

St. George's Jesmond



A worshipping community: inclusive, nurturing, engaged

THE LANCE

JULY 2025



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Editorial

We are at midsummer which means that Glastonbury is commanding attention. But it was not all angry young men. Our Christian faith is represented too. A set called 'Primary School Assembly Bangers' has proved very popular. A teacher turned singer, James B Partridge, encourages the audience to join in the hymns they would have sung in their primary school days. And there is a church tent set up in the 'healing fields' where they have been made very welcome.

The church tent is run by Chris North and during the day there are about 5 services including a Catholic Mass, a Communion service and several blessings of weddings, relationships and the renewal of vows. Chris North said that between 50 – 100 people came to the services, but for him, it was the 'little engagements' about sharing faith, which were really powerful. He said that Glastonbury seemed to be a safe space in which to explore spirituality and he had had many conversations. People were surprised that God would listen to them. They wanted to learn how to pray. They couldn't believe that to attach a prayer to the prayer tree was free. There was an atmosphere of deep questioning, people asking how to come to faith and they found North sharing his stories helpful.

In this month's edition, our Town Crier recalls her Jesmond wartime experiences. There are street pastors, home visits for a teacher and a wild bird oasis and we remember several recent happy events and celebrations. Try and stop St George's celebrating!!!

The Lance team are on holiday in August. See you in September.

Margaret, Graham and Jonathan



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Clergy Letter



Greetings from Taizé, a small village in Burgundy where Brother Roger set up a remarkable community of brothers after the Second World War. We are staying in self-catering accommodation that is independent of the community but attend many of the services in the Church of Reconciliation. At the moment there are 1500 to 2000 people staying in the community, mostly 16-35 year olds creating a vibrant atmosphere. The worship is simple, with short prayers, readings and songs in different languages but always including a ten minute period of silence.

Being with so many people is a reminder of how irritating other people can be. Last year I was sitting next to a lad who sniffed every thirty seconds until eventually a woman nearby reached into her handbag and found a tissue for him, evoking many grateful smiles from those around. Once this year the silence was disturbed by some people with disabilities unaware that their groans were audible. Sometimes there is someone, usually an older person who really should know better, who insists on whispering to their companion. On one occasion there was a young couple being inappropriately over-affectionate. Sometimes there is someone who sings out of tune, or who fidgets more than I do or whose personal hygiene could be better. There are also some scantily clad very attractive people who provide a distraction that should probably be unwelcome.

The silence is a time to process these feelings of irritation and ask the Holy Spirit to heal the misanthropy that I am embarrassed to admit. I can smugly reflect that I always carry a handkerchief - until I forget - but there are other things I forget that impact on others. A reminder that there are disabled people whose needs are easily overlooked is timely. When older people whisper to one another, it reminds me that I also expect younger people to do as I say, not as I do. I may not show physical affection in church but I can easily unwittingly cause offence. My singing may irritate others. There may be those who fidget more than I, but there are certainly those who seem able to sit serenely still.

Silence in the Church of Reconciliation is a time to recognise that we are part of the Body of Christ, not simply a collection of individuals. Tolerating others is not enough: accepting them with love and compassion is where the Holy Spirit is leading us. Israel

attacked Iran the day before I began to compose this article: as on every Friday evening in Taizé, there was half an hour's silent prayer for peace before prayers. With the threat of nuclear weapons being used in this and other conflicts, it is vital for the survival of all of us that we move from individualism and nationalism to a recognition that there are no people unworthy of living. This is a translation of a phrase the Nazis used of Jews - as well as gypsies, gay, disabled and psychologically ill people. It is therefore ironic that there are now Israelis who treat Palestinians in Gaza and the Occupied Territories as unworthy of living: Israelis are not unique in seeing other people in this way, but disappoint me more because we share the Hebrew Bible.

Taizé is a reminder that the Church is international. We all know this in our heads. Worshipping with people from different nations in various languages is a way to experience this in our spirit. On the day of Pentecost the Spirit was apprehended by people of many nations and it has been a blessing to celebrate the feast here. Below is a photo of the image that is the culmination of the Gospel Path, a series of eighteen stations created by one of the brothers.

Bryan Vernon

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The Lord's Prayer

You may or may not have noticed the booklets at the back of St George's Church entitled 'The Lord's Prayer' which were brought in for the period between Ascension and Pentecost to enable us to commit to a 10 day period of prayer. These booklets are produced by 'Thy Kingdom Come' which is a global and ecumenical organisation whose raison d'être is to invite people to pray. Each year is themed, and for 2025 the theme is 'The Lord's Prayer'. Why, you may ask. The answer is taken from their website (www.thykingdomcome.global) and quoted below:

"More Brits correctly identify source of 'Give us this day our daily bread' than 'To Be or Not To Be'; 'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times' or 'Happy and glorious, Long to reign over us'. The survey singles out forgiveness as the line in Lord's Prayer people most likely to find meaningful. Almost six in 10 people have prayed the Lord's Prayer in their daily life. The polling, carried out for the Church of England ahead of the annual Pentecost prayer initiative, Thy Kingdom Come, also found the reference in the prayer to being forgiven and forgiving others was the element people found most meaningful to them.

The pollster company Savanta surveyed more than 2,000 people across the UK. They asked them to match seven famous lines - spanning areas ranging from literature and history to popular culture – with their source, from a list of correct answers. Overall, the phrase from the Lord's Prayer was recognised correctly by the largest number of people (80.3 per cent), just ahead of Star Wars (79.9 per cent). Overall, 89 per cent of those surveyed said that they had previously heard of the Lord's Prayer or the Our Father. This was highest among those who described themselves as Christian (95 per cent), but also by 88 per cent of those who said they had no religion. Overall, 89 per cent said they had said or prayed the Lord's Prayer and 58 per cent said they had done so in their daily life.

