

St. George's
Jesmond



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THE LANCE

MAY 2025



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Editorial

Pope Francis died on Easter Monday, having been taken out into St Peter's Square to greet the pilgrims there on Easter Sunday. His last words were to thank his nurse for helping him to leave his bed and meet and bless these people.

Pope Francis was the first Pope to come from South America. His experience of serving the church in Argentina meant he had lived among the impoverished and the forgotten. The care of these people was always central to his ministry as was the pursuit of peace. We print here the life story of a brave missionary, working in another South American country, Paraguay, and her insights into how the love of Jesus can transform these people's lives for the better. This example is most apposite as we remember Francis.

After a very joyful and busy Easter at St George's, we can now look forward to both the VE Day celebrations on Saturday 3rd May on the green, and our Summer Fair at the end of the month, alongside many other daily and weekly events.

We are delighted to reintroduce a monthly column called 'Spotlight on Scripture' with written contributions from members of the Ministry Team.

St George's has had an important visitor!

There are Apps to help you identify both the flower which nags, and the bird song which irritates, to stop them haunting you! The Garden of Remembrance is full of plants and birds as is the Green and the gardens and parks of Jesmond. You will have much to identify!

Margaret Vane

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Letter from the Clergy

Dear friends,

It's good to be back! That's true for me in this benefice, but not something that most of us will be thinking as we return to 'normal life' after the build up to Easter... Back to getting up early for the school run or for work... Back to the regular routines of shopping, cooking, watering the garden and more – all the mundane, ordinary activities of life. Ordinary activities that we so often take for granted.



Yet sometimes, when we share these activities with others, especially small children, they are transformed. We share the wonder of a newly baked cake, or a tiny seedling, the beauty of birdsong or a misty morning, and are renewed. We encounter old friends and share new ideas, new joy and laughter.

In the days after that first Easter, the disciples were confused, uncertain about the future. Many of them tried to go back to the ordinary lives that they had left behind when they joined Jesus – scattering back to their homes and picking up the lives that had gone before. But on the Emmaus Road and on a beach beside Galilee, someone came alongside them to share their day and transform it – and in him they recognised the risen Christ, calling them to continue the journey they started with him, to share the good news of God's love and light and life at work in the world.

This month as we journey through 'normal life', let's try not to take all the tasks that fill our days for granted, but look for the wonder, beauty and joy in ordinary moments and share them with those around us. And as we continue through Eastertide, may we also continue the journey we started at our baptism, to share the good news of God's love and light and life, at work in the world.

Every blessing

Pauline



Spotlight on Scripture -

The Resurrection Appearances



The seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross are often collected together, but this is not done so often for His Resurrection appearances. Looking through the Gospels in turn, focussing on Christ Himself:

St Matthew chapter 28 begins with angels at the tomb.

1. Verses 9-10 present Jesus meeting the Marys en route from the tomb. This seems unusually rapid for an account in Matthew: the suddenness is far more like Mark's accounts¹.
2. Verses 16+ report the Ascension and Great Commission. It may be reassuring to note that, even after all the Resurrection encounters, some still doubt! It can be useful to recall that a disciple is a student who sits at a teacher's feet, not someone under discipline. When we are making disciples, we are encouraging others to sit at Christ's feet and learn from Him, not join the Army! We are being called to wash and to teach, with Christ as our constant companion. These verses are the only explicitly Trinitarian formulation in the Gospels². What if the Church's focus was Christ's - more about the Kingdom, mercy and justice, than sexuality, or even the "structure" of God?

St Mark chapter 16 is the shortest Resurrection narrative, potentially only extending to verse 8, the empty tomb (a version of (1) above). Some manuscripts³ have a possible Short Sending ending, a version of (2) above. A longer ending summarises other encounters: verses 9 Mary (1), 10-11 telling the others, 12+13 Emmaus (see (3) below), 14 dinner (see (4) below); 15 commission and Ascension ((2) above).

St Luke chapter 24 also begins with angels. Verses 9-12 again summarise and report other appearances.

3. Verses 13-35 cover the Emmaus road.
4. Verses 36-49 cover the first dinner appearance, "peace be with you".

Verses 50-53 report the Ascension ((2) above), including themes of waiting, witness,

repentance and blessing.

St John gives the longest narrative, over two chapters; but begins with angels again:

5. Ch.20 v.1-18 Mary at the tomb: seems substantially different from (1) above, and is arguably the first Resurrection encounter, and the most personal.

Ch.20 v.9-29 report the first dinner appearance (as (4) above), adding:

6. The recurrence a week later with Thomas, perhaps particularly significant for Christ outbreathing the Spirit.

Ch.20 v.30-31 provides overview/commentary.

7. Ch. 21 covers the beach appearance, with themes of following, feeding and bearing fruit. (v.24-25 give commentary)

Overall, it is interesting to note that there may be no Resurrection account in Mark's Gospel, just the empty tomb. In addition, there is possibly no Ascension account in Mark, but definitely none in John - we are just left on the beach in the sunshine...

All accounts at the tomb begin with angels. There is much consensus, confidence and caution, in and between many of the accounts, the overall pattern often moving from surprise and doubt, to commissioning in the power of the Holy Spirit. Other themes include the revelation by both Word and Sacrament (Emmaus), the repeated blessing of peace, and the "beach" themes of forgiveness, following, feeding and bearing fruit.

A composite list of Christ's appearances, from Easter to the Ascension, might therefore be:

(Easter morning) Mary Magdalene

(Easter morning) On way from tomb

(Easter evening) Emmaus

Dinner

Dinner (week after with Thomas)

Beach (undated)

Ascension

Dr and Deputy Wing Chaplain Malcolm Toft

References:

¹ Some material common to both Matthew and Mark is often attributed to an un-

known earlier scribe ("Q", for "quelle", "who"), but these verses are Markan style in Matthew's Gospel alone.

