CONNECTIONS



The Community Benefice Magazine of Richmond with Hudswell, Downholme and Marske

November '26

Price £1.80

ACE Gold Award Winner 2026

THE BENEFICE OF RICHMOND WITH HUDSWELL, DOWNHOLME AND MARSKE

www.richmondhudswellparish.org.uk
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CHURCH SERVICES — St MARY THE VIRGIN, RICHMOND with Hudswell

8.00 a.m.	Holy Communion		Every Sunday
10.00 a.m.	Parish Communion		Every Sunday apart from1st Sunday
	Morning Worship	(no communion)	Every 1st Sunday
4.00 p.m.	Café Church		3rd Sunday (every 2 mths — Jan, March etc)
	Fun-Key Church		Last Sunday each month
6.30 p.m.	Choral Evensong		Second Sunday each month
9.15 a.m.	Holy Communion		Every Wednesday

CHURCH SERVICES AT HOLY TRINITY CHAPEL, MARKET PLACE , RICHMOND

10.30 a.m. Holy Communion — Every Thursday

PARISH OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, DOWNHOLME

CHURCH OFFICERS

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CHURCH SERVICES AT DOWNHOLME

9.30 a.m.	**Morning Prayer**	**Every second Sunday**
9.30 a.m.	**Holy Communion**	**Every fourth Sunday**

THE PARISH OF ST EDMUNDS, MARSKE

CHURCH OFFICERS

Church Warden	Ruth Tindale	(01748) 823371	Skelton Lodge, Marske
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PCC Secretary	Andra Sison-Ham	(07753) 842246	andrakrumins@gmail.com

CHURCH SERVICES AT MARSKE

11.00 a.m.	**Holy Communion**	**Every Sunday, except 2nd (& 5th) Sunday**
11.00 a.m.	**Morning Prayer**	**Every 2nd (& 5th) Sunday**

EDITORIAL from connections.ed24@gmail.com

And so to November. A month of mixed emotions, for, as well as thinking about Remembrance, it also brings us Revd Martin's retirement after 8½ years of devoted service to our parishes and community. His quiet contribution has been immense, but more of that later. Suffice it to say that he will be sorely missed and, when he leaves, will take with him our heartfelt thanks and very best wishes for the future.

This issue begins with Martin's final message to us all, closely followed by a reflection upon his time here and an appreciation of his service by Peter Trewby. We then have an update on the Passion Play preparations, followed by a piece on Flowers of Remembrance by Steve Erskine. As you may have noticed, from the front cover, I'm then pleased to report our success in this year's ACE magazine competition, while Jim & Jan Jack pursue their pilgrimage theme on a visit to Walsingham in Norfolk. John Pritchard's Hard Question this month tackles the phrase 'Born Again Christian', while Judith MacLeod has been on her travels again with a visit to Appleby Church to see if we can learn anything from what they do there.

As usual, Jim Jack brings us up-to-date with the 'doings' of the Friends during this busy Autumn period, and there are details of the forthcoming Quiz Night and a repeat visit of the Royal Northern Sinfonia at the very beginning of next month. Carole McCormack relates a totally unexpected Surprised by Joy experience on a visit to France many years ago, and, if you haven't heard of the 'Exploring Faith' group, Rachel Walker tells us more and invites you to join them. Finally, we have a contribution from Arwen Hoskins about the 'Make-a-Wish' Foundation — this month's charity; a poem about Gratitude from George Alderson, which is also appropriate for Remembrance; and an article about Toilet Twinning from Christine Porter. Let it never be said that we don't bring you variety!

With your magazine this month, you should also receive an envelope with an invitation to subscribe to ***Connections*** for 2027. We do hope you will sign up again, and even encourage others to become subscribers. Your kind support is very much appreciated.

John McCormack

Cover photo by Wendy Pritchard
Remembrance poppies on Trinity Chapel

Martin's Message
November 2026



'The Gate of the Year'

The poem with that title is often quoted at the turn of a calendar year. I mention it now because this month we reach the turn of the Church's year. 22nd November, the last Sunday before a new year begins on the 29th, Advent Sunday, will also be my last Sunday as your rector.

We will then 'tread into the unknown' – Anna and I as we enter retirement, and you as the vacancy commences. But neither of these are really unknown: Anna and I have observed many people discovering retirement to be fulfilling in new ways, and those of you who recall the last three – or even four – vacancies will remember them as times of new growth.

So, knowing ourselves to be safely held and led by 'the Hand of God', I would like to take this opportunity as I prepare to leave to thank you for your love, support and encouragement during my time with you. And having spent my early years in Kirby Hill, my arrival here in 2018 felt very much like a homecoming. That sense was deepened by the warmth of the welcome you gave me, a warmth that has endured and that I shall never forget.

I have greatly enjoyed worshipping, serving and living alongside you. Thank you for all that I have learnt from you about the faith we share. Something we all learn from experience is that in God's time the past, present and future are all intermingled – as in Holy Communion when the past is brought into the present, and Christ who lives in us and we in him, assures us he will remain with us always. As you and I pass through the 'Gate of the Year,' all that you mean to me shall never leave me – and we will very much remain fellow pilgrims, fellow travellers along the Way.

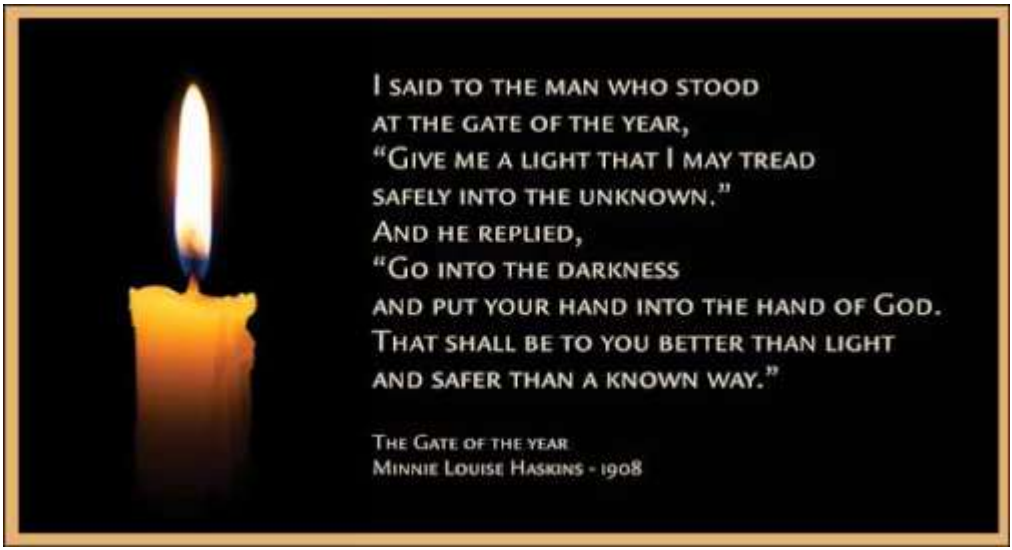
With the strength of your faith and the rich blend of your gifts and skills, I know that the future of the Benefice is safe in *your* hands. When my successor arrives, I have no doubt that s/he will feel as blessed as I did to have been called to serve amongst you. The 'landscape' of the role of rector may be shifting, but it is doing so amidst the unchanging and outstanding natural beauty of community life here.

As I have previously written, the role of rector is not 'mine' to hold on to: it is a privilege that has been lent to me, and now I feel called to lay it down and hand it on. The vocation of priesthood, however, is one that is never laid down and I hope to be able to continue to serve as a priest for many years to come. For now, however, there will be a change of pace, a shift of focus, and space in which to discern the nature of my next ministry.

Anna and I will be moving to Borrowby, between Northallerton and Thirsk – an easy commute for Anna to Ripon Cathedral, where her curacy as a Self-Supporting Minister will continue for another 2-3 years. Looking ahead, wherever she and I end up serving – whether individually or together – we would like to think it will not be too far from Richmond with Hudswell and Downholme and Marske.