The survey then gave people the full wording of Lord's Prayer and asked them to select the lines they found most meaningful. The most commonly selected line was '...and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us' with 43 per cent overall and more than half (56 per cent) of Christians surveyed.

Though ancient, its words continue to resonate with people of all faiths and none. In a world of shifting cultures and changing circumstances, the Lord's Prayer remains a steady guide - perhaps never more so than now. Lines like 'Give us this day our daily bread' speak powerfully to today's challenges, reminding us to seek sufficiency, not excess, and to consider what 'enough' truly means."

So, whether you picked up a booklet for those 10 days or pick one up now, it doesn't matter, because The Lord's Prayer is for Everyone Every day. Why not give it a go?

Rev Debbie

Spotlight on Scripture - Proverbs 2; 1-9



July 11th is the feast of St Benedict, Abbot and founder of the Benedictine Monastic communities. On his feast day the first reading for Communion is Proverbs 2; 1-9. And I would like you to explore this passage.

'Take my words to heart' are the opening words. Like all teachers the writer of these words offer us a gift. And, of course, we can take them or leave them as we choose.

But the writer asks us to 'tune our ears to wisdom and apply our heart to truth'. He asks us to concentrate our thoughts and to realise that the words God is offering us are like seeds, like treasure, and like rich gifts to be valued and to be used as part of our daily lives.

The book of Proverbs is perhaps not one the most appreciated books of the Bible but it is worth exploring. Benedict in his teaching offered his brethren and those who followed him words of teaching and instruction so that their thoughts, and ours, turn to God and so to discover the knowledge of God. The Benedictine rule of life is take the words of the Bible as seeds to let them grow in our hearts and minds. They are to be mulled over slowly and carefully. The Book of Proverbs is a rich source of wisdom and it worth delving into if you have never explored it before. 'The Lord is the giver of wisdom' exclaims the writer, 'for those who search for it, as if for buried treasure'.

I offer you this starter passage Proverbs Chapter 2 verses 1-9. Read, enjoy, let these words be like seeds that are planted in your mind for in so doing 'you will understand what virtue is, justice and fair dealing, for all paths lead to happiness'.

These are good words for summer days. I wish you well in your Scripture exploring.

Christopher Wardale

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News of the Summer Fair

The Summer Fair this year raised over £5,300 for church funds.

Once again, our church hosted a large, successful community event on the green and in the hall, attracting families, Jesmondites and folk from the surrounding areas. The Fair, on Saturday May 31st, was opened by our local MP, Catherine McKinnell, who had also hosted a surgery in the hall in recent weeks.

We are old hands for this event and have honed our skills in providing entertainment, things to buy and



seasonal things to eat. There was music from the Dignity charity fairground organ. Skilled Irish dancers amazed and delighted the crowd with their deftness and symmetry. Families lolled on the grass and ate ice creams and the raffle, with its generous prizes given by local businesses, was a focal point and fitting



closing act. Bottle stalls, Make- Me- Offer stalls, books stalls, HUB stalls, and plant stalls all ran alongside the tombolas, toys, cakes, beer [yes, we have a license], cream teas and Pimms stalls and the sun smiled over all. It has been calculated that faith groups and churches contribute some £8 billion towards the costs of our communities such as healthcare,



childcare, mental support and many other services. They are often at the heart of these communities, serving them on joyful and on sorrowful occasions and acting as a reminder of our culture and history as demonstrated by our recent VE Day celebrations.

And yet the government is not minded to renew the VAT exemption on church buildings which expires on 31 March 2026. Our church is about to embark on building works to enable it to serve its congregation and community better, and will be affected detrimentally by this lack of legislation. Our MP, so recently with us, may lend a supportive ear!



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Book Group

The July meeting of Book Group will be on Wednesday 16th July in the Winskill Room. The book is 'Long Island' by Colm Toibin.

Refreshments will be served.

Anne Clark

A Town Crier's Recollection of Jesmond at War

'Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!

On this day, Friday, first of September, nineteen thirty nine,

Throughout this country, including Newcastle upon Tyne,

Children went to school with haversacks and bags,

Gas-masks in cardboard boxes and their names on tags.

They assembled, two-by-two, in a crocodile,

Walked to the station, about half a mile.

Goodbyes said,

Tears shed,

Everyone apprehensive of what lay ahead.

Herded into carriages, doors locked, whistles blown.

West, across the Pennines to Longtown, in Cumbria,

Somewhere safe, but unknown.

From train to cattle-pens, taken in by strangers,

Not left in the lurch.

War, with Germany, was declared on the Sunday

As they sat in church.

My husband's memories, not mine.

Later bombs destroyed my parents' home in Newcastle upon Tyne.

God save the Queen. `

This was a town cry for a competition in Banbury, held in 2012, which Marjorie Dodds, Town Crier, competed in and it sets our scene.

Marjorie was born in Mayfair Road, West Jesmond, in 1940. There were wartime blackouts. No lights were allowed to show. No street lights. When her mother went into labour,



her father ran through the darkness, found the midwife and stood on her car's running board, guiding her to the house. Six weeks previously, incendiary bombs had been dropped at the top of Fairfield Road and Forsyth Road, and several families, including her own, had been 'bombed out'. Her parents were taken in by neighbours in Fairfield Road.



Keyes Garden, Mathew Bank, after the air raid of 29-30 December 1941

The area of West Jesmond was a real community of working people. Before the war, children played in the street and were outdoors for hours. However, Jesmond, like the rest of the country, was transformed by the second world war. The siren station was in the picture house by West Jesmond Station. Each street had an ARP Warden [air raid precautions] as part of civil defence. There were air raid shelters in all the lanes and many families had both Anderson shelters or a Morrison table at home which they could shelter under. People often did not use the shelters as they wished to stay together if there was a bomb scare. Most shops on Brentwood Avenue had cellars. The cellar at Mr Curry's Western Dairies on Brentwood Avenue was lined with concrete to keep the milk cool and because of its strength, was a particular favourite. There was a Police Box, like the one in Dr Who, on Forsyth Road bridge with a telephone for emergencies.