² In another instance of rarity, Christ only mentions the Church, His *ecclesia*, assembly or gathering, twice: once about Peter as Rock, and once in taking issues to the assembly.

³ Two of the oldest versions (from c.300AD) end at verse 8; the short ending is in 6 Greek manuscripts and dozens of early Ethiopic copies). For general information, the oldest manuscripts include the following Codices (a Codex being an early book: a collection of papyrus / parchment sheets):

- Vaticanus (325-350AD), in the Vatican;
- Sinaiticus (330-360AD), in the Mount Sinai Monastery;
- Bezae (400AD, Cambridge University – named for friend of Calvin who donated it),
- Alexandrinus (400-440AD, now in British Museum),
- Ephraemi Rescriptus (450AD, now in Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris; it's a palimpsest, i.e. pages that were reused for treatises of Ephraim the Syrian, c. 306-373AD)

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Faith and Log Churches - The Life Experience of a Living Missionary speaking to 'unreached people' in South America

Where did your faith originally come from?

I was a rebellious teenager and although I attended a Catholic Church with my family, I stopped going at 13. I hung out with the wrong crowd and had some bad experiences but aged 17, I attended a Christian youth meeting with my then boyfriend/future husband, Michael. I knew I

needed saving and at the meeting, we both felt hungry for God and then and there committed ourselves to follow Jesus's commands. My parents also gave the example of steadfast Christians and of being compassionate and kind. I found that the Catholic Church, with its emphasis on Mary and the Saints, did not speak to me enough about Jesus and I found the teachings of the Evangelical Church, more in line with the Bible. John Smithwick, an American evangelical, was a particular friend and mentor for us.

Where did this commitment to a life in faith take you?

In 2003 we went to Israel as TV missionaries working for God TV. It was a frightening time. The Intifada was happening and there were stabbings on the street and bombings in cafes. My husband and I knew nothing about television but in this period, we studied the Bible and learnt about the technologies we were using. In our time, the number of channels expanded from 2 to 7.

In 2008, we left Israel and went to live in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the headquarters of another Christian ministry, Global Ventures. We worked with John Smithwick and were sent on many short term mission trips all over the world but focusing mainly on Asia. The focus was to reach "UNREACHED PEOPLE", those who had never heard the Gospel or been introduced to Jesus' love for them.



We had a good life, living with our four children on a farm with horses and chickens. It was very comfortable. We had 3 cars, a puppy, cats, a lively church and friends and we were settled. My husband heard the call from God to go into construction and learnt all the skills of plumbing, building and installing electricity. These skills were to be incredibly important later on, but we did not know this yet. We then began to question whether God had a nation for us in which we could bring God's Word. We prayed, and Paraguay, a landlocked South American country, came before us. A pastor friend of ours also had a dream about Paraguay - she had never heard of that nation before. We knew someone there was crying out for help. We knew nothing about Paraguay. A contact put us in touch with a pastor there and we flew to the capital to meet several pastors who had gathered there. They expected a slick presentation but all we had was a God-given dream that someone needed our help. At the end of the meeting, the lead pastor stood up, with tears in his eyes and said: 'We are that Macedonian man crying out for help' and we were sent on a journey into Paraguay to find our place.

Where and how do you live now in Paraguay?

We live in the centre of Paraguay. We found that the indigenous peoples were the last to receive water, education or health facilities. Many are illiterate. Some are farmers, some traders, but many work for the large farming companies who have planted areas with soy and corn etc..



They use chemicals without protection and consequently babies are born deformed. Another problem is that much of the seed sold in the country is a ' terminator seed ', that is to say that it is sterile and cannot be used for a secondary crop. Each year, the farmer is forced to buy new seed. Most people live from day to day. They have no savings and no fixed income. There is terrible poverty as with many third world countries. The people do not value life and there is hopelessness everywhere.

From a practical point of view, to communicate, we learnt the local language as well as Spanish spending 9 months in a language school. We lived in a humble abode. I

washed clothes by hand. Electricity was spasmodic. We collected wood and cooked on an open fire. I educated my children at home. We were taken up by an indigenous pastor who helped us so we did not make any cultural blunders. He is a very important man in our story and is part of our family.



What have you introduced to this community?

We realized that we needed to present the simple message of the Gospel. There was tragic darkness everywhere. These were broken people, struggling to survive. There was dire poverty, sexual abuse, witch doctors and hopelessness. Originally, I wanted to build an orphanage and rescue the girls but we realized that the urgent need was to introduce the love of Jesus as the light of the world. We went from place to place, and have now shared the gospel in 234 villages. 77 of these villages are now receiving discipleship teaching. We take clothes, shoes and food because we are aware of their natural needs, but first we talk about Jesus's message. It is traditional here to take tea together when you meet. I sit with mothers and see this message transforming their lives. Women who have had to sell their bodies to feed their children have stopped. Everywhere, we see lives changing for the better.

Our biggest challenge is that we can't be in every village all the time. We have to raise up a body of believers who are strong enough and mature to take the message to new villages. Leaders emerge. We have built 9 churches already, with the help of each community and my husband's construction skills. The first churches were built



in areas without electricity. We used axes and chainsaws to prepare the trees for building. Many villages have asked for churches and another 3 are scheduled to be built this year.

We have had to contend with the traditional witch doctors. There are 'demon-possessed' people

which I have seen come out of darkness. Witch doctors fear that if they do not carry out their ceremonies, the demons will attack them. However, God heals the witch doctors, who can break down and surrender to Jesus.