With my love and with every blessing, now and always,

Martin



ANNOUNCEMENT

THE 200 CLUB

Congratulations to our latest Winner

October — no: 102 — Gill Percival



AN APPRECIATION AND FAREWELL TO MARTIN

A reflection by **PETER TREWBY**



It must have been pre-destined. Nine years ago, cycling from Edinburgh to London, Martin "bumped into" Scott Lunn, our then Reader who was also on his bike. Scott told Martin about the vacant Rector's post in Richmond. Martin applied, was appointed and the rest is history. It seems like yesterday and at the time, and even now, seemed just too good to be true.

Before Richmond, for nine years Martin was vicar of Hersham near Guildford, and before ordination worked as an engineer, his first degree being in mechanical engineering. His pre-training gap-year included time in Africa, which he said opened his eyes to the Anglican principle of unity in diversity. Martin was in fact born in South Korea, but spent his formative years in Kirby Hill where his father was Vicar, so North Yorkshire is clearly where he belongs and we have been so grateful to have been the recipient of his service and ministry over the past 8½ years.



SS Peter & Felix, Kirby Hill

We didn't make it easy for him. Shortly after starting, he was thrown into the maelstrom of Covid. The church was shut. Services were relayed online initially, with Martin in his kitchen traipsing up and down the stairs seeking a better Wi-Fi connection. We were so grateful when we were allowed to open the church again, but do you remember "social distancing" with those "do not sit here notices" on which people always tended to sit? And the regular cleaning of the front pews every day. Martin was very supportive in enabling us to keep the church open; many other churches remained shut and he forced through the permissions necessary for the installation of our audio-visual system, which was a blessing at that time. There was stress and anxiety, but we got through it with Martin's help and with no known adverse health consequences.

During this time in Richmond, Martin has mentored and supported two curates, Paul and Lorna; a licensed-lay-minister-in-training, Sharon; and put St Marys firmly on the map as a "sending church", being proud to be associated with Gillian, Scott and Anna's progressions to the priesthood. Under Martin's leadership, so much good has come out of St Marys. As well as looking after our Benefice, he has weathered the stress of being the Area Dean responsible for clergy and their well-being in 28 parishes distributed across 10 benefices. It was quite right that in 2023 he was made an Honorary Canon in the Diocese of Leeds.

Much has altered at St Marys under Martin's tenure. An annual AwayDay has been established and a Parish Vision Team looks optimistically towards the future. Martin has supported and encouraged the Church magazine Connections, joint winner this year and recipient of the coveted Gold award for church-based magazines.

No church fabric remains the same for long. As well as the audio-visual system, we now have floodlighting, a disabled access pathway and car park (thank you Martin for letting us use some of your garden). As a result, the church has regained its place as a community asset for events run by the Church and by the Friends of St Marys, as well as for outside events. All this thanks to Martin's guidance and support.



Martin's induction as Rector of Richmond with Hudswell, Downholme and Marske
27th April 2018 with Bishop Nick and Archdeacon Beverley

Personally, I have valued and appreciated Martin for his leadership, quiet and sincere faith and spirituality and, on hearing he is leaving, so many have expressed similar views to me. He is well known in the town and its associated organizations including our schools, the Guilds, the Town Council and the military. He will be a difficult act to follow.

Martin came as a single man, but leaves happily married to Anna; and we will miss them both so much. We'll also miss Maverick, Martin's cat. How will Maverick cope — how will we cope? We wish them well and will pray for them as they embark on the next stage of their journey. We ask that they pray for us as with God's help we continue to forge forward in what are now, but probably always have and will be, difficult times.



Thank you Martin for devoting the last 8½ years of your life to St Mary's.

Peter Trewby

Post script: There will be the opportunity to say goodbye to Martin at his final service in St Marys on 29th November, but also at a reception in the Town Hall on Saturday 28th November 7.00pm—9.00pm. We need to know numbers for the Town Hall, so please let one of the Richmond Churchwardens know if you wish to attend: email: trewbyp@gmail.com or wendypritchard@btinternet.com .

Thank you.

CONNECTIONS 2027

With this issue, you should have received an envelope containing a letter inviting you to subscribe for another year to this award-winning magazine. We do hope you will wish to do so, for we value your support and have kept the price the same as before. Please complete and return the form in the envelope provided, before Christmas preparations overtake you.

PASSION PLAY UPDATE

The organisers of next year's Passion Play in Richmond — on Good Friday 2027— have been very busy of late and plans are well advanced. There is so much more to do, however, for which lots of volunteers are needed. Can you help?

The Passion Play for Richmond team have moved into the last six months of planning and the Technical Group have started meeting. It's not so much 'lights, camera, action', as sound, stitching and casting. By the time of reading this, we may well have completed the casting, but the costume team have approximately 70 costumes to make; we have some very specific props to source and we need volunteers. Lots of volunteers. Our mantra is to do this well and do it safely. With a cast of 70 and an anticipated audience of about 1000, we are keen to hear from people experienced at marshalling events and those who are happy to wear hi-viz and help.

We are almost half-way there with the fundraising. Our Just Giving Account can be accessed via the website — www.richmondpassionplay.org.uk — and this is also the best way to sign up to help in any capacity. We also now have a Facebook page and Instagram to help you follow the news. And if you pray, we ask for fair weather and the funds we need to complete this important production.



Steph Williamson

FLOWERS OF REMEMBRANCE

For over a century, the wearing of a red poppy has been a symbol of remembrance in this country, but where did the tradition originate? **STEVE ERSKINE** investigated and also found what other countries do.

The poppy is the enduring symbol of remembrance, and it is strongly linked with Armistice Day, but the poppy's origin as a popular symbol of remembrance lies in the landscapes of the First World War.

Poppies were a common sight, especially on the Western Front. They flourished in the soil churned up by the fighting and shelling. The flower provided Canadian doctor John McCrae with inspiration for his poem 'In Flanders Fields', which he wrote whilst serving in Ypres in 1915. It was first published in Punch, having been rejected by The Spectator. In 1918, in response to McCrae's poem, American humanitarian Moina Michael wrote 'And now the Torch and Poppy Red, we wear in honour of our dead…' She campaigned to make the poppy a symbol of remembrance of those who had died in the war.



John Macrae

Artificial poppies were first sold in Britain in 1921 to raise money for the Earl Haig Fund in support of ex-servicemen and the families of those who had died in the conflict. They were supplied by Anna Guérin, who had been manufacturing the flowers in France to raise money for war orphans. Selling poppies proved so popular that in 1922 the British Legion founded a factory – staffed by disabled ex-servicemen – to produce its own and it continues to do so today.



Anna Guérin

While the red poppy is universally recognized in the UK and the Commonwealth as a symbol of military remembrance and support for veterans, other nations utilize distinct floral or historical emblems for similar purposes.

HOW DO OTHER COUNTRIES USE FLOWERS AS COMMEMORATION?

France: A blue cornflower represents solidarity and support for veterans, war victims, and victims of terrorism. Like the poppy in Flanders fields, the hardy cornflower was often the only sign of life that bloomed amidst the mud and desolation of the Western Front trenches.

Italy: Adopted the Forget-me-not to commemorate the end of World War I, National Unity, and Armed Forces Day.

Serbia: Wears the Natalia's Ramonda flower to symbolize resilience and the country's resurrection following heavy casualties in World War I.

Ireland: Wears the Easter Lily to commemorate the 1916 Easter Rising and fallen republicans, alongside the red poppy for international remembrance in certain contexts.

The Netherlands: Observes a strong tradition of wearing the White Carnation during Veteran's Day to honour living veterans and those who served.

Sweden & Finland: While not a war memorial, the May Flower is a major charitable lapel flower sold by schoolchildren every spring to raise funds for child welfare.

New Zealand: Poppy Day usually falls on the Friday before Anzac Day, which is commemorated on 25 April. The reason is a historical one – the ship carrying the poppies from France for the first Poppy Day in 1921 came too late for them to be used in November's Armistice Day.

Japan: The official flower of remembrance for war dead is the chrysanthemum (especially the white variety).