Rationing was introduced so everyone could be fed. Everyone had a ration book with coupons, which you could exchange for what you were allowed to buy that week. Brentwood Avenue had a Co-op, two butchers, a grocery shop, a vegetable shop, Eva's the dress shop, a hardware shop, and a



Guildford Place with Cheltenham Terrace in the background, Heaton, after the air raid of 25th April 1941

bakery. Acorn Road and St George's Terrace had a similar mix of shops, as did Holly Avenue. Milk was brought to the house by horse and cart. You took a jug outside and collected milk from the cart. The horse and cart were stabled behind Lonsdale Terrace. Bread wasn't rationed. The 20 jars of jam which Marjorie's mother made before the war were made to last several years. Bread and jam sandwiches were the staples to fill people up.

Tea was rationed. Marjorie remembers her father putting one teaspoon of tea in the teapot and then re-filling the teapot with hot water, using the same tea leaves. Tea

pots were also in short supply.

One day, when bombs were falling on Matthew Bank, a loud bang was heard; not a bomb but the smashing of a teapot, as serious a matter as the bombs. It was difficult to buy another!



West Jesmond School stayed open throughout the war. The children took their gas masks to school with them. There were air raid shelters in the school

yard, on Forsyth Road field, and there was a large underground shelter on the Town Moor. Perhaps it is still there! Marjorie believes that West Jesmond School was probably on half days because of a shortage of teachers, many having been called up. The government introduced a 12 month scheme for fast-tracking new teacher recruits and Marjorie's mother went to the interview, but because she had a small child at home, she could not take up the offer. The school did not provide lunches. Eddie, Marjorie's husband, remembered attending half days in a school in Newcastle where several schools shared the same building. The boys would attend in the morning and girls in the afternoon.

Marjorie's father was in a reserved occupation, servicing all the essential vehicles for the war-effort [ambulances, fire engines etc]. He also fire-watched and served in the Home Guard. He had an allotment beside Jesmond Dene Road and supplemented

their diet with vegetables and fruit. He often gave away cabbages to passing folk. He would take Marjorie to the allotment every Sunday and then return to the house to wash and brush up before the family attended Even-song at St Hilda's. They listened to the radio a lot. Marjorie remembers Tommy Handley in ITMA and Worker's Playtime, programmes which kept morale up. She was aware of the traitorous broadcasts of Lord Haw Haw. The picture house in West Jesmond was open for news reels and films. The family visited the coast once but found the police patrolling the beaches, which were out of bounds. Her mother noticed that the police had sand all over the backs of their uniforms, from lying down themselves on the beach!



West Jesmond station was different at this time. It was a main line station with waiting rooms [with coal fires] on both sides of the track, toilets and you could buy a ticket from the booking hall to any station in the country. There was also a porter and a station master who had his own house. The coal yard was beside the railway line, behind the station master's house, where the Lonsdale Court flats are now.

Possessions were very few. Marjorie remembers having chests of drawers with few clothes to put in them. She would keep her books there and one drawer in the house just contained gas masks. Food had to be eaten and could not be wasted. If it was

not eaten at one meal, it would be put aside and warmed up and served at the next meal. Clothes were rationed. They were often tight fitting, using little fabric. Factories made it a priority to produce uniforms. Like many women, Marjorie's mother knitted, crocheted and sewed for the family.



There was no NHS at this time.

Dr Eliot was the family's doctor and he had a practice on St George's Terrace. You sent for the doctor and he would come to the house.

The family knew that the country was in great danger. There were search lights mounted on the Town Moor. Bomber planes could be heard over head, sirens wailed and bombs were dropped and exploded. They were to realise the huge price people paid to win the war. She said that people were not the same when they came back from the war. Similarly, those at home had also suffered and been changed by the experience. A young cousin on her father's side returned from serving in the Far East where he became a prisoner of war. He was severely emaciated and died soon after from tuberculosis.

While there was no street party in Marjorie's street to celebrate VE Day, everyone celebrated their freedom as they could do things again and were not under the terrible constraints of the war. There was palpable relief everywhere.



Jesmond Station

'Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!

I remember nineteen forty-five "
it's over "; a sunny day in May
Ran to the newsagents for a pa-
per Union Jack to wave
But the sweets were rationed!

No more taking shelter in the
dark

Allowed to play on the beach, in
the street, in the park
But sweets were rationed!

No more air raid warnings,
searchlights and waiting for the



'all clear'

We welcomed home relatives we held dear

But sweets were rationed!

No more blackout at the windows or street wardens with ARP bells

The country was at peace, we felt all would be well

But sweets were still rationed... until nineteen fifty three, the Queen's Coronation year!

God save the Queen `

[A Cry from 2015; Darlington; 70th Anniversary of VE Day]

By Marjorie Dodds as told to MV

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Friday night with the Jesmond Street Pastors

I volunteered to join the Jesmond Street Pastors (JSP) in 2023 after I read in the weekly notice sheet their call for recruits. A chat with St George's vicar, Rev Brian Hurst, started the ball rolling. Rev Hurst was a champion and board member of the governing body of JSP. He first introduced them to our congregation at a Sunday Lent service a few years previously. I knew then that this was something that one day I would want to be part of. A busy NHS post meant I had to wait until I was retired.

The recruitment process started with an informal chat with JSP leader, Chris Lincoln, over a Costa coffee. I was given time to reflect and consider if I still wished to proceed. I was invited to join a patrol in Jesmond as an observer. I was clearly marked out as I was the only one with a high viz vest while the others were dressed in their smart navy gear!