We do not offer schooling but we provide some educational activities for the children. This reveals illiteracy. We give out new born packs for babies. Importantly, we encourage mothers to love and care for their children. There are a lot of babies born through rape and abuse. And we see things change for the better.

What has given you most pleasure in your work?

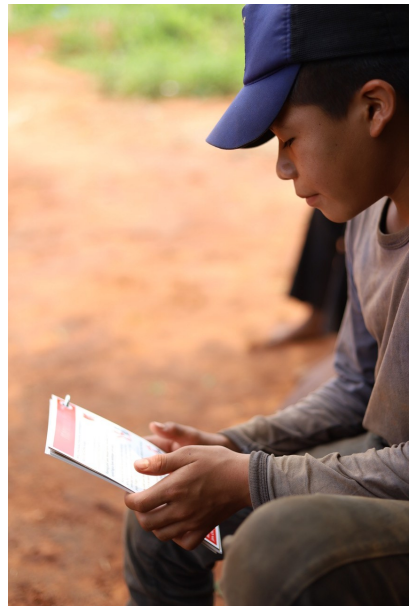
We go to villages, once broken and dark, and see the people thriving. We see happy mothers and children. We see the change from hopelessness to hope.

What has been a worry for you in your work?

I am often tempted to worry for my husband's safety, especially when traveling to new unreached villages. But I resist the fear and trust in God for his safe return.

What have your children gained from this life experience?

We have 7 children. The children have learned to put the Good Samaritan story into action. They have witnessed miracles and seen that faith in God can overcome any challenge. They believe that God can do anything. They have seen brokenness. They have seen children with no clothes, dirty, abandoned and hungry. They have seen these lives transformed by love. They have witnessed Jesus changing lives. People will always struggle materially, but they need hope. Being hopeless is the worst thing in the world. The Gospel gives you something to live for and answers many questions.



Who supports your mission spiritually and financially?

The word of God tells us that Jesus is continually interceding for us before the Father and we sense this heavenly support as we work. Many churches pray for us. We are in contact with a number of pastors. Our family is also a great support, occasionally visiting us in Paraguay.



We went out to Paraguay with nothing, only the money to buy a car. We stepped out in faith and God has provided. We have never run out of food! 7 churches support us financially, including 2 churches in the UK. There are also individuals who contribute. Like the parable of the loaves and fishes, when we need something, God provides through these

people. Sometimes we find we have no resources but somehow, through miracles, we are given the resources.

How do you see God's message to us about service?

We should try to live by Jesus's example. He was so compassionate. He never turned people away. He came to serve and not to be served. We want to serve the people of Paraguay but it can happen on the streets in Newcastle too.

Are there any texts or hymns which have personally given you strength to carry on?

The book of Isaiah, chapter 55, verse 5 is very important to me:

"Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations you do not know will come running to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor."

I hold on to this through thick and thin. In Paraguay, there are many tribes of indigenous people. We have seen people run to us when our car pulls up in a new village. We just need to show up! I read this part of the Bible over and over again.

In the book of John, chapter 15, verse 5

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

This verse is also very important to me. Jesus asks that we try to become Christ-like, but with humility. We submit to his love. This is not about personal egotism which is dangerous. It is about humility.

One of my favourite hymns is Amazing Grace.

*"I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind but now I see"*



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Loose Ladies and Guests Enjoy Charlie Chaplin

In early April, over 20 Loose Ladies and guests attended an afternoon screening of the silent film, 'Goldrush', with the Royal Northern Symphonia accompanying the action, at the Glasshouse, Gateshead.

Charlie Chaplin took nearly two years to write and film 'Goldrush'. Often with no ideas for a script, the actors could be left hanging for a couple of weeks while he waited for inspiration. It cost nearly a million dollars to film and had 600 extras in some of the sequences. Chaplain was a perfectionist and since he was wealthy enough to have sole control of the project, he could indulge in elaborate sets and special effects.



But there was a slight difficulty when he got the lead actress with child and had to replace her with another, Georgia Hale. He did go on to marry the actress, the conductor of this silent film, Stefan Geiger, reassured us, but it speaks to the somewhat chaotic birth of this comic masterpiece. The film became the highest grossing of his films and in 2025, it celebrates its 100th birthday.



There were wonderful moments. Gags involving houses balanced on a cliff edge, which tipped towards disaster every time the inhabitants moved. The little bowler-hatted tramp cooked his shoe laces for the famished prospectors and ate them as spaghetti. There was also pathos in the long lines of humble, desperate men, trudging through the snow and hauling themselves over snow-covered

mountains, to reach the goldfields of the Klondike and find a fortune. Romance, the famous choreographed slapstick and joy were in abundance and there is a happy ending as the seekers find a mountain of gold and Chaplain finds his love. And Chaplain even wrote the music for the film too.

Coming out into the sublime sunshine of late afternoon and drinking in the view over Newcastle, we all agreed that it had been a fine afternoon. Thank you so much Alison Mattisson for choosing so well and getting us all there to enjoy such talent.

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Jesmond and St George's: Some of the Effects of World War Two - Vicars of the War Years, John W Woodhouse (1934-1942) and John Ramsbotham (1942 - 1950)

About five years ago I contacted some members of the Rickard family, who were stalwarts of St George's, and provided me with memories of that period. They gave me permission to use that information, and I would like to thank them for being so helpful and generous of their time. I have also used information from the Lances of that period - so, here goes!

Edwin and Dolly Rickard were very active in the life of St George's, serving in numerous roles and long-time PCC members and they were instrumental in establishing a canteen for the use of the troops stationed in the area. As reported in the Lance:



December 1940: St George's Canteen, 57 Sanderson Road:

This is going splendidly and is open every day, but we do want more writing paper and envelopes for the soldiers. If anyone will give us writing blocks etc they will be welcome. Bring them straight to Mr Rickard at the Canteen.