Nepal: The Gurkhas of Nepal share the red poppy as the overarching flower of remembrance for war dead. While the poppy serves as the universal emblem, specific flowers and plants hold distinct cultural significance in their native Nepal. For example, Marigolds are often used in wreaths and garlands during Nepalese and Indian memorial services, honouring the historical contributions of soldiers from the wider subcontinent.



Earl Haig's poppy, laid in 1921

Paul notes in Romans 14 that believers should be mindful of how their choices affect others. If wearing a specific symbol causes confusion, misrepresents the faith, or offends the conscience of a fellow believer, scripture advises exercising caution and love. The wearing of one of Gods bountiful blooms, as a symbol of remembrance, cuts across faiths and is a choice which all can agree and share.

Steve Erskine

CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

After achieving the Silver Award a couple of years ago, we entered this bi-annual competition once again in the hope of further success. Your editor had his fingers crossed!

Regular readers of this magazine may recall that a couple of years ago I ventured down to London one late-September Saturday to attend the annual meeting of the Association for Church Editors. This is an organisation that was formed in 1999 to bring together all those involved in the production of Church magazines to help them improve the quality of what they are offering. It is open to all denominations throughout the UK and abroad and currently has almost 200 members. As well as producing a monthly newsletter with ideas for inclusion and tips for improvement, it also runs an annual competition, alternating between those produced in black-and-white and those created with colour printing. Members are encouraged to enter their magazines into this competition and, having done so for the first time two years ago, we were delighted when ***Connections*** gained the Silver Award in 2024.

This year it was the turn of colour magazines once again so, earlier in the year, we entered the required two editions into the competition. We had taken note of some of the previous feedback and, having made some of the recommended presentational changes e.g. borderless covers and some 'tweaks' to the lay-out, hoped that we might enjoy some success again this time. At least I knew where I was going this time, so managed to find the meeting, in Central Hall Westminster, without difficulty. There I learned that there had been 63 entries but, looking at the 'swaps' table, where members had been invited to share some spare copies with other attendees, my impression was that the general standard was higher than two years ago. Consequently, I wasn't particularly hopeful.



Methodist Central Hall, Westminster

As before, all the entries had been read by a committee of judges and scored against 5 criteria:

- Clarity of Christian Message
- Cover design
- Layout & Structure
- Use of Graphics
- Appeal to intended readership



Receiving the Award from ACE Chair

The winners in each category received an award, then there were Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for the best overall scores. The actual scores weren't revealed but, when it came to the Gold award, apparently there was a tie – '***The Witness'*** from an Evangelical Church in Wandsworth, London and our very own '***Connections'***. You can imagine my delight when I heard that the judges thought that '*there were lots of well written interesting articles to appeal to the community as well as churchgoers and there were excellent quality photos with captions'*. It gave me great pleasure to be told by the Chair that we were worthy winners, so I was pleased to receive the award on behalf of the whole editorial team – Jim Jack, Judith MacLeod, Carole McCormack, Christine Porter and John Pritchard. Without their efforts month after month, and indeed those of all our contributors, our magazine would not be what it is.



The John King Trophy

What did we receive? A framed certificate, which will be displayed in church; a small wooden plaque as a keepsake; and the John King trophy – an antique silver scallop shell for use in baptism – but this will have to be returned next year. You may have noticed that our front cover has been amended to celebrate our success, and it is very gratifying to have received national recognition. Do please tell others about what has been achieved and encourage them to become regular readers too. It would be great to increase our circulation, but, better still, perhaps it might encourage more people to contribute articles or ideas for future editions. We'd love to extend our pool of contributors.

John McCormack

TO BE A PILGRIM — OR JUST A TOURIST?

Their journey to Richmond over, **Jan and Jim Jack** are still taking a breather before deciding whether to move on (Richmond to Ripon — in chunks) or look at something completely different. Their experiences in following the Camino Ingles from Finchale, however, and Christine Porter's recent article on pilgrimage, together with a recent TV series on the same topic, has kept the pot quietly bubbling. So it was that a holiday in Norfolk in July put them within easy reach of Walsingham and its shrines. What about a one-day visit to this English centre of pilgrimage?

Can I say at the outset that we have been warmed by the interest shown in the story of our journey along the Camino Ingles. It is genuinely a delight to know that it has created such interest — but was it a pilgrimage or just a nice walk? The fact that we have not reached a religious centre of pilgrimage, and that it has not been a continuous journey, probably are big minuses. The 'plusses' of a pilgrimage-type experience have been the visits to churches along the way and taking time to enjoy and appreciate more the opportunity for quiet reflection and prayer which these spaces offer. Also the time to talk, to think, to appreciate the beauty of nature around us in detail; the time away from mainstream bustle to reflect on the lives and times of people who have gone before; and also meeting new people would all count as part of a pilgrimage experience.

So Walsingham — 'the English Nazareth', as Christine explained in the September issue — was a natural place to aim for when we were in Norfolk. But why Walsingham?

The story starts with Lady Richeldis de Faverches, a devout widow who owned the Manor of Walsingham Parva. We are told that she experienced three visions of the Virgin Mary, who was said to have transported Richeldis spiritually to Nazareth to show her the house where Mary had learned of her destiny from the Angel Gabriel. Richeldis' mission was to measure this holy house and build an exact replica in Norfolk. This would enable pilgrims in England to experience a piece of Nazareth, without having to make the hazardous journey to Nazareth itself. (It is worth recalling that, historically, this was a time of great interest in the Holy Land, in pilgrimage as penance, and also the beginning of the period of Crusades.)



Shrine of the Holy House of Nazareth today

The project proved problematic. The original building was inappropriately sited on marshy ground, but, so the legend goes, during a night of vigil and prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary by Richeldis, the replica Holy House was miraculously reconstructed overnight on a better site.

What is certain is that the family retained guardianship of the wooden structure which was the Holy House replica. This was followed by construction of a Priory at Walsingham, which passed into the care of the Augustinian order of monks during the 12th century. The building, when complete, housed the wooden Holy House, with the addition of a beautiful carved statue of Our Lady of Walsingham. It became a shrine of increasing popularity and wealth and certainly seems to have become the English 'Nazareth', with people making pilgrimage from many areas to pray on the spot where Richeldis had her visions of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



The Slipper Chapel today

Amongst the many pilgrims over the next 500 years, six sovereigns came to visit, but the seventh (Henry VIII) came to plunder and destroy, taking much of the wealth and burning the famed statue. The site lay derelict until the Slipper Chapel (a 14th Century addition to the priory) was restored in 1894, having been a poor house, a forge, a barn and even a byre. Remembering that up to its destruction the style of worship was Roman Catholic, the restored building became the focus of a Roman Catholic pilgrimage in 1897. It is this site of the original shrine which is the Roman Catholic National Shrine today and lies about 1-2 miles outside Walsingham itself.



Father Hope Patten

In 1921, however, the newly appointed Anglican Vicar of Walsingham, Father Hope Patten instigated the production of a new statue of Our Lady of Walsingham based upon an image on the seal of the medieval Priory. In the year following his appointment, this statue was set up in the Parish Church of St Mary, and It soon became a centre for people of Anglican persuasion to gather round the statue to request her help and support through their prayers.

This marked the start of steady growth of the church as a focus of pilgrimage. New buildings followed, which included accommodation for pilgrims. Then a new

Holy House was built in 1931 and enlarged in 1938 to take a form which still exists today. Additional accommodation for pilgrims with special needs (St Jospeh's) and then more accommodation, gardens, a refectory and conference facilities were added. So the Anglican shrine which we were to visit was much changed and developed from its original format, driven by the numbers of pilgrims and other visitors and is separate from the Catholic shrine which stands on the original site chosen in response to Lady Richeldis' vision. Now Walsingham sits alongside Rome, Jerusalem and Santiago as an internationally recognised centre of pilgrimage



Gardens and pathway leading to the church containing the Holy House



Water pump and main street Walsingham

So, with that rather lengthy, but hopefully helpful, explanation of the reason for Walsingham's importance as a centre of pilgrimage, we got into the car and drove there! No penance here I'm afraid, not even public transport, simply a desire to visit and see for ourselves what others making a genuine pilgrimage experience.