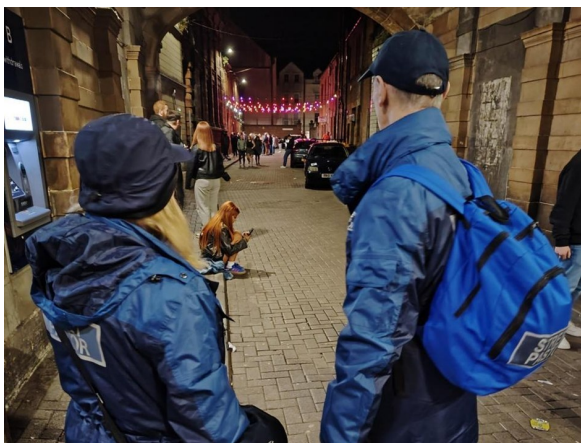
After a few patrols, I attended a training session and later I was inducted formally at an evening service at St George's. You might have been there and saw me dressed in my full uniform.

I have now been on many Friday night patrols with the JSP. There is a rota, and we will only go out if three volunteers are available for the shift. We average one patrol a month but I have done two some months. We never separate from each other, and we always stay together as a group. I am the only non-Methodist Church member.

I was given my own uniform of polo shirt, fleecy and winter jacket and an assortment of head gear (a baseball hat, a beanie and a trapper style one) all our kit is emblazoned with "Street Pastors" in reflective lettering. This is a standard nationwide uniform. This means we are readily recognisable when we go on patrol.

Our patrol session starts at around 8.45 pm in an upstairs room of The Jesmond Methodist Church on St George's Terrace. We catch up with each other's news, share

information from recent patrols, and agree on who is doing what on the patrol. We usually carry three backpacks containing bottles of water, chocolate, and crisps as well as a First Aid Kit, space blankets, and flip-flops. We carry torches, a pan and brush to collect broken glass. We use counters to record how many glass bottles and broken glass we collected and how many people we



had a direct encounter with. This could be a simple hello, a general chat, or a faith chat. The leader of the patrol is also responsible for recording any incidents we encountered that evening on a special form.

Our patrol route might vary slightly but the main route takes us from St Georges Terrace, along Acorn Road, and down Osborne Road and surrounding side streets. We will make a point of stopping to chat to the door staff with whom we have a good relationship. We always greet those we pass with a hello or good evening and most of the time we are greeted back, occasionally high fived and many times ignored. That does not deter us. We are determined to make ourselves seen and heard.

We occasionally have “faith chats” as we call them. I noticed that young men are more willing to engage. They question us: do you have to be a Christian to do this (yes), would you look out for a Muslim (of course, we care for everyone), why do you do it (because we want to help others, to look out for those in need and help people stay safe). I am surprised how many university students tell us they used to go to church and had attended Sunday School. We have been told that they learnt about street pastor movement in the religious education classes.

Sometimes, there is a quiet “thank you” as we pass or “I really appreciate what you are doing for us” particularly from young women. Surprisingly in this secular age, many “God bless you”.

Sometimes my medical and mental health knowledge comes in useful, but I defer to the leader of the patrol who has the experience and wisdom to guide us to what we

can and can't do. We have to be realistic. We would call the police or an ambulance if we felt anyone was in danger. Calls from the JSP are taken seriously and are responded to very quickly.



We have a break about 10.30pm and go out as the bars are emptying at 11pm. We observe people coming out, who might need assistance, if there are people becoming isolated or are in distress. Sometimes this is the time when fights amongst young men take place. Often friends intervene and things settle down quickly. We never intervene where there is physical violence. We call the police. We are back at base around midnight.

We start and end the patrol with prayer. Led by the leader for the night, we pray that God may guide us to where we are needed, that we can be of help to those out in the streets and that everyone returns home safely.

I appreciate the camaraderie and community with other Christians in Jesmond. I have witnessed the love and care of young people for each other. Especially on darker nights, I love to gaze through the glass doors at the beautiful plain backlit cross in the Methodist Church. It inspires me.

On a lighter note, I have seen and learnt about the changing fashion scene amongst young women: thank goodness that the days of very high heels have gone and most are in trainers. However, 'minimalist fashion' amongst young women is still very popular!

Sylvia Dahabra

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Hazel Jones-Lee

There was a very jolly party after Church on 22 June to celebrate the unspecified birthday of Hazel Jones-Lee. Her children spoke to her life, and Hazel, herself, spoke. Although the church choir was primed to sing her 'Happy Birthday', Hazel refused them the honour, although happily, two other congregation members had birthdays to celebrate and the choir could let rip in their usual way anyway. The hall was beautifully decorated by Hazel's daughter, Sarah, and family, and the tables were furnished with much deliciousness to eat and drink.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, HAZEL



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Adlestrop by Edward Thomas

Yes. I remember Adlestrop -
The name, because one afternoon
Of heat the express-train drew up there
Unwontedly. It was late June.
The steam hissed. Someone cleared his throat.
No one left and no one came
On the bare platform. What I saw
Was Adlestrop - only the name
And willows, willow-herb, and grass,
And meadowsweet, and haycocks dry,
No whit less still and lonely fair
Than the high cloudlets in the sky.
And for that minute a blackbird sang
Close by, and round him, mistier,
Farther and farther, all the birds
Of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.



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It Never Rains On Our Parade (or Chalky's Walkies)

June was the turn of Mary and I to organise the monthly Parish Walk but the weather forecast for the appointed day was not good.

Nevertheless 12 of us set off to Seahouses where we parked the cars and caught the bus up to Bamburgh. Many of you will know that you can walk the distance between the 2 villages without coming off the beach so we crossed the cricket area below the castle and onto the sand and headed south. No rain yet.



The tide was in but that was not a problem and after 2 hours we were back in Seahouses having enjoyed the sound and the smell of the sea and fantastic views of The Farne Isles but, unfortunately, no sight of the orcas recently reported in the area. We were still dry.



Into a pub for drinks and either a soup or sandwich lunch. Still no rain.

Back to the cars at which point the heavens opened and we drove home through some torrential rain. But nobody cared.