October 1940: Parochial activities:

Owing to circumstances over which we have no control, the various activities, which were going on in the Parish Hall, have had to be curtailed. For one thing we cannot have our Harvest Social there and the Badminton Club has had, for the time being, to be abandoned. The Sunday school has also had to move and is now being held in Church each Sunday at 2pm. The Mothers' Union and the Knitting Party and the

Youth Fellowship are being held at the Vicarage, and we will do all we can to keep the social life of the Parish going.

Christmas 1940:

We shall not forget the early services on Christmas Day. Owing to the times we live in, it was necessary to keep the Church in darkness, and the faint flickers



of the candles were all the light that could be allowed. Yet somehow the darkness of earth seemed to emphasise the light of heaven, and we hope that like men of old "the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death upon them hath the light shined."

January 1941 (extract from vicar's letter in the Lance):

...The bitter weather in the early part of the year gave us a bad start, and the extra black-out in the early mornings of the last two months have made early morning worship more difficult and we are sorry to see that the acts of communion are only seven thousand as against eight thousand last year. Those who came, however, tell us that they will never forget these communions in the darkened church, and the quiet and peace has been a great help to them.

...As the year has gone on the names on our roll of those serving in His Majesty's Forces has increased week by week, and there has been a fairly good attendance at the Intercession Services on Thursday afternoons, when all the names are read out. They are also read out at the Communion service on Friday mornings, but very few of those who have asked for our prayers have been present themselves, to join in the service.

...One of our most successful efforts of the year has been our "House of Welcome" for soldiers. It is now open for twelve hours a day and is being very much appreciated by the men. We would like to thank the large number of helpers for the service they are giving at all times of the day.

April 1941:

Owing to not having possession of our Hall and Hut our various organisations have naturally suffered, especially the Scouts and Guides and Badminton Club. Through the kindness of Mrs Campbell of Field



House we hope to have an evening a week after Easter at 75 Osborne Road where Miss Cross runs her School of Dancing.

June 1941:

...I suppose now that a fortnight has gone, we may say that the Church had a narrow escape one night. Incendiary bombs fell all around us, but only one hit the Church and bounced off, and one hit the Vicarage, but was soon put out. We would, however, like to express our sympathy with Fr Johnson, our near neighbour at the Church of the Holy name, who had his house badly damaged. I saw him next day and he was quite serene behind his boarded windows...

October 1941: The Canteen

The Canteen in Sanderson Road completes its first year at the beginning of next month. It was opened after Evensong on October 6th 1940, and has been very much appreciated by the troops stationed in the neighbourhood. There are often enquiries made by the men for rooms where their wives could stay for a few days while here on a visit and the Committee would be glad to have the names and addresses of anybody willing to provide accommodation at a nominal charge. Gifts of books, magazines and writing paper would be appreciated and could be left at 57 Sanderson Road at any time, where the Canteen is open from 10am to 10pm daily and would welcome inspection from subscribers and visitors.

December 1941: St George's House of Welcome:

The Canteen is being much appreciated by the soldiers this winter and any night you drop in you can find it more or less full. A Committee was held at the Vicarage on November 17th and it was decided to use some of the proceeds of Mrs Arnott's Spe-

cial "Bring and Buy" Sale to purchase new chairs, cups and saucers. It was also reported that the priority permit has now been received and this will make our catering problems easier.



Some Christmas cards with a sketch of the church are on sale, price 1d. We shall be glad to hear of people who can offer lodging for soldiers' wives from time to time. We are grateful to all our helpers, and know that their work is much appreciated by all the soldiers billeted in the neighbourhood.

November 1942: St George's Canteen:

The Canteen celebrated its second anniversary on October 6th and seems to be very much appreciated by the Forces in the neighbourhood. The Committee thank friends and supporters for various gifts of stationery, for which there is always a demand, and for the money, which have been sent to us as a birthday donation.

September 1943: St George's Canteen:

Owing to the fact that Mr and Mrs Rickard feel that they cannot continue with the arrangement, which was made when the Canteen was started, it will be necessary to move it to other premises at the end of September. Anyone who knows the situation must wonder how Mr and Mrs Rickard have been able to continue so long, and will agree that a great debt of gratitude is due to them for all that they have done during the three years of the Canteen's existence.

November 1943:

The St George's Canteen has now been moved from Sanderson Road to the Scouts Hut, and has settled down very well in its new quarters. Mrs Elcoat and her helpers are to be congratulated on the organisation of the move. The last cup of tea was served in the old quarters, the helpers moved over to the new one and served the first cup almost out of the same pot. There was never a minute's break.

December 1944: The St George's Canteen:

It is with great regret that the decision was taken by the Canteen Committee to close down at the end of October. But there was no alternative, as the "custom" had inevitably dropped below the economic level, and there is no capital to enable us to keep on at a loss. All the Canteen helpers have done a grand job of work, and it is a disappointment that they could not continue till the end of the war. But there is the satisfaction of knowing that now the troops in this area are not left without a canteen of any sort, as they were when St George's first started.

May 1945:

It ought to be put on record that the Parochial Hall was officially de-requisitioned (another good word!) on April 23rd, St George's day 1945, and that the Black-out ended on the same day. It was thoughtful of the Government to choose our own special day.

.....

I think these extracts give just a hint of what it was like in Jesmond during the war years. Interestingly I have a copy of the Christmas card mentioned in the article. It was sketched by the then vicar, John Woodhouse. I am afraid I have upped the price of those cards somewhat!

Barbara Peacock



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Catherine McKinnell MP

Visits St George's

On Thursday 10th April, we were delighted to welcome our North Newcastle MP, Catherine McKinnell, for a lunchtime visit to introduce her to the Community Hub and to our Church.