But back to our visit. Much of this history we didn't know when we set out, but, having parked and walked through some surprisingly quiet streets with a fine collection of old buildings on either side, we headed for the Visitor Centre. Many houses on each side of the road displayed some sort of icon in the window and inscriptions in chalk above the door — Epiphany Door Chalking, of which more in the next magazine.

Our only previous experiences of visiting a shrine of significance were two visits to Lourdes. On each occasion we were moved by the quiet and hopeful dignity with which people queued to pray at the shrine, many in wheelchairs and even

hospital-beds pushed by friends and supporters after long journeys to pray for God's help in their tribulation.

We intensely disliked the rampant commercialism in Lourdes town, however, which we felt was akin to a seaside town, with flashing shop signs, windows crammed with rather untasteful memorabilia at high prices, including souvenir water bottles allegedly containing holy water and statues of the Virgin Mary with flashing lights built in — if you've never been, I hope you still get the picture of Lourdes as we saw it.

Well, thankfully, little of this in Walsingham. Two small souvenir shops at the top of the street where pilgrims, on one of the three large pilgrimage days every year, walk in procession to the Anglican shrine.

The Visitor Centre itself was very well laid out and told the story related above simply and well. We were greeted warmly by a volunteer guide, who answered our questions knowledgeably, even though she had probably had such questions many times before. Our unique question was 'Is Father Howard Stoker still in the area?' Some may remember that the former curate at St Mary's went to Holt in Norfolk and remains there to this day, with the added responsibility of being a Guardian (Trustee or Governor) of the Shrine



And so into the beautifully kept garden area, with an open-air altar under a sail -like structure (right) at the top of the rise. On a separate rise nearby stand three crosses. Going down a sloping path to the right brought us to a small chapel and thence to the Shrine itself, with representations of the Stations of the Cross set into the brick work alongside the path on the way. Although this was early August, there were few people around, usually solitary, apart from a small group of cleaners enjoying their mid-morning break in the quietness of the garden.

The entry to the church itself led to a welcomingly light area, sparsely furnished in light-oak with full-height windows admitting daylight to a single-storey area running the length of the church. On the left, a few steps down, was a well uncovered during excavations in the 1930's, from which water could be drawn in small cardboard cups, akin to those accompanying water coolers in modern offices. (Donations please — £5, £10, £15, £20, £25 suggested.)

Moving into the extraordinarily quiet and reverend area of the church of the shrine itself, there are a number of side chapels to the left, including one to St Cuthbert.



The centre of the church which contains the Holy House has no daylight, with moveable pews in the centre and the focus on a brightly lit and painted altar (right). This is the focal point of the shrine. Here several services are held each day. Behind the back wall of the church is another darkened area, where candles can be lit in memory of loved ones and messages can be written or printed using an available computer on heart-shaped cards to be hung on wires running the full length of the darkened space. (Donations please — £5, £10, £15, £20, £25 suggested.) The only illumination here is from the tea-light-like votive candles. (Donations please — £5, £10, £15, £20, £25 suggested.) Here we found the 1922 statue of our Lady of Walsingham. This whole central area was serene and peaceful and amazingly quiet, giving visitors like us an environment where personal silence, thought, reflection and prayer can take place, respecting the request for silence proclaimed on notices on the walls.

Eventually we left this unique place to adjourn to the excellent refectory/café, where we sat outside to reflect on our morning over a coffee and scone (one between two and cut into three layers — a particular skill which Jan possesses!)

The whole shrine was most impressive and peaceful, thoughtfully presented and to a very high quality. And yet, and yet…. Perhaps we came as tourists, akin to a visit to a stately home, so we could not find ourselves totally engaged with the experience as pilgrims. It felt as if it was designed to look nice, rather than to be 'used', may be a way of summing it up. Clearly, large sums of money had been spent on creating this beautiful place, but unlike with a number of old buildings, there was no feeling for us of awe and wonder. I was also somewhat perturbed that the requested donations for many items of prayer felt a bit commercial, when even the smallest sum may be beyond the sensible reach of some people.

So it was that we left admiring the place, having enjoyed the quietness and peace, but we departed as tourists rather than pilgrims. Perhaps if we had walked, or been part of a pilgrimage, our thoughts would have been different. Nevertheless, a worthwhile experience and a nudge to visit Father Stoker in his parish on the following Sunday … and to plan our next walk.

Jim Jack



Wednesday 2 December / 7.30pm

Royal Northern Sinfonia Winter Tour

by candlelight at St Mary the Virgin Richmond

Music to warm up a winter's night by
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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

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HARD QUESTIONS

We sometimes hear disparaging comments about 'born-again Christians' in the media. What's the truth behind that phrase? **JOHN PRITCHARD** looks into it.

Isn't the phrase 'Born Again' a real turn-off?

It certainly seems so. The way that 'born-again Christians' is used in popular media as a disparaging description suggests that such Christians are seen as pathetic, unintelligent believers. Evangelical supporters of a certain orange President with yellow hair are often tarred with this brush. The phrase is usually said in a supercilious way that dismisses such people at a stroke. But is that fair?

- Well, the phrase is entirely biblical for a start. In John 3 we have an extended discussion between Jesus and Nicodemus, a Pharisee clearly searching for something more from his religion, and Jesus tells him he must be 'born anew.' The best translation from the original Greek is probably 'born from above' i.e. born from the activity of God. Nicodemus initially takes the phrase literally, as if Jesus is saying he needs to be born from his mother a second time, and Jesus says he's speaking metaphorically (not that he uses that term!), but nevertheless 'no-one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and spirit' – that is, having a spiritual rebirth.

- One of the problems with the phrase 'born again' is that it's used most often by those with a more fundamentalist faith, who insist that there's only one way (their way) to become a Christian. This involves a radical conversion experience that can be timed and dated and brandished as the entry qualification to the Kingdom. If you can't demonstrate that this has happened to you, then you'd better come back when you can. As ever, it's the extreme versions that give sensible concepts a bad name.



- As I hope you'd expect me to say, there are in fact many more subtle ways to be 'born again' in our faith. Many people simply grow up in the faith and mature as believers over the years. A majority perhaps have a time in their lives when things fall into place spiritually, possibly through an experience of love or pain, or a desire to explore, or an encounter with 'the beyond in our midst.' That leaves a minority who have a dramatic conversion, when their life is transformed at a rally or a course and they make a commitment to follow Christ with heart and soul.
- But the various ways we can 'enter the Kingdom of God', the new experience of God's love, forgiveness and life, mustn't hide from us the importance of, in some way, being 'born anew.' We can trundle along in our faith, and even our church-going, and only have caught occasional glimpses of the richness and splendour of Christian faith and discipleship. There's more. There's always more to discover of God, of grace, of love, of worship, of service in the world, day by day. We never 'arrive'; we're always journeying 'to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.' (Ephesians 4.13)
- Perhaps the crux of it is that we need to be 'born anew' every day, not just once in a lifetime. The phrase is one I treasure as showing what the Holy Spirit can do in me, making me new, but I want it to be happening all the time. Even though once, at university, it all came alive and I've been following Jesus ever since.

John Pritchard



ALL ARE WELCOME

This is the strap-line of St Mary's, and we hope we live up to it. There is always room for improvement, however, so **JUDITH MacLEOD** has taken it upon herself to visit other churches and see if there is anything that we can learn from them.

The theme of this piece is "welcome". Since I needed a neat title, I was very pleased with Lorna's choice of opening hymn for today (11th October): 'Let us build a house', which has the welcome words in the chorus.

For several months in the last year, we has been re-appraising how we welcome worshippers and visitors to our church. On Sunday mornings at 10:00am, teams of church members meet and greet people on arrival, offer them a pew sheet and show them where to sit if they are new to the church. Refreshments are served after the service and new people are encouraged to join in. There is also a welcome leaflet available in the church for anyone who wants to know more. For those who do not stay for refreshments, Martin, Lorna or the presiding priest stands by the entrance door to have a chat, if they wish, on their way out. For those who visit the church outside service times, there is a prayer area under "Ruth's Window" in the south aisle.