Geoff White

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Washington Wetland Centre squares up to a challenging world

Churches are so multi-faceted these days. They offer church services and prayer and an increasing role within the wider community which is becoming ever more complicated to navigate. The charmingly innocent description in June's Lance by Walter Sproggart of a choral service comes from a simpler time. And so it is with wetland centres!



There are 9 World Wildlife Trust Wetland centres throughout the UK. Sir Peter Scott, the son of the explorer, Robert Falcon Scott, opened the first centre, Slimbridge, in 1946 where it specialized in breeding programmes for endangered wetland birds as well as creating an attractive habitat for them. The breeding programmes were very successful. In 1962, the first Slimbridge nene [duck] was released back into the wild in Hawaii marking the recovery of the nene population, which had fallen to 30. There are now over 2,000 world-wide.

But things have moved on for this charity, as with our church. The wetland centres must now think about related subjects like flood relief, water management, bird flu, protecting wetland birds and climate change. The centres address mental health issues by offering programmes of support and encouragement, and another mission is to connect people with nature [the Generation Wild project]. They run important breeding programmes trying to stabilize endangered species. There are school visits and research projects. And as a charity, in addition, they must raise funds to continue their work.

Washington Wetland Centre is a 103 acre, well-run sanctuary for wetland birds based on the north bank of the River Wear, near the Penshaw Monument which towers

over it. It is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year and has welcomed over 3 million visitors in the interim. Previously farmland, most of the hedges and trees did not exist and all the ponds and lakes were specifically designed to increase bio diversity by creating new wetlands and new woodland habitats for birds. It is an urban oasis surrounded by industry.



The Trust believes that its greatest achievement is creating the wetlands which support many nationally important species including the curlew, lapwing, Eurasian otter, dragonflies, bats and the fastest declining British bird, the willow tit [rarer than a southern white rhino!]. Predators are always an issue as the Trust seeks to protect its wildlife. Protection is part of the daily operations. They have a predator fence which excludes larger mammalian predators such as foxes, non- contact scaring techniques, rigid monitoring and audio scarers. The Trust restricts natural food resources for predator species so they are less inclined to make a home at the site.

Wellbeing and mental health are improved by being in nature. The team use social media and visits to bring people as close to wetland nature as possible. Through Generation Wild, the Trust works with schools , children and families in underserved communities, who have fewer opportunities to experience nature. They connect people with nature through the use of the concept of 5 pathways, as developed by the University of Derby; senses, emotion, compassion, meaning and beauty.



Animals are unpredictable! The Manager of the site said 'Don't ever say a species will "always" do this, or "never" do that. 'One example was where the team spent weeks creating, what they believed to be, ideal nesting and



loafing areas for breeding birds, only to return 3 hours after the birds had been released into the area to find that they had nested in an upturned bucket. Tractors go, periodically, out of use because a blue tit has made her nest in the wheel arch.

The Trust looks after flamingoes who have the first in Europe solar powered house, which provides them with fresh water, UV heating, extraction and lighting. Avian flu is a problem and the Trust is one of the organisations providing the government with data from its experts and site teams.

Climate change is another factor addressed by the Trust. WWT is the charity for wetlands. It works internationally and across the UK to build resilience to future climate change because wetlands are a natural solution to the problem. It stores carbon. Creating the new saltmarsh at WWT Steart Marshes is expected to sequester an average of 615 tons of CO2 equivalent per year. WWT is campaigning for a strong environment bill after Brexit. It is seeking opportunities to expand its reserves and to better connect the habitats of fragile wetland species. Internationally, projects such as those in Madagascar, Cambodia and Sri Lanka are working to diversify local livelihood options, such as eco-tourism, to ensure that local communities are better able to adapt to future change.

Research is central to the WWT. It undertakes a huge amount of research across a wide range of fields including bioscience, health and wellbeing, visitor data, animal welfare and wildlife monitoring. It also undertakes citizen science where they provide information to their supporters.

Perhaps one of the greatest contributions to delight and wellbeing is in allowing hu-

mans to come close to these beautiful creatures and for them to show little or no fear at our presence. Almost like a scene from the Garden of Eden, one can wander slowly past unconcerned nesting birds, birds with young and those feeding on the river or in their enclosures. The great hedges, pools and twisting paths slow one's pace to fully enjoy this oasis of wildlife. But like our church, it is also so much more.

Margaret Vane

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AND IN A WELCOMING
ENVIRONMENT, WHY NOT
MAKE FRIDAY CAFÉ
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**Articles etc. for The
Lance to be received
no later than the 15th of
each month**

Send to:

mmvane31@gmail.com

Thank you, Margaret.

It wasn't always just Parish Coffee!

A 1959 Lance explains why

When I first joined the congregation of St George's, we didn't have Parish Coffee. We went to church without having breakfast (the eucharistic fast) and the idea was that you would have breakfast in the hall after the service. (Services tended to be held early, around 9.00 - 9.30am, to ensure a shorter fast. We would all be passing out if we had to wait until 11am before we ate anything!)

A minute from the PCC meeting of May 12th 1958, noted that 'the Bishop on his recent visit had expressed the opinion that the Parish Eucharist was in itself sufficient grace before meat; Parish Breakfast will not therefore be delayed on this account in the future'.

An excerpt from the Lance in July 1959 (66 years ago), when Fr Piercy was Vicar, explained the reason for Parish Breakfast.

'The Sunday morning Parish Breakfast is now a regular part of Church life in England - well past the stage of being a novelty as it was fifteen or twenty years ago. It came into use in most places as the accompaniment of a Parish Communion at 9am or thereabouts and has proved its value in two main ways. There is, of course, the strictly practical purpose - the Breakfast is the place where communicants can *break* their *fast* immediately after joining in the common Meal around the Altar. But it has a religious meaning too.