Catherine also took the opportunity to hold a constituency surgery in the Hall and Winskill room. Her surgery is a place where, by prior appointment, people across Newcastle North can come to speak to her with any issues that she can assist them with. She was joined by her office manager, Liam Blakey, and caseworker, Ella. Local residents waited in the main hall, chatting with Liam until Catherine could see them. They were then taken into the Winskill Room to talk to their MP more privately, with Ella taking notes.



After the surgery, Catherine and her team were taken on a tour of the hall, church and green by Rev. Debbie. They were joined by Janet Wilson as church warden and Kay Plumley, publicity for the Community Hub campaign. Together, they shared the story of St George's – its history, its role in the community today, and the exciting vision for its future.

Catherine showed a genuine interest in the heritage of the building and in the wide range of activities that take place across the church, hall and green. We sat down for a cup of tea and a sandwich afterwards and talked Catherine through the Community Hub fundraising campaign.

We're grateful to Catherine, Liam and Ella for taking the time to visit and look forward to welcoming them back in the future as the Community Hub campaign continues to grow.

Kay Plumley



Pope Francis

Pope Francis, the first Latin American pontiff, has died at the age of 88, following a long illness. He served as the leader of the Roman Catholic Church for over a decade, making history as the first Jesuit and the first pontiff from the global south. Francis was known for his outspoken advocacy for the poor, his insistence on a more welcoming Church, and his willingness to engage in open dialogue on controversial issues.

The key aspects of his papacy were:



Focus on the Poor:

Francis prioritized the needs of the marginalized and vulnerable, both within the Church and in the broader world, urging his priests to engage with those on the streets.

Open Dialogue:

He opened doors to discussions on previously taboo topics, including priestly celibacy, communion for divorced and remarried people, and greater roles for women in the Church.

Global Outreach:

Francis reached out to people from diverse backgrounds, including women, immigrants, refugees, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people from other faiths.

Peacemaker:

He sought to mediate conflicts around the world, particularly in Ukraine and the Middle East, condemning violence and calling for peace.

Inclusivity:

He strived to make the Church more welcoming and inclusive, embracing a more informal style and emphasizing humility and mercy.

Resistance to Change:

His reforms faced strong resistance from both within and outside the Church, with some conservatives and progressives disagreeing with his approach.

Legacy of Hope:

Despite the challenges he faced, Francis was praised for renewing hope in the Church and for his compassion and empathy.

Personal Details:

- Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1936.
- Entered the Jesuit order in 1958 and was ordained a priest in 1969.
- Served as the Jesuit provincial superior in Argentina from 1973 to 1979.
- Elected Pope on March 13, 2013.

His death was announced on April 21, 2025, after a five-week hospital stay for respiratory issues.

He was buried in Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, according to his wishes



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**"Letters
Column"**



Dear Editor,

I was delighted to reread the ancient poem 'The Dream of the Rood' in your April edition. Your readers may be interested to know that John Casken has composed a choral version of the Dream and a recording has been made by the well-known Hilliard Ensemble.

I have known John Casken for many years. He is retired professor of composition from Manchester University, now living in Wooler. He was for a while composer in residence for the Northern Sinfonia.

Mike Oswald.

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BOOK REVIEWS



Rowan Williams "Being Human"

ISBN 978-0-281-07975-9, ebook 978-0-291-07976-9

Typed by Geethik India -published Jellyfish print, 1st Pub 2018,Copyright Rowan Williams

This short book of 5 chapters is difficult for a lay person to assimilate without close study. It has received good reviews from two Baroness', a Professor and a Rabbi. The author quotes from Eastern European, Russian, French and German philosophers and writes "part of the purpose of the book is to ask what has gone wrong and how we might re-think" It includes an exposition of his own mind-set as a highly regarded academic, a classicist, a cleric and a family man, acquainted too with the modern educational curriculum.

Rowan Williams was born, an only child, in Swansea on 14.06.1950 and became Archbishop of Canterbury from 2002 to 2012. He writes about the brain, our thoughts, dialogue and language. He looks at life from the view of both the arts and the sciences, considering perspective. Just about every worldly concern is covered-some in the abstract. Cooperation, collaboration, the continuous narrative are all developed. Some mention of the Saints of old is informative. Empathy - something that comes up at job interviews - is covered. Recall and self-awareness are added to the list.

He has structured the work to help the reader get around obstacles and I already have a new line for opening up conversation (important for the elderly). His thinking comes from the Divine and is reinforced in the Scriptures. It is a bit overwhelming and the reader might wonder, as I did, what the challenges were in his role as Archbishop.

His concerns for current relationships in this era (2018 and onwards) are about the evolution of the uncooperative self.

Jenny Redgrave

All shall be well: Visions of Salvation with Julian of Norwich

by Emma Pennington. Bible Reading Fellowship
2025. ISBN 978 1 80039 206 9. (160pp.)

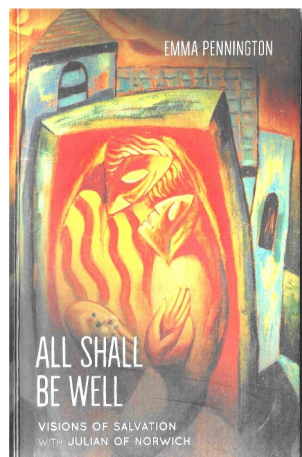
This deeply researched and densely argued study of the anchoress Mother Julian's visions is quite challenging and requires thoughtful reading, but it is very rewarding.

In around the year 1300 the anchoress Mother Julian experienced a series of visions. About a quarter of the book situates Julian in her theological, ecclesiastical and social context. Anchorites and anchoresses lived in small chambers attached to churches, taking the name of the Saint to whom the church was dedicated. They rarely left their cells, but people visited them for their wisdom and understanding.