In early August I visited Appleby-in-Westmoreland with the remit of considering the quality of the welcome in churches other than ours and to discover whether there is anything more that we could be doing. All that I knew about Appleby was that it is famous for its annual horse fair and that I liked the name because of its association with the word apple – 'apple-place', founded as a Danish settlement in 920.



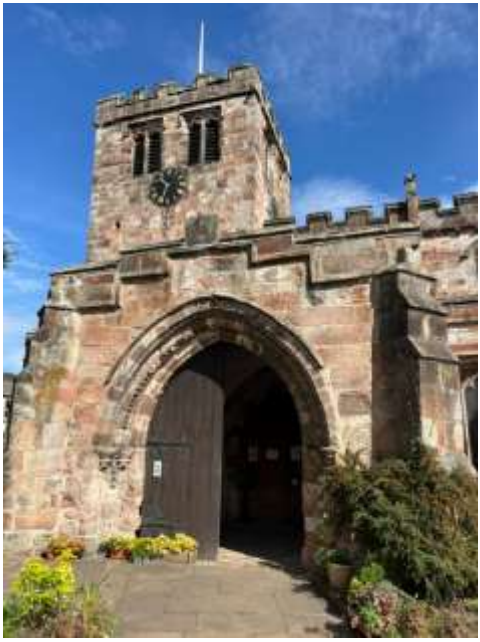
To make a proper day out, we drove to Settle to catch the train running on the very scenic Settle-Carlisle line. Both the platforms and the waiting room are beautifully maintained.

Settle Station and



The Waiting Room

We arrived at Appleby station, which is perched on a hill, some 40 minutes later and walked down to the town centre. Appleby is a delightful town of about 3000 inhabitants. The parish church, St Lawrence, lies at the bottom of the marketplace, where the open door beckoned me into the thirteenth-century porch.



Porch, with dog-tooth moulding



Interior, with box pews and moulded ceiling

I admired the dog-tooth moulding on the arch as I walked through and, once inside, I noted the thirteenth-century nave, the moulded ceiling dating back to 1831 and the box pews.

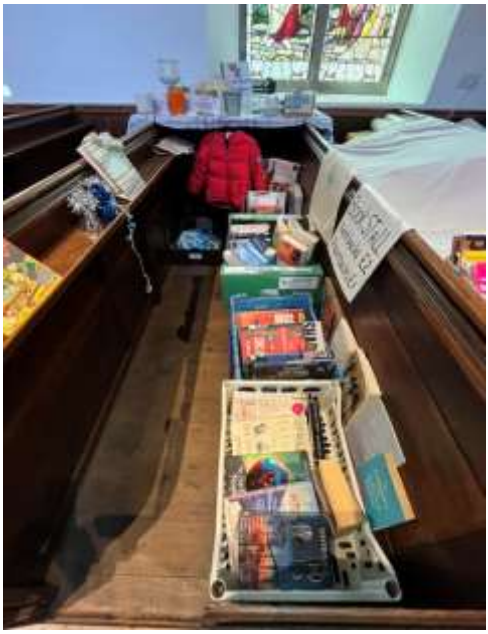
An alabaster memorial to Margaret, Countess of Cumberland and mother of Lady Anne Clifford alerted me to the importance of the latter for the history of Appleby. For several decades the Clifford family owned the castle which stands at the top end of an elegant tree-lined street known as Boroughgate, with St Lawrence's Church at the bottom. In the seventeenth-century, during the reign



Lady Anne Clifford memorial

of James I, Lady Anne Clifford successfully challenged the law which prevented women from inheriting. It is astonishing that she then inherited 5 castles – Appleby, Skipton, Pendragon, Brougham and Brough – and managed them all!





As in our church, there was a variety of tables with leaflets, a magazine, a pew sheet and appeals for financial support. Even though it was not very well stocked, I liked the idea of a library of spiritual and wellbeing books that could be borrowed. As a separate idea, boxes of books for sale in one of the pews made me wonder whether we could do something similar to boost our church funds, but it could be more orderly and attractive. Both facilities operating on a trust system could fit in well with our Open Pantry initiative.



Then I came to the seventeenth-century organ at the nearby west end. During the summer months, the organist, Geoff Gordon was giving concerts on Friday and Saturday mornings as a fund-raiser, with a visible collection box.

The most welcoming part of my visit, however, was meeting the organist himself. Geoff Gordon was keen to show me and other visitors



The Corporation Pew

the Corporation Pew with its serpent head and dragon carvings dating from about 1720. When I told him I was from St Mary's in Richmond, he said he knew our organist, Colin Hicks, from church choral singing events, and sent his regards. There is nothing more welcoming than a person who looks pleased to see you and wants to share their pride in their church.

If you visit Appleby, be sure to see this delightful courtyard (below). In 1653 Lady Anne Clifford established 13 Almshouses for 12 sisters and their mother, as a charitable act to help widows in Appleby. They are set around a cobbled courtyard with a chapel tucked in one corner. The cottages are still occupied today and services are held in the chapel. The St Anne's Hospital courtyard and garden remain open to visitors Wednesday to Sunday, 10.00am—3.00pm throughout the year.



Judith MacLeod

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

EVENTS REPORT



A busy Autumn programme is now well under way. We were very grateful to **Katherine and Paul Perry** for opening up their lovely home and gardens for a **Coffee Morning on 19th September**. It really is a delightful spot, and we were blessed with good weather which made it possible to enjoy the gardens as part of the morning. With such a fine venue and great coffee and tea, a wonderful selection of cakes and hand-picked raffle prizes on offer, the morning was an excellent social occasion and also added around £300 to the funds of the Friends.



Hot on the heels of this social event was a **Community Folk Night** featuring the hugely talented, indeed legendary, **Jez Lowe** (right) who has toured world-wide and featured in evenings with the Pitmen Poets across the UK in addition to his many solo appearances in a variety of venues. All in all, we were ready for a great night and were not disappointed. An audience of about 130 were well entertained and the funds benefitted to the tune of £930.

The annual **Curry Night** with **Bingo** (the game of chance — not the renowned dog Bobby of musical fame) was also well attended in the Town Hall on 10th October.



Thanks to the superb hard work of the Challis family providing or organising the food, aided and abetted by David Frankton and Andy Lovell organising the bar, it was certainly a fine social occasion for town and church as the evening flew by. Over 80 people attended and £1400 was added to the Friends account.

Many thanks must go to the Perrys for their hospitality; to Bob Hill for organising the Jez Lowe concert with such attention to detail; and to the Challis family for their work in running the Curry Night and helping Andy with the liquid refreshments at the Curry Night and the concert.

With all of this activity, it was decided to **postpone the Chris Lloyd talk about the life of Lewis Carroll** until the Spring of 2027.

SPENDING

The funds we raise are spent on improving and maintaining the church. So, with your help and community support in paying to attend our public events, the Friends have paid for **the recent re-plastering and painting work done in church at a cost of £7,000;** made a grant towards the work of the Flower Guild; and bought portable stage lighting for illuminating concerts and performances. This was first used to great effect at the Jez Lowe concert, bringing an air of professional staging to such events. There is more to do on this front, but we feel we've made a good start.

The next project, which we are undertaking at the request of the PCC, is for the **improvement of the toilet facilities to make them easier to clean and maintain and modernising some fittings e.g. taps, door locks, etc. before re-decoration**. Replacing the carpet in the corridor leading to the choir vestry is also under review.

Doing this work with your support takes a financial load off the PCC and helps it to organise our finances to pay our Parish Share.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

At the time of writing, the **Fashion Show is** a forthcoming event but will be a past event by the time you read this magazine. If, through the sterling work of our delivery team, you receive your magazine before **29th October,** there may still be a few tickets left for this occasion, staged in conjunction with **Larches** in the **Town Hall at 7.00 pm**. You can refer to the October issue for full details.