The Christian life is a life of fellowship, a social life and the Parish Breakfast is, or can be, a place where we put into practice in an ordinary, everyday way that higher level of fellowship - the common life of grace - which Christians find first at the Altar. In other words, just as the Parish Communion is the place where we are strengthened and sent forth by our Lord Jesus Christ to practice Christian living, so the Parish Breakfast is the first opportunity given to us each Sunday to do just that - to eat and drink and talk and listen in Christian fellowship.

This sort of thing was happening even while the New Testament was still being written. The Christians met every Lord's Day for "the Breaking of the Bread", and

closely connected with that meeting at the Altar, we find that they also met for a social meal. They called that meal by a lovely, expressive name - the Feast of Charity.

Looked at that way, it is clear that the tea and sandwiches in the Hall at 10.15 each Sunday morning is much more than a necessary practical accompaniment of a later Communion service to which people come fasting - it is the PARISH Breakfast, an important part of our life together as a Christian community. We gather not just to eat, but to eat and meet and so express the fellowship of the Christian life.

If you do not come into the Parish Breakfast after the service on a Sunday morning, perhaps it is because you have never realised that it has this deeply religious purpose as the reason for its existence. For the sake of our Family Life perhaps it is more important that you should come to the hall rather than go straight home.

One purely practical point - there is a shortage of families and groups who are ready to take a turn at preparing sandwiches and pouring tea. Consequently, one or two people are getting the job far oftener than need be. If you would like to help occasionally with the rest of your family or with your friends, Mrs Leeming would be very glad to hear from you.'

[I remember Mrs Leeming very well and her husband, Tom, who was churchwarden, together with Francis Waller].

The tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits we now have after the 9.30am service every Sunday morning is what is left of what, in some places, was a full Parish Breakfast with bacon and eggs, which St George's didn't do. You might be interested to know that we had marmalade sandwiches. I remember them well. They were extremely popular at St George's long before Paddington came into being! St George's continues to be ahead of the game!

Barbara Peacock

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Home Visits. Handy hints from a Seasoned Explorer

Coming towards the end of another school year, nursery and reception class teachers turn their minds to the new intake and the statutory Home Visit.

Teaching in the east end of Newcastle, these visits helped build up trust with new families and it was good to meet the children on their home ground. On many occasions, the wider family was assembled to give you the once over. The welcoming committee of nanas, aunties, siblings of all ages could be slightly unnerving and required at times, a strong stomach and quick reflexes. After a few years of going solo, it was felt that there was safety in pairs, which helped greatly.

The first challenge was finding the address, obviously no SAT NAV in those days, just a beaten-up old copy of A to Z, impossible for most of us to read without a magnifying glass. Many doors were numberless, to give inmates time to abscond on seeing blue lights. Once destination was identified, certain advice was to be taken. As follows...

"On reaching destination be mindful of wobbly gates. Step carefully over any garden ornaments such as abandoned toilets, rusting bikes, buggies etc.

Gaining entry. Most premises have no bells, bells that are defunct or play like an ice cream van. Knock gingerly on the door so as not to incur wrath of Alsatian or Rottweiler called Satan.

Give good impression. Smile on entry even if overcome by smells of smoke, urine or worse and choose seating carefully, examine settee before sitting on baby, cat, nappy or other hazardous substances.

Scan the occupants of the room before jumping to conclusions. Any one of them could be your new child and never try to guess who the parents are. Sometimes they're not sure themselves! Also be gender aware, Ellis, Jordan, Jade and Kyle could be boys or girls. Remember to smile brightly at assembled relations and neighbours, potential customers and you may have even taught them.

Don't talk too loudly. Various family members are trying to watch Jeremy Kyle on the tele. In fact, when you do talk, bear in mind they may not be listening, they are too busy sussing you out. Try to engage with the child, sometimes tricky when they are glued to the tele with dummy firmly attached.

Never accept nourishment without having previous family knowledge and remember, heaven forbid you may need the loo. Stay safe with Tena Lady.

Be sensitive to timing. You will know when it's time to leave. Be on the lookout for signs of restlessness in threatening hoodie members of the family who having bunked off school specially and are currently swinging their legs menacingly having sat on the arm of your chair.

Do try to remember to take all your possessions with you. Running back for pens, specs or car keys does not give a good impression.

Big smiles on leaving. Brave wave and don't be tempted to dissolve into relieved hysterics until round the corner as Auntie Vi is curtain twitching two doors along and watching your every move!"

I did have had some hairy moments. A drug dealing dad, with minder standing by, once tried to ply me with wads of notes for the bairn's dinner. He was bringing up his son on his own and his little boy was the happiest most cared for little chap. Regular visits to an infamous family household where Auntie was serving life for murder was always a bit nerve racking, like Russian roulette, but we got away unscathed. That is until at the end of one year, when on the traditional annual outing to a children's farm, grandma, matriarch of the family, organised a wholesale shop lifting spree from the farm shop. Unfortunately, I was in charge and never gave a thought to the bags and picnic baskets that the parents were carrying round with them. On arriving back at the nursery, I was horrified by a call from the farm. The farm shop had been depleted and the next day many children proudly showed off tractors and animals "me ma has bought!" But I digress.

The last home visit was reserved traditionally for "Geordie" (name changed to protect identity), a prolific dad who never bothered to use the names of his many gorgeous children. He would arrive at the end of the day on his push bike shouting the immortal words "Haway Babbie!" and on one legendary occasion "Haway babbie it's

pissin doon!”. “Geordie” merited a visit most years and had to be prized away from his dubious private viewing by his long suffering but ever cheerful much better half.

“Torn that trash off “Geordie” it’s the teachas !”

It was the beginning of another great year of enjoyment working with gutsy families who despite hardships and challenges, remained cheerful and resilient. I was privileged to work for twenty years with them and to be accepted into their family lives.

Maggie Paczek

The Gosforth Wild Web Project

The Gosforth Wild Web project, made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, ran for two fantastic years, helping people all over our area get closer to the natural world on our doorstep.