The rest of the book studies in turn Julian's final seven visions under the titles: The wound of Christ, His dearest mother; Christ our Saviour; All shall be well; United to God through prayer; Patient suffering, Trials and tribulations, and finally The city of the soul.

I would happily lend my copy to anyone who is interested.

Mike Oswald.

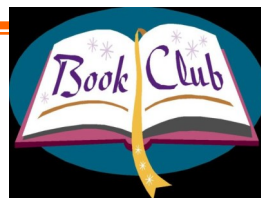


Book Group

The next meeting of the church book group is on Wednesday
14 May at 7.30pm in the Winskill Room.

The book is Precipice by Robert Harris

Anne Clarke



St George's Bells on VE Day 2025

**Message from Bruno Peek CVO OBE OPR,
Pageant Master, VE DAY 80**

RE: VE DAY 80 RINGING OUT IN CELEBRATION -
6.30PM 8TH MAY 2025 - St GEORGES CHURCH
GUILD OF BELLRINGERS TAKE PART

Following on from the enormous success of the D-Day Commemorations that took place on 6th June 2024, in which you all played an important and amazing role, we are now focused on the celebration of the 80th Anniversary of VE Day, taking place throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories on 8th May 2025. We would like to encourage you to take part in this important celebration of 80 years of peace in Europe too, which as you know, signalled the start of the beginning of the end of WW II. (See organisers details below)

RINGING OF BELLS

At 6.30pm, please ring your bell/s out in celebration of the 80 years of peace in Europe, since 8th May 1945, along with paying tribute and in remembrance, of the many millions that paid the ultimate sacrifice during the dark days of WW II.

.....

The Bell Ringers of St George's will also be ringing for the Big Friendly Gathering and VE Day Celebration on the 3rd of May from 1:30pm as requested by Joan and Chris Clarke Jesmond Community Festival organiser.

This has been requested by Chris Clarke, Jesmond Community Festival and also Joan Grenfell for the BFG.



Newcastle's Carabao Cup Win Eclipsed

The D&N (Durham & Newcastle Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers) hold an annual quiz and St George's has always fielded a team. Usually Ponteland have proved very strong and they won it last year, but this year they did not enter.

Could we take advantage of their non attendance? The answer was: Yes as we won, beating 7 other teams, Gosforth All Saints coming second.

Chris Vane gave great support on the classics, amongst other areas, while Edward Young showed his brilliance on bell ringing related anagrams and words beginning with X. If Huddersfield Uni ever make University Challenge and Ed is on the team then that's where to put your money. Other team members were Lorna and Paul Taylor, Neville Walker and Geoff and Mary White.

We were stumped by the question as to which part of the body is represented by the clue "Before she was married", the answer being (K)nee.

Thanks to Christ Church, North Shields, for hosting the event.

Geoff



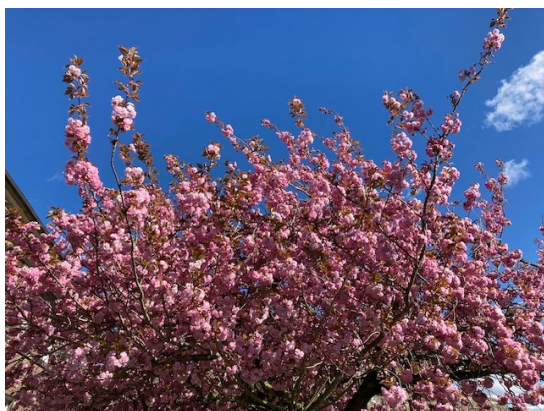
Explore, Record, Protect: How Citizen Science Apps Can Transform Your Walks

Spring has arrived in the UK, bringing longer days, blooming flowers, and a renewed enthusiasm for exploring the great outdoors! It's the perfect time to immerse yourself in nature and contribute to meaningful scientific research through citizen science. By participating through Apps like iNaturalist and Merlin Bird ID, you can help scientists monitor wildlife, track environmental changes, and support conservation efforts—all while enjoying the great outdoors.



iNaturalist: Join a Global Community of Nature Enthusiasts

Imagine this: you're out on a walk enjoying the sunshine, when you spot a shrub covered in beautiful bright pink flowers. You have never seen this plant before; you want to know what it is. With iNaturalist, you can find out immediately. Just snap a picture, and the app will give you a short list of species it thinks it might be. You compare photos and choose the one that matches best. It turns out the pink shrub was wild flowering raspberry! Satisfied, you continue on your walk, with your camera at the ready...



iNaturalist is a user-friendly platform that allows you to record and share observations of wildlife. Whether you're in your garden or exploring local parks, you can snap photos of plants, animals, and fungi, and upload them via the iNaturalist app. The community and AI-powered identification tools will help you learn more about your discoveries. Each observation contributes to biodiversity sci-

ence, aiding researchers in understanding species distributions and trends. Many local conservation efforts save a lot of time and labour by using the data gathered by you – on the app, you can support your local conservationists in your free time or join a citizen science project. This is a free App.

Merlin Bird ID: Your Personal Birdwatching Assistant

Developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the Merlin Bird ID app is a fantastic tool for identifying birds by sight and sound. Simply answer a few questions, upload a photo, or record bird songs, and Merlin will provide you with likely species matches. The app offers a Bird Pack specifically for Great Britain and Ireland, featuring over 400 species with detailed information, range maps, and audio recordings. It's like having a personal birdwatching guide in your pocket! The best part is: it sorts out different bird chatter. One listen, and it tells you how many species it can hear, and lets you listen to each one individually, so you can find out which particular bird species you heard. Listen and say hello to the wrens, tits, robins, finches, and everyone else in your garden and beyond! The App is free to download and does not require any in-App purchases or subscriptions.