The main November event is the ever popular **Quiz Night,** which is also in the **Town Hall on 14th November**. Full details can be found in the poster elsewhere in the magazine. Will the Bell ringers triumph once more, or will another table win through? Do come along for a fun quiz, a great supper and a chance to Play your Cards right.



The Friends will also be 'staffing' the Christmas concert by a touring ensemble of **the Royal Northern Sinfonia orchestra** on **Friday 27th November at 7.30pm.** See page 20 for details, but tickets are only available from their website.

Jim Jack

SURPRISED BY JOY

Have you ever been taken by surprise, by something completely unanticipated, and which happened unexpectedly?
CAROLE McCORMACK had just such an experience some 20 years ago and still remembers it vividly.

Do you ever find yourself completely surprised, when you are least expecting it, by a place, a person, or an event that shocks you out of the moment and remains utterly memorable? Just as something long anticipated can disappoint, something not anticipated at all can, out of the blue, surprise one by an unexpected joy.

I have experienced several beautiful shocks like this in my life; and I shared my extraordinary faith experience when I visited St Cuthbert's tomb in Durham Cathedral under the same title, *Surprised by Joy,* in the February 2024 edition of *Connections.* This month, appropriately one which we associate with Remembrance, Sacrifice and Loss, my joyous surprise is connected with Saint Martin, the soldier who divided his cloak for a beggar – and subsequently dreamt that he saw Jesus wearing it – and then went on to become Bishop of Tours.



St Martin of Tours

About twenty or so years ago, we were driving along hot and dusty roads to the south of the River Loire. Rather than take the major roads, we aimed to visit small towns and villages, because we could take our time and linger where and when we wanted to. Driving through one of these small towns, the road skirted one side of a square, fronted by a hotchpotch of buildings, with a variety of architectural styles. Of these buildings, one stood out very clearly: an ancient church or chapel with a time-eroded façade: it took only moments for us to decide to take our break right there, and to pay the ecclesiastical building a visit.

We discovered that the church was dedicated to St Martin; that the main body of the church was mediaeval; and that Pope John Paul II had visited. But my 'surprise' came in discovering a tiny chapel, or even an earlier church, built to the north-east of the nave. This was joined to the nave, albeit at a lower level, and accessed was by several stone steps. Amazingly, the building dated from the 4th Century and is the most ancient church building I have ever visited.

Encountering the power of a saint is an individual, and extraordinary, experience. The key words for my encounter with St Cuthbert were humility, calm and immense power. With St Martin, it was an active, healing energy, attested by the hundreds of marble votive plaques, thanking him for performing miracles of healing, placed there over the centuries by the recipients of his miracles, or their families. The place was hallowed by sixteen hundred years of worship and affirmation of God's power and it was electrifying. There were three, quite complex, inter-related issues in my life at the time and I prayed for their resolution, all of which were granted over the succeeding months. Interestingly, I cannot remember much else about that holiday, but will never forget this joyous surprise.

But the slightly strange thing is this: although I remember the experience vividly, I cannot precisely remember the location of the church, apart from the fact that it was south of the river Loire. We do not have a photograph, for these were taken twenty plus years ago with a camera, not a phone. And researching as extensively as I could online for several days has not enabled me to identify the church, although I discovered several points of similarity between two churches dedicated to St Martin and my memorable visit. The Basilique de Saint Martin in Tours fits the facts that Pope John Paul visited and that there are marble votive plaques in the crypt which is the burial place of the saint, but we were not in Tours and the photographs online are of a much grander setting than the humble unadorned chapel we saw. Candes-Saint-Martin was the place where the saint died on 8th November 397 and had previously founded a church dedicated to Saint Maurice. Although it did not house his relics, the church became a pilgrimage site. The current Church of Saint-Martin of Candes was constructed between 1175 and the mid-13th century, replacing the earlier Church of Saint-Maurice, which had fallen



The Basilique de Saint Martin in Tours



Candes-Saint-Martin

into ruin. There is no mention that the earlier church still exists and could be the space which houses the marble votive plaques, nor is there any mention that Pope John Paul visited there. So the exact location of the church remains an enigma but, in a very real way, that doesn't matter.

In a sermon a few months ago, Bishop John said that our experience of this world depends upon what we look at. If we dwell only on the tragedy and darkness which the news presents to us day after day, and with which we are surrounded, then we will be deeply troubled. But if we look at the beauty of nature, the preciousness of family and friend relationships, and open our hearts to the rare glimpses of God's love and power, then we will be given hope and assurance that this is God's world indeed.

Carole McCormack

SEEN ON SIGNS OUTSIDE VARIOUS CHURCHES..

- ***No God — No Peace. Know God — Know Peace.***
- ***Free Trip to heaven. Details inside!***
- ***Searching for a new look? Have your faith lifted here.***
- ***Come in and pray today. Beat the Christmas rush!***
- ***Church car park. Members only — Trespassers will be baptised.***

Above a picture of two hands holding stone tablets upon which the Ten Commandments are inscribed, the headline read:

- ***For fast relief, take two tablets.***

When the restaurant next to his church put out a big sign saying 'Open Sundays', the Vicar reciprocated with his own message:

- ***We are open on Sundays' too. And we have live music!***

And from a church notice board:

- *Weight Watchers will meet at 7.00pm next Wednesday in the church lounge. Please use the large double door, side entrance.*

From Parish Pump

Friends of St Mary's Church
Richmond

Quiz Night

Town Hall Richmond
Sat 14th November
7:00 pm

With Top Quizmaster

Dave Tucker

Bar, Raffle,
Play Your Cards Right

Tickets £10 including
Pie and Pea Supper
(Vegetarian Option)

Tickets available in advance from :
"Book Stop" Market Hall Richmond,

Prizes (Top Prize £50)

Call 07974 766020 for Details

www.richmondhudswellparish.org.uk

CHARITY OF THE MONTH

This month, **ARWEN HOSKINS** seeks your support for a charity which helps to make dreams come true for children with critical illnesses — and, in so doing, often helps with the quality of life of the whole family.

Make-A-Wish UK is a charity dedicated to bringing joy, hope and lasting memories to children during their darkest time. It was founded in the UK in 1986 with just 6 volunteers, after word had spread of a community in America which had rallied around to help a child living with Leukaemia to realise his dream of becoming a policeman for the day. It has now expanded with affiliates in 50 countries, and has become the leading charity for granting wishes to children living with a critical illness, granting over 1000 wishes each year in the UK alone



A wish is special, individual and personal experience for a child aged 3-17 who is living with a life-threatening condition. The wishes vary and take many forms, from being a princess in their own castle, to meeting a hero, having a bedroom makeover, a new sensory toy, mobility aid or a once-in-a-lifetime holiday with their family. To receive a wish, a child must be referred by a parent, medical professional or social worker, and the organization then contacts their medical consultant to establish eligibility.

Make-A-Wish works with families, medical teams and local volunteers to make unforgettable wishes a reality. The charity has found that wishes do more than bring happiness – in their family survey, 91% said the wish gave their family a greater sense of closeness, and 87% said it added to their child's quality of life. It gives seriously ill children hope for the future, strength



to cope and resilience to fight their condition, and gives families quality-time away from hospital and diagnosis.

As a national charity, Make-A-Wish relies entirely on the generosity of communities and supporters to help fund its work. There are many ways to help – from donating, fundraising, or becoming a volunteer Wish Maker in your community, who helps research and bring local wishes to life.

For further information about Make-A-Wish UK, or to refer a child, please contact 01276 405060, email info@make-a-wish.org.uk, or visit http://www.make-a-wish.org.uk .

Arwen Hoskins

DID YOU KNOW? PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD.





EXPLORING FAITH

The Rokeby Inn, not far away on the A66, may seem an unlikely venue for a serious discussion group, but, as **RACHEL WALKER** explains, it has been chosen deliberately, so don't let that put you off!

How do you like to spend your Saturday Mornings? Well, several times a year 40 – 50 of us gather at the Rokeby Inn on the A66. We begin with coffee/tea and croissants/pastries – the body needs physical sustenance! – but the main purpose of the morning is mental sustenance.