Organised by the Natural History Society of Northumbria (NHSN), it wrapped up on 23 June with a lovely celebration at the Great North Museum: Hancock. Some of our own St. George’s congregation, who are members of NHSN, were there to enjoy the event—spot them in the photo!

The project collected over 32,000 records of local wildlife and included many fun nature activities with hundreds of schoolchildren. There were also citizen science walks, wildlife ID sessions, and community events like a ladybird safari in Jesmond Old Cemetery. Gosforth’s Wild Web has been a great way to explore, record and enjoy the amazing wildlife around us.

Kay Plumley



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The ability to recall people

The ability to recall people's faces after many years of not seeing them is not a condition itself, but rather a skill. It's often called super-recognition or having superior face recognition ability. People with this ability are sometimes referred to as "super-recognisers".

Brent Swinburne was working at the church summer fair in May this year, when he noticed a man sitting on the bench on the green near his stand. He thought that the man's face was familiar and eventually went across to him for a chat. He seemed to recognise him and recalled a name. Brent asked if the man was called Michael Jamieson. He was, and he and Brent had gone to the same school. Michael was 3 years younger. They hadn't seen one another for 74 years and yet Brent still recognised him. Sadly, Brent had to tell him his name. ['I must be looking very old' he thought]. He immediately recalled how on a school trip, they had walked 200 miles down the Rhine Valley, in Germany in 1951. To him, at the time, Brent must have been one of the big lads!

A few years ago, whilst touring Argentina, Ella and Brent went to Peru to visit Machu Picchu. While staying In Cusco, Brent got into conversation with two, more elderly, British backpackers, who turned out to be Geordies. One had just completed 30 years in the Met. Police and was returning to live in Northumberland. Brent thought that the other man had a familiar face. The man said that for the last 12 years he had run The Pack Horse Inn in Eglingham, near Bamburgh. Brent had, at that time, only ever been to it once and recalled talking to the manager and him telling Brent that he had only been there for four months. It was the same man. And extraordinarily, when they exchange names, it turned out that Brent used to employ his wife.

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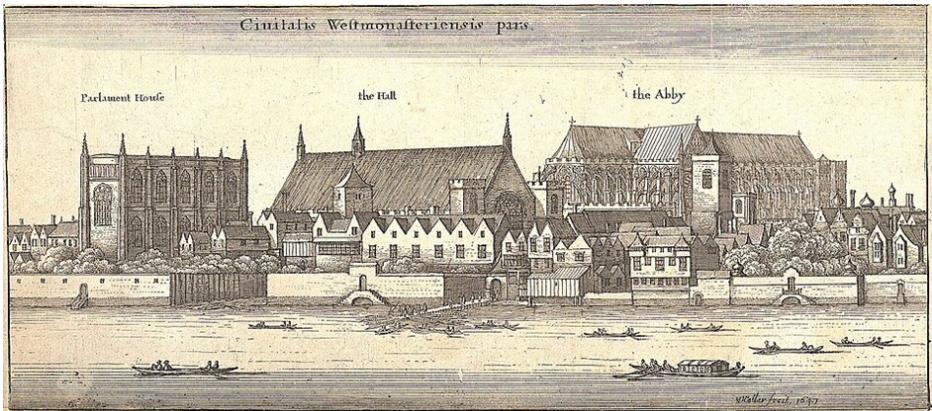
BOOK REVIEWS



The Lost Chapel of Westminster - How a Royal Chapel Became the House of Commons

By John Cooper (Head of Zeus - 2024)

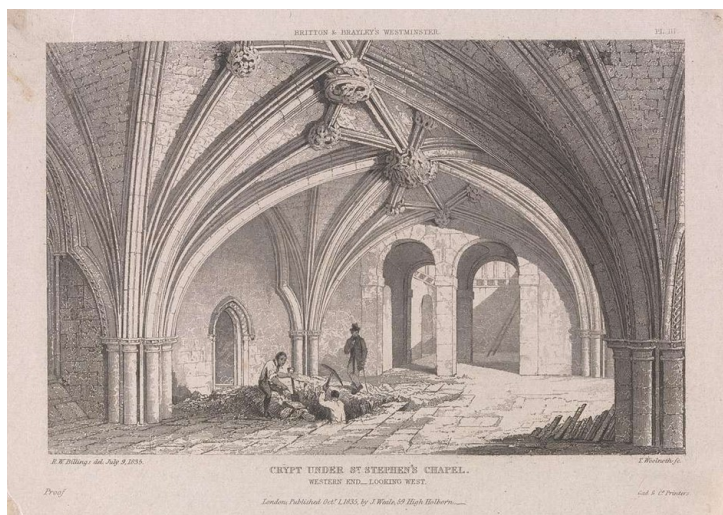
The Palace of Westminster, now generally called the Houses of Parliament, was in the Middle Ages the principal residence of the Kings of England. In 1292 Edward I began the building there of St Stephen's Chapel. He was probably seeking to upstage the King of France and the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris. The site was a relatively small one, lying between the south-east corner of Westminster Hall and the Thames. St Stephen's was only completed in 1348 by Edward III, just in time for the Black Death. Edward III founded a secular college of canons to serve in the chapel and pray for the souls of the dead.



Not being a monastic foundation, the college survived the Dissolution of the Monasteries, but it then succumbed in the reign of Edward VI to the Abolition of Chantries Act of 1547. By this time the Royal Family were no longer living in the Palace of Westminster having moved up the road to Whitehall, and the chapel was turned over into the debating chamber of the House of Commons. Like the present chamber it could not hold all the members at once: it was about the size of a lawn tennis court. This problem only increased with the admission of Scottish and later Irish members.

Panelling was fitted. Galleries were installed and later enlarged. The roof was replaced by Sir Christopher Wren. To accommodate Irish members in the early years of the 19th century the building was further remodelled unsympathetically. Then, on 16th October 1834, the Houses of Parliament, with the exception of Westminster Hall, were burnt down.