Wildflower Identification Apps.

There are at least three FREE wildflower Apps which will help you identify wildflowers. Popular choices include; PLANTNET. FLO-RA INCOGNITA and iNATURAL-IST. Using image recognition technology, the user-submitted data of your photos of the flowers helps to identify plants based on their appearance.



Upcoming Citizen Science Events in the North East and Nationally

If you'd like to try out these apps, but don't know where to start, why not try them out on St George's church green? Sit on a bench in the sunshine and listen to the bird song, or snap photos of daffodils and bees. St George's has wildflower patches and gardens to explore; you can find out exactly how your local church and community help support biodiversity on its land.

Here in the North East, we're all nature advocates. Want to invest some more time into nature, or go for more practical projects? Spring and summer are bustling with citizen science events where you can get hands-on experience and contribute to vital research. Here are some upcoming events in the North East of England and across the UK:

City Nature Challenge 2025 (25th–28th April)

Join this global initiative to document urban biodiversity using iNaturalist. Participants across the UK, including the North East, will be recording observations of wildlife in their local areas. It's a fun and engaging way to connect with nature and contribute to a worldwide database.

Great UK WaterBlitz (Spring 2025)

Organized by Earthwatch Europe, the Great UK WaterBlitz invites volunteers to collect water samples from local rivers, lakes, and ponds to assess water quality. This data helps scientists monitor freshwater ecosystems and identify pollution sources. Keep an eye on Earthwatch's website for registration details.

Nature's Calendar

The Woodland Trust's Nature's Calendar project encourages you to record signs of seasonal change, such as the first flowering of plants or arrival of migratory birds. Your observations help scientists track the effects of climate change on wildlife. It's an ongoing project, so you can participate at any time.



Northumberland Wildlife Trust Events

Northumberland Wildlife Trust hosts a variety of events throughout the year, including guided

walks, workshops, and talks focused on local wildlife and conservation. Check their events page regularly for updates on activities happening near you.

Why Participate in Citizen Science?

Engaging in citizen science offers numerous benefits:

Contribute to Conservation: Your data aids researchers and policymakers in making informed decisions to protect wildlife and habitats.

Learn and Discover: Enhance your knowledge of local species and ecosystems and develop new skills in observation and identification.

Connect with Community: Join a network of like-minded individuals passionate about nature and science.

Enjoy the Outdoors: Spending time in nature has been shown to improve mental and physical well-being.

So, grab your smartphone, download these apps, and step outside to explore the wonders of spring. Your contributions, no matter how big or small, play a crucial role in understanding and preserving the UK's natural heritage. Happy observing!

Alexis Plumley

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The Lance's Spring Wildlife Photo Competition

Inspired by our piece about citizen science and all the Apps available to identify the flora and fauna about you?

We are holding a competition open to all.

Please submit your favourite wildlife PHOTO, both flora and fauna, to the Lance by June 1st at noon.

[Send your photos to either mmvane31@gmail.com or to the Church Office].

The competition will be judged by our resident wildlife expert, Alexis Plumley.

The winners will have their photos printed in the Lance.

AND THERE ARE PRIZES AVAILABLE FOR THE TOP 3 PHOTOS.....

Spring Awakens at St George's

Spring is finally here, and with it comes the long-awaited end to the dark and chilly months of winter. The days are stretching out, sunlight lingers a little longer in the evenings, and the air feels softer and warmer. After months of bare branches and frosty mornings, nature is stirring back to life. Buds are beginning to unfurl, early flowers are peeking through the soil, and the steady hum of



bees and birdsong is returning. Spring is a season that speaks of hope and renewal—a reminder that even after the coldest and darkest seasons, life finds a way to bloom again.

This sense of rebirth is reflected not only in the natural world but also in the quiet shift in our hearts and community. There's, of course, something restorative about seeing green shoots pushing through the earth and feeling the warmth of the sun on your face after a long winter. It's as if creation itself is offering an invitation to begin again—to step out of the stillness of winter and into the promise of new life. In spring, we are invited to notice the small signs of life around us and to trust that God is always at work, even when we cannot yet see the results.

After months of quiet waiting, the wildlife patch we planted last October is beginning to come to life, bringing with it early signs of spring and the promise of a vibrant season ahead. This patch was created to enhance the church's biodiversity—a project made possible through the hard work and dedication of the church's gardening group, The Tuesday Group, alongside the support of St George's PCC. The goal was not only to create a beautiful space but also to nurture a haven for pollinators and local wildlife, and it's already starting to show results.

The coppiced rose bush is showing encouraging signs of new growth, with small

green shoots pushing through the stems. In the wildflower patch itself, the crocus bulbs are beginning to bud—a welcome sight after the long winter. While the crocus is leading the way, new green shoots are also starting to appear along the patch, a quiet reminder that the groundwork laid in the autumn is beginning to bear fruit. Among the early bloomers, we're also expecting to see Helleborus (especially the lovely double yellow spotted variety) and Pulmonaria adding their colour and texture to the patch in the coming weeks.

It's not only the plants that are stirring—our wildlife visitors have already started to take notice. Honeybees and bumblebees have been spotted flitting from flower to flower, drawn to the early blooms as a vital source of nectar. Their presence is a reassuring sign that the patch is already beginning to fulfil its purpose as a sanctuary for pollinators.

