and many others. The prisoners stitch needle point cushions, aprons, book marks lavender bags, purses, Christmas decorations and lampshades. New products are always arriving. Recently, a donated red and gold thread uniform from a Chelsea Pensioner was donated and numerous bags and other items were created from the luxurious fabrics for sale. Organisations have approached Fine Cell to create bespoke pieces for them.



It can be difficult to introduce prison-

ers to the concept of sewing in their cells. They will be in charge of needles and sharp scissors, both items very useful as weapons in an era when attacks on fellow prisoners and prison guards have reached epidemic proportions. Both the prison authorities and the prisoner must be happy with the arrangement and this can take patient months to establish.



Many men [yes, this is done mostly by men] are not interested in the rather stereotypically feminine pastime of sewing at the onset. However, being locked up for 23 hours a day in an over crowded prison, and the human contact which FINE CELL brings with it, and the teaching, learning and self-esteem created by making beautiful and sellable products, has convinced many people to try. Purposeful activity is transformational.

Research shows that FINE CELL has contributed to bringing down the rates of re-offending for their members when compared to the main prison population. They are helping to break the devastating cycle of reoffending and repeated imprisonment. Through developing high quality needle work skills, prisoners also develop accountability, fostering hope.

The prisoners are paid for their work. Moreover, when a piece is bought, there is a little postcard in its wrappings. This postcard can be sent back to the prisoner to tell him of her how much the recipient has enjoyed the gift. Contact, praise and recognition of their work is everything. The bigger pieces can take hundreds of hours to complete. They also often pass through more than one hand in the execution.

There are volunteering opportunities. FINE CELL holds events at which they display their items for sale and explain how the charity works. They offer mentoring to prisoners in prison. There is a post-release workshop in which some of the items are finished and which has created paid jobs for ex-offenders. The commissioning service

has a bespoke design service for the creation of important pieces. Tudor fabrics were created by the embroiders of FINE CELL for Hampton Court, for example.

Quietly and steadfastly, this charity is transforming prisoners lives, a stitch at a time.
Margaret Vane



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I want to express our immense gratitude for your generous donations. Your thoughtful gifts will make a profound difference in the lives of people seeking sanctuary, offering them warmth, comfort, and hope during this season of giving.

Christmas is a time when we are reminded of the importance of love, kindness, and sharing our blessings with others. Your generosity embodies the true spirit of Christmas, providing not just material support, but also a powerful message of compassion and solidarity to those who need it most.

These donations will go directly to families and individuals who have experienced unimaginable challenges. Your kindness will help ensure they feel welcomed and cared for, particularly at a time when the absence of home and family can be most deeply felt.

Thank you



Andy Durma
Interim CEO
West End Refugee Service (WERS)



**WEST END
REFUGEE
SERVICE**

Winter Celebrations and Christmas: a Short History

Winter with its short nights, strange light and deprivations has always been celebrated and acknowledged by the people of this country. Here is a short history of some of the cultural traditions through time.

NEOLITHIC [4,000 BC – 2,500 BC]

The shortest day of the year [21 December] was very important to a people who knew their stars well, navigating by them and letting them rule the agricultural year. The tallest stone at Stonehenge is lined up with the sunrise on this day and archaeologists, working at Durrington Walls [the camp for the people who built Stonehenge] found that they feasted at this



time on huge quantities of pork and beef. Analysing the DNA of these animal bones surprised the archaeologists as they appear to have been brought from all over the British Isles and it has been postulated that the majority of the inhabitants of Britain travelled to take part in this feasting at Durrington Walls every year. New stone age people also ate fermented cheese and milk from decorated beakers, and drank barley beer or mead made with honey.

Presents were given! The most valued present was a bronze dagger, a new material beginning to replace flint and stone tools and weapons. These were imported from Europe who were developing the technology. The leaders of these groups wore much gold in the form of necklaces, gold hair ornaments and buttons to fasten their clothing. No doubt there were stories, music and singing in the dark nights.



ROMANS [43 AD – 410 AD]

The Romans celebrated midwinter with five days of feasting and partying called Saturnalia, which began on 17th December. Honouring Saturn, it was a time when the usual rules of rank and etiquette were overturned. Slaves were served at meals by their masters, and soldiers would have been served by their officers. Everyone wore a 'pileus', a conical 'cap of liberty', an ancient form of the onesie! . Gambling with dice, usually forbidden, was allowed, and instead of white togas, everyone wore bright party clothes. Public feasts were followed by celebrations at home, and people exchanged small gifts, especially sigillaria [little figures made of wax or pottery], or jokily satirical presents, songs and poems. Food became richer and more varied for soldiers who replaced their normal fare of beef and bread with the luxury foods associated with the Romans.... Figs, dates, pine nuts, dormice and the strong fishy sauce called garum. Wine was drunk, instead of beer and a drink called mulsum, made with honey and spices, was very popular.