The Houses of Parliament were rebuilt, but not St Stephen's Chapel. Alfred Barry, grandson and biographer of the architect in charge of the rebuilding, Sir Charles Barry, claimed that the chapel was so badly damaged that restoration was impossible. The author seems doubtful about this assertion. A painting of the ruined chapel by George Belton Moore, which appears as an illustration in the book, shows that much of the walls survived. The designs for rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament went out to competition and at least one of the unsuccessful entries, that of Anthony Salvin, a better architect than Barry, and who later worked at Alnwick Castle, shows a restored St Stephen's Chapel.



The former undercroft of the chapel survived the fire: it had previously been converted into the Speaker's dining room. The undercroft is now a chapel: our grandson was christened there last year.

The author of this short book on the chapel and its history is

Professor of History at the University of York and is leading a research project into the chapel.

There are surprisingly few images of the chapel and really none of the interior as a chapel. The building appears in Wenceslaus Hollar's famous engraving of the City of Westminster of 1647 where it is marked as "Parlament House". The chapel was tall for its length. It might be said to look a bit like the chapel of Eton College or a trun-

cated version of the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, but being more than a hundred years earlier than Henry VI's two colleges, it was built in the decorated rather than the perpendicular style.

With the help of inter alia accounts for its building and work done by antiquarians and artists at the time of its remodelling in the first decade of the 19th century and after the fire, it has been possible to work out what the interior looked like soon after it was completed. Such reconstruction appears in two illustrations in the book but more can be seen on the Virtual St Stephen's website to which the author refers readers. As one might expect the interior was highly decorated and colourful with much stained glass and painting. Across the middle was a rood screen. I would encourage those interested to visit the website: even I was able to master the interactive panorama.

This is an interesting book, although I was a bit dismayed that the author (or perhaps his editors) felt it necessary at one point to explain what the Adoration of the Magi was.

Christopher Vane

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Cycling With Purpose

I'm going to be cycling 300 miles in July to help raise money for Cancer Research UK. You may or may not know why I cycle quite so much. As well as enjoying it, the exercise produces endorphins which help me with the side effects of the cancer treatment which has cured me. Please show your

support and help fund life-saving research by donating to my page and help devise cures for other forms of cancer too.

<https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/grahams-giving-page-675>

Graham Rutt



Church of England Calendar July 2025

1	<i>Henry, John, and Henry Venn the younger, Priests, Evangelical Divines, 1797, 1813 and 1873</i>
3	Thomas the Apostle
6	<i>Thomas More, Scholar, and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, Reformation Martyrs, 1535</i>
11	Benedict of Nursia, Abbot of Monte Cassino, Father of Western Monasticism, c.550
14	John Keble, Priest, Tractarian, Poet, 1866
15	Swithun, Bishop of Winchester, c.862 <i>Bonaventure, Friar, Bishop, Teacher of the Faith, 1274</i>
16	<i>Osmund, Bishop of Salisbury, 1099</i>
18	<i>Elizabeth Ferard, first Deaconess of the Church of England, Founder of the Community of St Andrew, 1883</i>
19	Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, and his sister Macrina, Deaconess, Teachers of the Faith, c.394 and c.379
20	<i>Margaret of Antioch, Martyr, 4th century</i> <i>Bartolomé de las Casas, Apostle to the Indies, 1566</i>
22	Mary Magdalene
23	<i>Bridget of Sweden, Abbess of Vadstena, 1373</i>
25	James the Apostle
26	Anne and Joachim, Parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary
27	<i>Brooke Foss Westcott, Bishop of Durham, Teacher of the Faith, 1901</i>
29	Mary, Martha and Lazarus, Companions of Our Lord
30	William Wilberforce, Social Reformer, Olaudah Equiano and Thomas Clarkson, Anti-Slavery Campaigners, 1833, 1797 and 1846
31	<i>Ignatius of Loyola, Founder of the Society of Jesus, 1556</i>

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Church of England Calendar August 2025

4	<i>Jean-Baptiste Vianney, Curé d'Ars, Spiritual Guide, 1859</i>
5	Oswald, King of Northumbria, Martyr, 642
6	The Transfiguration of Our Lord
7	<i>John Mason Neale, Priest, Hymn Writer, 1866</i>
8	Dominic, Priest, Founder of the Order of Preachers, 1221
9	Mary Sumner, Founder of the Mothers' Union, 1921
10	Laurence, Deacon at Rome, Martyr, 258
11	Clare of Assisi, Founder of the Minoresses (Poor Clares), 1253 <i>John Henry Newman, Priest, Tractarian, 1890</i>
13	Jeremy Taylor, Bishop of Down and Connor, Teacher of the Faith, 1667 <i>Florence Nightingale, Nurse, Social Reformer, 1910</i> <i>Octavia Hill, Social Reformer, 1912</i>
14	<i>Maximilian Kolbe, Friar, Martyr, 1941</i>
15	The Blessed Virgin Mary
20	Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, Teacher of the Faith, 1153 <i>William and Catherine Booth, Founders of the Salvation Army, 1912 and 1890</i>
24	Bartholomew the Apostle
27	Monica, mother of Augustine of Hippo, 387
28	Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, Teacher of the Faith, 430
29	The Beheading of John the Baptist
30	John Bunyan, Spiritual Writer, 1688
31	Aidan, Bishop of Lindisfarne, Missionary, 651

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.

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grenfelljoan@yahoo.com

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

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Initial enquiries should be directed to the vicar, Rev. Debbie Loughran, 07776 922580

email: Rev_debbie@hotmail.com

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Website: www.stgeorgesjesmond.org.uk

Facebook: St-Georges-Church-Jesmond

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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Warm Summer Sun by Mark Twain

Warm summer sun,
Shine kindly here,
Warm southern wind,
Blow softly here.
Green sod above,
Lie light, lie light.
Good night, dear heart,
Good night, good night.

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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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