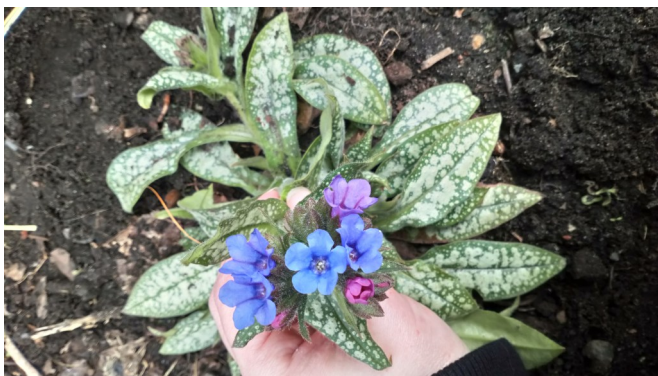
Beyond the wildlife, the change in season is being felt across the church green. As the days grow warmer and the sun lingers a little longer in the sky, the green is starting to fill with life once more. Students are seen dotting the benches, soaking in the sun's rays, and families are tossing frisbees back and forth. Children have been spotted playing again, and the sound of laughter carries on the breeze. It is a mark of the warmth and beauty of the changing season, especially along the edges of the church green; snowdrops, white and purple crocuses, and cheerful yellow daffodils have already sprouted and blossomed. We also hope to see new life soon in the bird box in the trees above.

Spring is a season of renewal and quiet hope—a time when the work of the winter months is revealed in the signs of new life around us. As reminded by the comforting promise in Isaiah:

"The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy." - *Isaiah 35:1-12*



The unfolding season offers us a chance to witness the steady and faithful work of God in creation. Just as the flowers bloom and the wild-life returns, we are reminded that growth often happens quietly, beneath the surface, before it reveals itself.



And there's more to look forward to. From April to June, we can expect to see Brunnera (Alexander's Great), Polemonium (Golden Feathers), and Geranium (Rozanne) bringing rich blues, purples, and golds to the patch. The tall, round blooms of Alliums will also make their appearance, adding height and texture to the display. Each new flower will offer fresh beauty and nourishment for our visiting bees and butterflies.

This unfolding growth reflects the deeper work that often happens in our own lives and faith. As The Song of Solomon 2:11-12 reminds us:

"For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land."

May this season of renewal encourage us to open our hearts to the quiet yet powerful work of God in our lives. Just as the wildflower patch is beginning to flourish, may we also find ourselves growing in faith, hope, and community, especially as we reflect during this holy time of Lent. Let us care for this space and one another (particularly on Mothering Sunday this March 30th) with the same attentiveness and patience, knowing that even the smallest signs of life are part of something greater.

Happy Spring!

Alexis Plumley

[The Lance will publish a photo from time to time throughout the season of the new WILDFIRE PATCH showing how it develops and changes]

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Parish Walk: Saturday 5th April 2025

The start point for the walk was North Ropery Lane from the car park in Chester le Street - it's the riverside car park next to the big park on the left side of the A167 coming from the north. Postcode is DH3 3SJ if you should wish to explore on your own. Around 10.15 the group of 9 set off from the car park and soon were recording local birds on the way.



It's a lovely, mostly woodland, walk along Lumley Park Burn behind Lumley Castle, on well-made and permissible footpaths, lanes and a few short sections of road. The walk is currently covered in wild garlic and woodland flowers.



Part of the route is on the Weardale Way. The distance is about 4.5 miles and there were two uphill sections, but nothing too strenuous. Conditions underfoot were good and mostly dry but with just a few, short, muddy stretches. There were two places where care needs to be taken - one where the river has eroded the path a little

(this is all of about five feet of the path) and another where we ducked under the A1(M) on a minor road, where for around 50 yards, there is no footpath or verge.

Towards the end of the walk, we stopped at Lumley Castle itself, where they served teas, coffees and snacks in the library/bar. The



castle itself is quite an interesting building, and, in case you were wondering, Joanna Lumley is descended from the family who owned it. It's a four- star hotel now.

It was an enjoyable walk with sunshine and a great coffee or tea taken in the castle which is such a wonderful building.

Neville Walker

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Pimms



Teas



VE Day Memories



1940's music



Bring a picnic

Face painter and
children's
activities



Church of England Calendar May 2025

1	Philip and James, Apostles
2	Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, Teacher of the Faith, 373
4	English Saints and Martyrs of the Reformation Era
8	Julian of Norwich, Spiritual Writer, c.1417
12	<i>Gregory Dix, Priest, Monk, Scholar, 1952</i>
14	Matthias the Apostle
16	<i>Caroline Chisholm, Social Reformer, 1877</i>
19	Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, Restorer of Monastic Life, 988
20	Alcuin of York, Deacon, Abbot of Tours, 804
21	<i>Helena, Protector of the Holy Places, 330</i>
24	John and Charles Wesley, Evangelists, Hymn Writers, 1791 and 1788
25	The Venerable Bede, Monk at Jarrow, Scholar, Historian, 735 <i>Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, 709</i>
26	Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, 605 <i>John Calvin, Reformer, 1564</i> <i>Philip Neri, Founder of the Oratorians, Spiritual Guide, 1595</i>
28	<i>Lanfranc, Prior of Le Bec, Archbishop of Canterbury, Scholar, 1089</i>
30	Josephine Butler, Social Reformer, 1906 <i>Joan of Arc, Visionary, 1431</i> <i>Apolo Kivebulaya, Priest, Evangelist in Central Africa, 1933</i>
31	The Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth

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

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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

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Enid Pearson 285 0958

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Janet Wilson 07766 297359

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Dr Sue Vernon 07411099690

suejvernon@icloud.com

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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 vicar, tel: 07776 922580

email: Rev_debbie@hotmail.com

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

Website: www.stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Facebook: St-Georges-Church-Jesmond

Instagram: stgeorgesjesmond

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>



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

Instagram: stgeorgesjesmond **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

18.00 Taize (2nd Sunday of month)

18.00 Choral Evensong (3rd Sunday)

WEEKDAY SERVICES

08.45 Thursday: 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 month



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