MEDIEVAL [1066 – 1485]

Christianity refocused winter celebrations with the birth of Christ. There was a full twelve days of celebration, reaching a crescendo on 6th January or 'Twelfth Night' when presents were exchanged. The celebrations commemorated Christ's birth and the name Christmas [Christ's Mass] was first recorded in England in 1038. Medieval celebrations combined the servants-as-masters antics and gift giving of Roman Saturnalia with customs belonging to the midwinter festival of Yule. These included the Yule log [kept burning through the season], decorating the house with evergreens and eating richly decorated boar's heads and drinking 'braggot', an extra strong ale with honey and cinnamon, spiced with brandy.

Boisterous medieval festivities were directed by a Lord of Misrule, whose word was law. The Christmas games he ordered could be rough. Among the tamest was 'Hot Cockles', where blindfolded victims had to guess who had slapped them on the behind. If they guessed correctly, the slapper became the victim. Blending devotion

with drunken partying, medieval Christmases were also important state occasions. Kings ceremonially wore their crowns at feasts and at law-givings. Henry II held 'Christmas crown-wearings' at 24 different locations during his 34 year reign.

TUDOR [1485 – 1603]

Tudor Christmases revolved around the Twelfth Night cake with its bean or 'feve'. Anyone who received the bean became 'King of the Bean' and everyone had to imitate his actions. If he drank, they drank. If he coughed, they coughed. It was a time of



plays [Shakespeare's Twelfth Night] and 'disguisings'. King Henry VIII would dress up with his men as Robin Hood's men and people would pretend not to recognize them.

Queen Elizabeth preferred energetic dancing and drank drinks laced with a new product, sugar. There were sugar banquets with elaborate sugar models of castles, dragons, holly, and edible goblets. The Queen also expected lavish presents, then given on New Year's Day, and carefully listed as to their value.



VICTORIAN [1837 – 1901]

Christmas became a quieter, more family-centred festival. Queen Victoria and Albert and their 9 children played a big part in these changes. Many German traditions were brought to Britain by Albert. Christmas trees arrived in about 1840 and became very popular. And they were decked with candles and presents, given now on Christmas Day. Christmas presents were very modest such as sweets or nuts or an orange, although wealthier children may have received a toy such as a toy train. 'Christmas Box' tips were left until 26th December, hence Boxing Day. Many elements of our present Christmas originated in this period. Printed Christmas cards, Christmas crackers, eat-

ing turkey instead of the traditional goose, and Christmas pudding are examples. Even Santa Claus and his reindeer sleigh first came to Britain from America in the 1870's.



Most Victorian families went to church over Christmas and the words [if not always the tunes] of many popular Christmas carols are Victorian. Better-off people also provided gifts or Christmas feasts for poorer neighbours [a tradition promoted in Dicken's story of 'A Christmas Carol' published in 1843.] Parties for tenants' children were an annual Christmas event.

[Content taken from English Heritage with thanks]

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Christmas Appeal

£15000

Help us apply to the biggest trusts for matched grants!



£257,000 raised so far!

Have your say:

How would you use the Community Hub?

See overleaf for: Contacts; More Information; Donations.



COME AND JOIN US FOR

JESMOND CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON

ACORN ROAD, OUTSIDE LOCAL CAFÉ

THURSDAY 5TH DEC
5PM

SANTA
CLAUS

FREE
REFRESHMENTS

CAROL
SINGERS

FOLLOWED BY THE LIGHTING OF THE TREE ON
ST. GEORGES' CHURCH GREEN



THE
WATSON FAMILY
CHARITABLE TRUST



FROM 4:30PM, ACORN ROAD

Ward off the cold with free hot drinks and warm mince pies at LOCAL Café.

5PM, LOCAL CAFÉ

Fuel the festive mood further with carol singers and a visit from Santa Claus himself.

5:30PM, SWITCH ON



Come together to watch the children of the Percy Hedley Foundation switch on the Christmas lights and see Acorn Road sparkle!

6:30PM, ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

Enjoy the sounds of Christmas with a performance from the Northern Counties Signing Choir of the Percy Hedley Foundation and the Newcastle Brass Band, followed by the lighting of the tree on St. George's Church Green.

This is the perfect time to come together as a community and get in the holiday mood. We hope to see you there!