Exploring Faith began as result of a number of people feeling that they wanted to explore subjects more deeply than there is time for in an hour's worship on Sundays. People could listen to a sermon, but there was no opportunity to ask questions and no feedback. We meet in a pub rather than a church, because we find that people are less hesitant about asking questions in a pub than in a church! A small charge is made to cover expenses.

After coffee and chat, we move on to the main business of the morning, when an invited guest speaks for about 40 minutes on a topic on which they are knowledgeable. We then break for more coffee and pastries, then return for discussion and questions.

Exploring Faith is ecumenical: there are Roman Catholics, Methodists, U.R.C, Anglican and Quaker, so there is a broad spectrum of Christian belief. The group has been meeting since 2014 and is still going strong. During that time there have been many speakers – local and national – covering a wide range of subjects.

Speakers have included David Wood on the Psalms; Bishop Nick Baines, who led a Quiet Day; and most of the staff of the Theology Department at Durham! We have been fortunate to have had three visits from John Bell of the Iona Community; a Hospital Chaplin; Jonathon Ruffer from the Auckland Project; John Dobson, the Dean of Ripon; Stephen Cherry from Kings College Cambridge; and a host of other Academics, Bishops and leading Church people.

The range of subjects is wide-ranging – Meister Eckhardt; the future of the Rural Church; Aliens and Christianity; Bishops – do we need them?; The Point of Religion in a Secular Society; Forgiveness and the Unforgivable; the Human Jesus; Climate Change; and Jesus – a life between the comma.

We also have a small library of books for people to borrow (and return please!) on a wide variety of subjects. We welcome donations of books which people have found helpful and which may help other people.

It is a very friendly group and you would be most welcome to join us. If you would like further details, please speak to Rachel or Howard Walker or Wendy or John Pritchard. We can give you details of forthcoming meetings, and there may be a subject in which you are particularly interested. There is no obligation to attend every meeting.

Rachel Walker

FOR THOSE WITH LONG MEMORIES …..

It's a small world and, during their recent visit to Norfolk, (see pages 15-19) Jim and Jan Jack were unexpectedly able to renew their acquaintance with someone whom others may remember too.

We did visit the Parish Church of St Andrew the Apostle in Holt the following Sunday and had a conversation with Father Howard, who remembers his time in our Benefice fondly. He asked to be remembered to all who knew the family. He and his wife, Helen, are well and their two children, Amy (married and living in the south of England) and Tom (settled with partner and child in Scotland) are also well and thriving as young adults.



A younger Father Howard leading a pilgrimage procession towards the shrine in Walsingham

TOILET TWINNING

At a recent meeting, when exploring ideas for articles relevant to our church, someone, with tongue-in-cheek, mentioned the twinned toilet certificate hanging in one of our loos! **CHRISTINE PORTER** rose to the challenge of finding out more about the scheme, and wonders just how many there are around our town.

Toilet Twinning

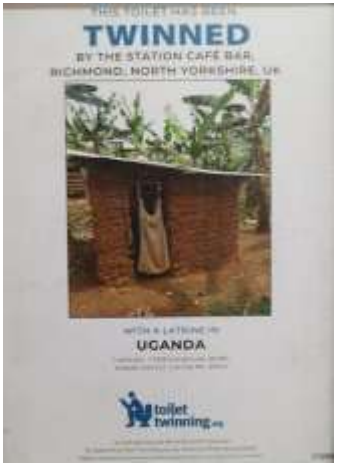
A favourite fixture of the Jorvik Viking Centre, since the attraction first opened in April 1984, has been Bogar (often affectionately called Bogar the Toilet Man). During the Yorvik Centre's dark ride through a re-imagined 10th century Viking town, the famous animatronic character Bogar is depicted in a small, wicker-fenced outdoor privy, with a memorable, strained expression on his face. To give visitors a full, multi-sensory experience of what life actually felt like in the 10th century, the accompanying smell of rotting waste and cesspits simulates the unhygienic conditions of the era.

Fast forward to the present day, and it's unbelievable that in the 21st century, with gadgets galore, an app for everything and the ability to put people into space, 3.5 billion people (that's 1 in 5 people around the world) still don't have a safe, clean toilet, and their conditions are little better than in Bogar's time. For many people, the 'toilet' is not a convenient enclosure with safe walls, a door to shut and protection for privacy; it's just an unsafe space in the bush. When in lieu of a loo you're forced to use a secluded area of nature, the possible risks include snake bites, darkness, fear, indignity ... and even rape.



What's more, 2.2 billion people don't have clean water close to home; one child under five dies of disease linked to dirty water and poor sanitation every two minutes – that's a thousand children every day; and diarrhoea kills more children in war zones than war itself. Without proper toilets, people get trapped in a vicious cycle. They're likely to become sick through sanitation-related diseases; illness keeps people from working; children miss school; and parents have to pay for medicine or food and fall into debt. Everyone is robbed of their dignity, at risk of disease, and for women and children especially, at risk of harm.

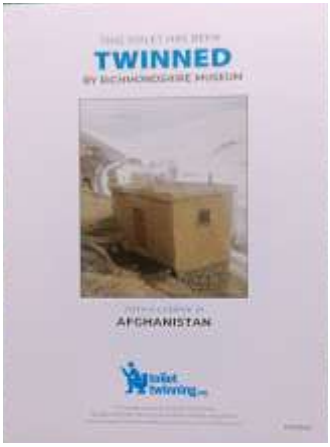
Everyone deserves access to a decent toilet, clean water and safe hygiene practices. But for millions of people, a flushing loo and somewhere to wash their hands is a luxury they don't have.



Toilet Twinning is an initiative which invites people to "twin" their own toilet with latrines in poor communities. This is a way of raising funds to enable people in the poorest nations to access decent toilets, safe drinking water and to learn about healthy hygiene. The Toilet Twinning scheme is run by the charity Tearfund, as part of their water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) work in over 50 countries worldwide.

In stable communities, Toilet Twinning works through a model of community mobilisation, enabling people to get the materials to build their own toilets, and to create locally owned and locally delivered water and sanitation programmes. In conflict areas, where little infrastructure exists, Toilet Twinning funds programmes that build toilets and provide clean water.

Since 2010, more than 140,000 toilets have been twinned, giving about 840,000 people access to safe sanitation. Toilet Twinners receive a certificate, with a photo of the twinned latrine, its location and GPS coordinates. Some of these twinned toilets will be familiar to people in Richmond. A number of key individuals and organisations have joined the scheme, including the Welsh National Assembly, the Northern Ireland Assembly, the comedian Tim Vine and the adventurer Bear Grylls. One of the earliest organisations to join the scheme was the British Plumbing Employers Council, which has now twinned all the toilets at its Derby HQ.



World Toilet Day is celebrated annually on 19th November to raise global awareness about the 3.5 billion people still living without safe, managed sanitation. Organised by the United Nations, the day inspires action to tackle the global sanitation crisis, raise awareness for the billions of people living without safely managed sanitation, and supports the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 6: safe water and sanitation for all by 2030.

Christine Porter

GRATITUDE

Let us be grateful for the few
Who do whatever, out of view,
And never change their attitude,
Ignoring praise and platitude!
A humble man lies here below,
Though who he was, we'll never know.
He came and did what he'd begun,
Until the chore was neatly done,
And he was fully satisfied,
Though never showing boastful pride.
The job complete, another task
Would be conferred. He kept his mask
Of gratitude, which always showed,
Regardless of sparse thanks bestowed,
Though they had given him hard work,
Wherein tough times would likely lurk,
Or, if it was some simple fare,
When there's no need for fuss and flair!
His time has passed, and he's entombed,
But, though his countenance had bloomed,
Then faded, as does every soul's,
No matter what their earthly roles,
His efforts will be always blessed,
While he enjoys his final rest,
An unknown bringer of delight,
Who, as in life, is out of sight,
Which is the way he wished to be,
A paragon of modesty!