THE
WATSON FAMILY
CHARITABLE TRUST



St. Hilda's Church, Thornleigh Rd, West Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne

<http://www.sthildasjesmond.org.uk>

<https://www.facebook.com/sthildasjesmond>

A Festival of Decorated Christmas Trees



Saturday 7th December 2024

Viewing and Voting 11:00am – 4:30pm

Decorate a tree as an individual, a group or a business. Traditional or otherwise!

Prizes for the best trees in the Festival... Voted for by the public

Previous prizes included... Afternoon Tea for Two - A Three Course meal for two with Wine -
A Hair & Beauty Salon voucher and other prizes to cover all categories.

OPEN TO ALL AGE GROUPS

Come and see the spectacular trees and vote for your favourite.

5:00pm Carol Singing Surrounded by the Trees.

The winning trees will be announced during the carol singing.

Tree Entry Fee £10.00 – Admission on the day FREE

WELCOME

Contact Telephone Numbers.... 0191 2846568 0191 2814133

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Book Review: The Last Runaway

by Tracy Chevalier

This historical novel from the author of 'The Girl with the Pearl Earring' is recommended as a rewarding read which both transports the reader to a different time and place, but also raises moral dilemmas which are completely contemporary today. It follows the story of Honor Bright, a young Quaker girl from Devon, who sets out in 1850 to settle in a small Quaker community in Ohio. This area is one of the last stops on the "Underground Railroad" for runaway slaves from the South, and Honor finds her principles and beliefs sorely tried as she learns how to survive in a harsh, pioneering environment.



The author, Tracy Chevalier, is a committed attendee at Quaker meetings. She grew up in Washington DC and, although from a non-religious family, was sent on Quaker summer camps as a child. Later in life, having decided she wanted to write a novel about the Underground Railroad, she was figuring out from what angle to approach her story. She happened to attend a Quaker meeting in Washington with her step mother, and it struck her that it would be good to place her novel in a Quaker community. She then set about researching the role of Quakers in the railroad, and, as in all her research for her novels, she likes to embed herself as much as possible in the experiences of her characters. For this novel she, for example, learnt to make hats, embedded herself in quilt making, spent hours in the archives of a Museum of the Underground Railway in Oberlin, Ohio, and also spent many hours at Quaker meetings. She was greatly affected by these meetings, and, in her own words, became "hooked". She now attends the Hampstead meeting in London.

After studying English at Oberlin College in Ohio, Chevalier married an Englishman and moved to the UK. Her husband is a forester who works for the Woodland Trust, and she has developed a knowledge and love of trees. Honor, in the novel, notices how different the trees are in Ohio from her native Devon. In a leap of imagination, Chevalier imagines a young woman moving from Bridport in Devon to Ohio and her impressions, whereas she herself had moved in the other direction. She has also writ-

ten for and edited a book of short stories compiled for the Woodland Trust entitled "Why Willows Weep" (which incidentally makes a very good Christmas present for nature lovers!). This all seems a long way from 'The Girl with the Pearl Earring' set in Vermeer's Delft for which she is best known, but she is a writer of historical fiction who gets caught by an idea and then researches it thoroughly, meticulously and sympathetically.



A central theme of 'The Last Runaway' is how the key principles of Quakerism in which Honor has been brought up, put her into moral dilemma about how to act in her new American context. She is in an internal conflict between loyalties. She struggles with the sexual appeal of the Slave Hunter, the appeal of a pretty hat, and the expectations of duty and plainness. She is honest with herself as she examines these conflicts, but it all comes to a head between her beliefs about the care of the runaways and her duty to her new family. The moral grey areas are examined in depth, including the explanations of why the family she marries into has developed its attitudes to the care of the runaways.

One lovely thing about Honor is that she really believes that there is something of "the light" in all human beings. She holds the Slave Hunter's hand as he dies (or as she puts it, "until she felt the light fade") in an especially moving scene. She finds an inner resilience in herself through her faith and helped by her pleasure in her sewing skills. Her quilting permeates this whole book; the little chapter- heading illustrations and, in my edition, the inside of the cover. Any quilter would love this book for its detailed descriptions.



This novel about pioneering life where there are no safety nets, and peopled with vivid characters, ends with a scene worthy of a wild west movie, and, no spoiler, with

Honor and her husband and child moving on Westwards. The theme of running away, and the character development of both slaves and pioneers is central to the whole movement of the story. It leaves the reader with self-questioning: how might I have reacted and behaved then, and how do I respond to the needs of those seeking safety in the present?

It is available in Newcastle Libraries and as a Paperback or Audio from retailers.

R Watson

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FRIDAY CAFÉ.

**IN THE WINSKELL ROOM
EACH FRIDAY FROM 10-
12NOON.**

**FRIDAY SINGING STARTS
AT 11:00**

WELCOME TO EVERYONE.

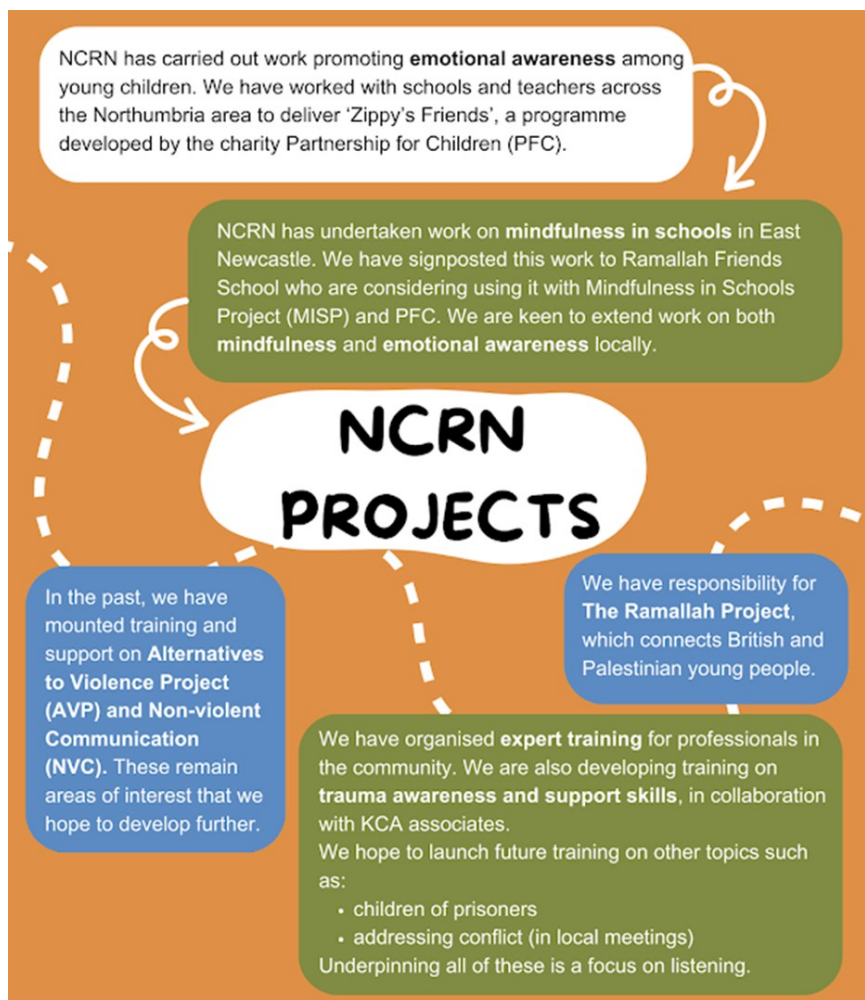
**IF YOU ARE LOOKING
FOR SOMEWHERE TO EN-
JOY TEA/COFFEE/
CAKE/BISCUITS IN THE
COMPANY OF OTHERS
AND IN A WELCOMING
ENVIRONMENT, WHY NOT
MAKE FRIDAY CAFÉ
WHAT YOU DO?**

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

Send to:

mmvane31@gmail.com

Thank you, Margaret.



Who we are:

NCRN is a small group of Quakers and allies from across the Northumbria Area Meeting committed to finding non-violent responses to conflict and inequalities in the North East. We hope that this document will inspire you and widen participation in our work.

Design by Nina Winstanley

Design by Nina Winstanley

Contact us:

We warmly invite you to contact us if you would like to discuss anything further or request more information. You would be more than welcome to attend our meetings, held approximately monthly and usually at Gosforth Quaker Meeting House.

Marcie Winstanley marciecwinstanley@gmail.com
Keith Hibbert keith.a.hibbert@gmail.com
Chris Griffiths christophergriff@gmail.com

Jonathan Adams adams.j@icloud.com
Andy Lie andy.lie@urc-northernsynod.org

Pastoral and Spiritual Care

Out of sight, but not out of mind, our Spiritual and Pastoral Care Team continue to visit members of our congregation in their homes and in their care homes. Here, they can receive the Sacrament and friendship.