George Alderson

WORD SEARCH

The Poppies of Remembrance Sunday

In late 1914, WW1 erupted across Northern France and Flanders. Great swathes of previously green fields and forests were blasted and bombed, leaving them bleak and barren, with seemingly every living thing destroyed.

But then in the Spring of 1915, something beautiful began to come out of all the destruction. Tens of thousands of bright red Flanders poppies began to put out tentative shoots across the endless vistas of mud. These resilient little flowers had actually flourished in the middle of so much chaos and destruction, because their seeds grow when exposed to sunlight, through disturbances to soil.

Those endless fields of cheerful poppies, growing in the midst of such horror, were what inspired the Canadian doctor, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, to write the now famous poem 'In Flanders Fields'.

World
War
France
Flanders
Green
Fields
Bombed
Barren
Bleak
Destroyed
Spring
Destruction
Bright
Red
Poppies
Mud
Chaos
Seeds
Grow
Soil
Cheerful
Growing
Horror
Doctor
Poem

R	O	R	B	D	G	N	I	W	O	R	G
O	P	F	A	T	C	G	N	C	B	O	N
R	U	B	R	I	G	H	T	L	A	T	I
R	E	D	R	A	E	S	E	O	I	C	R
O	S	R	E	D	N	A	L	F	H	O	P
H	E	D	N	Y	K	C	G	E	P	D	S
S	E	I	P	P	O	P	E	R	O	E	W
N	O	I	T	C	U	R	T	S	E	D	A
E	G	W	H	A	F	M	T	D	M	E	R
L	R	A	W	U	U	R	S	S	R	R	N
W	O	R	L	D	B	O	M	B	E	D	O
S	W	R	S	D	O	F	I	E	L	D	S

Sudoku - Easy

		4	1					
		9	4				2	
		2	6			3		8
	6		8	4	3		9	
2	8	5				4	3	1
4	9		2	1	5		8	
3		6			9	5		
	2				1	9		
					4	8		

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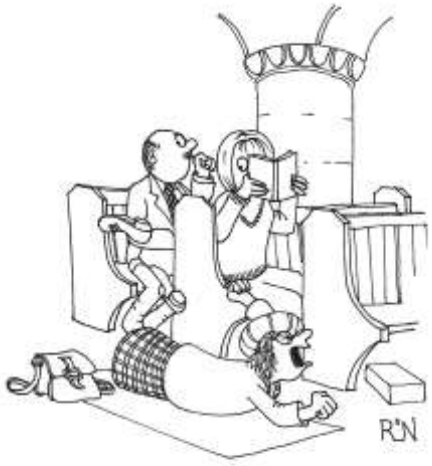
Sudoku - Medium

6						2		4
			3				6	
	1			4				
		9				7	8	
		2	1		5	6		
	8	4				1		
				2			1	
	5				7			
4		8						3

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The vicar's alternative to traditional after-service coffee was having a dramatic effect on male church attendance



Somebody sat in Minnie Hyssop's pew

PASTORAL CARE

The St Mary's Church community wishes to do all we can to support, listen and love all in our parish, whether members of our church or not.

Our trained **Pastoral Assistants** (please see page 2 for their contact details) are ready to listen and offer support. With the clergy, they make up our **Pastoral Care Team** who meet regularly. If you need a listening ear, please contact any member of the Team.

We have two **Prayer Groups** who can offer prayerful support:

The Prayer Group

This group meets weekly, currently on Tuesdays at 7.30-9.00pm.
All are welcome.
We start with a short, relaxed bible study then move into a time of prayer for individuals, the Benefice, the world and the worldwide Church.
For details, please contact Lorna: lorna.heatley@leeds.anglican.org

The Prayer Circle

This is an email-based anonymous group of church members who commit to pray when specific prayer requests are made, usually for named people. These can be relatives, friends or acquaintances, who may not even live in the area, but who would appreciate confidential prayer. No prayer request is ever too small or trivial.

Prayer requests can be made via a slip placed in the box near Ruth's Window in the church or by contacting prayer@richmondhudswellparish.org.uk
Whatever you wish to share, in confidence, we will support you in prayer.

If you would like us to add a name to the **Pew Sheet** list of those for whom we pray publicly during the Intercessions in our church services, please contact Colin in the Parish Office: admin@richmondhudswellparish.org.uk



Puzzle Solutions

Sudoku — Easy

8	7	4	1	3	2	6	5	9
6	3	9	4	5	8	1	2	7
1	5	2	6	9	7	3	4	8
7	6	1	8	4	3	2	9	5
2	8	5	9	7	6	4	3	1
4	9	3	2	1	5	7	8	6
3	4	6	7	8	9	5	1	2
5	2	8	3	6	1	9	7	4
9	1	7	5	2	4	8	6	3

Sudoku — Medium

6	9	3	7	1	8	2	5	4
2	4	7	3	5	9	8	6	1
8	1	5	6	4	2	3	9	7
1	6	9	2	3	4	7	8	5
7	3	2	1	8	5	6	4	9
5	8	4	9	7	6	1	3	2
9	7	6	4	2	3	5	1	8
3	5	1	8	9	7	4	2	6
4	2	8	5	6	1	9	7	3

Wordsearch



Deadline for Dec '26/Jan '27 edition; Monday 16th Nov. '26
To contribute letters, articles, etc. please contact connections.ed24@gmail.com or 07866 033263

Are you at school? Love Singing? Want to learn to read music?

Join the St Mary's Song Squad

We meet on **Mondays during term time,** 4-5pm in St Mary's Church, Richmond
As well as having lots of fun singing and learning a wide variety of songs, there will be opportunities to perform at occasional services/events and to participate in the Royal School of Church Music's highly acclaimed 'Voice for Life' Scheme.
Juice & biscuits will also be available & tea / coffee for any parents / carers wishing to stay during the rehearsal time.

For more information or to sign up for the Song Squad

Contact Chris Denton 07817 386070

Fun-Key CHURCH

Usually last Sunday in every month
Next service **— 29th November '26,**
For children and the young at heart.
Why not come and join us?
www.richmondhudswellparish.org.uk

LOUNGERS!
(The Ladies' Group)
Usually, last Friday of each month

From 7.30pm in the BLACK LION
Finkle Street, Richmond
Next meeting:
27th November '26



THIRST!
(The Men's Group)

Meets first Thursday of every month from 7.00 p.m.
Next Meeting at

The Town Hall Pub & Dining, Richmond

5th November '26



Reverend Matthew Hutchinson's Charity

Do you live in:
Richmond, Gilling West, Eppleby, Eryholme, Hutton Magna, South Cowton, North Cowton, West Layton, Cliffe or Barton?

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and many other expenses.

For further information, please contact:
The Secretary, Reverend Matthew Hutchinson Trust, Middlemoor House, Hudswell, Richmond DL11 6DB

KNIT & NATTER

A new name — but still a group of people who love to knit, sew, craft and chat.

Every Friday
9.30am to 11.30 am.

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Contact Sharon McCormack
07791 426659

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Have you thought of volunteering?

Are you free on a Monday or Friday morning 1 day or more a month?

Our friendly team at The Welcome Hub are looking for volunteers. We provide a warm welcoming, safe space where visitors can share a cuppa, connect with others and make new friends. Pop into the Hub at Dundas Street entrance on Monday or Friday morning.

We will happily answer any of your questions and show you around.

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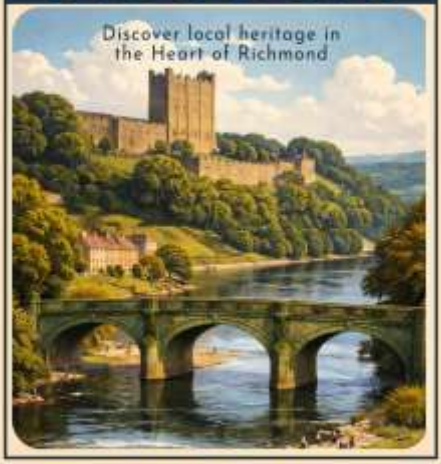
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