Joan Grenfell



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Virtual Coffee Mornings 2020-4

Many, like me, might prefer to block out the events of the Covid lockdown from our minds. However, on reflection, there are some happy memories: long walks on the moor and exploration of the silent city, in the exceptionally fine spring weather of 2020...birdsong without traffic noise...learning to make bread, a habit which has continued...witnessing some extreme altruism, especially from young men, during my participation of the vaccine trials...daily, lugubrious reassurances from Dr Chris Whitty (next slide please!).

One major disadvantage of that time was the absence of church-going from our lives. Particularly, I recall wandering down to the Green on Good Friday, to observe the three crosses, and thinking "We should all be here." About that time, Bryan Vernon initiated the Wednesday morning Virtual Coffee Mornings, which were, amongst other livestream events, a regular lifeline and focal point for many of us. We exchanged our difficulties, thought of each other, and were able to engage with those who were distant from the parish.

Bryan has continued assiduously with the virtual coffee mornings until now, when most of us have slipped back into our old habits. They continued to attract friends from far and wide, and have been very much appreciated. Thanks Bryan, from all of us.

Enid

St George's Christmas Caption Competition

What are these two beauties talking about?

Best answer [sent to mmvane31@gmail.com] gets a prize



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THE DALEMAIN WORLD MARMALADE AWARDS COLLECTION POINT

**Drop your well wrapped marmalade entry here.
Your entry will be sent to Dalemain free of charge.**



**You have from until Friday 24th January to drop
your entry at a collection point.**

**Entry via post or delivery to Dalemain Mansion
directly is open until Monday 3rd February 2025.**

For more information visit: www.marmaladeawards.com

November Parish Walk

There were 11 of us for a 6km walk known as Morpeth Loops and the weather was as good as could be hoped for at this time of year.

As the name implies, it loops round the town in 2 parts. The first part passes the once home of Admiral Lord Collingwood, who is known to Geordies as the man who really won the Battle of Trafalgar. It then follows the footpath on the western side of the Wansbeck before a gentle climb up to Stobhill. Hav-



ing been marched up to the top of the hill we were duly marched down again to enter the very impressive and well kept Carlisle Park with its 11th century motte and bailey castle. In 1516 Margaret Tudor, the widow of King James IVth of Scotland [and sister of Henry VIII] spent 4 months there taking refuge from her enemies on the other side of the border. It would be rather draughty today. There is also a smart statue to Emily Davison, the militant suffragette who died after throwing herself in front of the King's horse at the Epsom Derby. The Autumn colours along the riverbank and in the park were all that we could have wished for.



After refreshing coffee and cakes in the refurbished park café, the walk continued eastwards along the river via Bennett's Walk before crossing to the north bank by the new library and the along the busy Bridge Street back to The Clock Tower car park.

Geoff White



Church of England Calendar December 2024

1	Charles de Foucauld, Hermit in the Sahara, 1916
3	Francis Xavier, Missionary, Apostle of the Indies, 1552
4	John of Damascus, Monk, Teacher of the Faith, c.749 Nicholas Ferrar, Deacon, Founder of the Little Gidding Community, 1637
6	Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, c.326
7	Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, Teacher of the Faith, 397
8	The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
13	Lucy, Martyr at Syracuse, 304 Samuel Johnson, Moralist, 1784
14	John of the Cross, Poet, Teacher of the Faith, 1591
17	O Sapientia Eglantyne Jebb, Social Reformer, Founder of 'Save The Children', 1928
24	Christmas Eve
25	Christmas Day
26	Stephen, Deacon, First Martyr
27	John, Apostle and Evangelist
28	The Holy Innocents
29	Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1170
31	John Wyclif, Reformer, 1384

Understanding the Calendar:

Principal Feasts and other Principal Holy Days.

Other Sundays & Lesser Festivals.

Festivals.

Commemorations

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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.

Vicar

Rev. Debbie Loughran 0191 281 1628

Rev_debbie@hotmail.com

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

janet@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Dr Sue Vernon 281 3861 / 07411099690

suejvernon@icloud.com

Director of Music

Drew Cantrill-Fenwick

music@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Bell Tower Captain

John Markham

bells@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Publicity

Margaret Vane and Hazel Jones-Lee

publicity@stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

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/>

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

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Welcome to St. George's Church Jesmond

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

Facebook: St-Georges-Church-Jesmond

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

SUNDAY SERVICES

08.00 Holy Communion

09.30 PARISH COMMUNION with
Sunday School / Smarties (age 4-16)

Children's corner available in church

11.30 Holy Communion (1st Sunday of
month)

18.00 Taize (2nd Sunday of month)

18.00 Choral Evensong (3rd Sunday)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

08.45 Daily: Morning Prayer

09.30 Thursday: Holy Communion

Saints' Days as announced

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



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*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
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4U

