

# CONNECTIONS

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

**October 2025**



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**National  
Silver Award 2024**

# THE BENEFICE OF RICHMOND WITH HUDSWELL, DOWNHOLME AND MARSKE

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## MINISTRY TEAM

### RECTOR

The Revd Canon Martin Fletcher  
[martin.fletcher@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:martin.fletcher@leeds.anglican.org)

The Rectory, Church Wynd, Richmond  
07762 440094 or (01748) 821241

### ASSISTANT CURATE

Revd Lorna Heatley [lorna.heatley@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:lorna.heatley@leeds.anglican.org) 07783 903156

### HONORARY CLERGY

Bishop John Pritchard - Revd Jennifer Williamson - Revd Pauline Shepherd  
Revd Martin Clarke - Revd Stewart Ridley

### OCCASIONAL PREACHER

Paul Perry

### PASTORAL ASSISTANTS

|                 |                |                  |                |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Graham Pearson  | (07455) 943875 | Sharon McCormack | (07791) 426659 |
| Sharon O'Connor | (07704) 467833 | Jan Jack         | (07725) 574188 |

### PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayer requests to Anna via [boyceadl11@gmail.com](mailto:boyceadl11@gmail.com)

### CHURCH OFFICERS — ST MARY THE VIRGIN, RICHMOND

|                   |                 |                |                           |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Mayor's Warden    | Peter Trewby    | (01748) 824468 | 24 Hurgill Road, Richmond |
| Rector's Warden   | Wendy Pritchard | (01748) 850854 |                           |
| Warden Emeritus   | David Frankton  | (01748) 823531 | 8 Allan's Court, Richmond |
| Director of Music | Colin Hicks     | (07498) 299061 |                           |
| Bell Captain      | Susan Welch     | (01748) 823700 | 8 Maple Road, Richmond    |
| Head Verger       | John Welch      | (01748) 823700 | 8 Maple Road, Richmond    |

### Parish Administrator & Secretary to the PCC

Colin Hicks (07498) 299061 [admin@richmondhudswellparish.org.uk](mailto:admin@richmondhudswellparish.org.uk)

### OFFICERS OF THE PCC (AND OTHERS)

|           |              |                |  |
|-----------|--------------|----------------|--|
| Lay Chair | Peter Trewby | (01748) 824468 | 24 Hurgill Road, Richmond  |
| Treasurer | Paul Carnell |                | <a href="mailto:stmarys@paulcarnell.co.uk">stmarys@paulcarnell.co.uk</a> |

Magazine Editor John McCormack (07866) 033263  
[connections.ed24@gmail.com](mailto:connections.ed24@gmail.com)

|                       |              |                |  |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|--|
| Magazine Advertising  | Jim Jack     | (07754) 283161 |  |
| Magazine Distribution | Keith Robson | (07866) 325843 |  |
| Church Bookings       | Colin Hicks  |                | <a href="mailto:admin@richmondhudswellparish.org.uk">admin@richmondhudswellparish.org.uk</a> |
| Publicity             | Andy Lovell  | (07974) 766020 | <a href="mailto:skeeby@skeeby.com">skeeby@skeeby.com</a>                                     |

### **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 from 1st 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**

|                  |                                |  |
|------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Reader           | George Alderson (07487) 257646 | 68, Brompton Park,<br>Brompton on Swale DL10 7JP   |
| Church Warden    | Andra Sison-Ham (07753) 842246 | <a href="mailto:andrakrumins@gmail.com">andrakrumins@gmail.com</a>                               |
| Church Treasurer | Phil Ham (07920) 884103        | 'Sundale', Reeth, DL11 6TX<br><a href="mailto:philip.ham@outlook.com">philip.ham@outlook.com</a> |
| PCC Secretary    | Andra Sison-Ham (07753) 842246 | <a href="mailto:andrakrumins@gmail.com">andrakrumins@gmail.com</a>                               |

#### **CHURCH SERVICES AT DOWNHOLME**

|                  |                       |                            |
|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>9.30 a.m.</b> | <b>Morning Prayer</b> | <b>Every second Sunday</b> |
| <b>9.30 a.m.</b> | <b>Holy Communion</b> | <b>Every fourth Sunday</b> |

### **THE PARISH OF ST EDMUNDS, MARSKE**

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|               |                                |  |
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| Church Warden | Ruth Tindale (01748) 823371    | Skelton Lodge, Marske  |
| Organist      | Jennifer Wallis (01748) 822930 | 1 School Terrace, Marske   |
| Treasurer     | Peter Coates (07801) 521954    | Orgate Farmhouse, Marske<br><a href="mailto:peter.coates54@hotmail.co.uk">peter.coates54@hotmail.co.uk</a> |
| PCC Secretary | Andra Sison-Ham (07753) 842246 | <a href="mailto:andrakrumins@gmail.com">andrakrumins@gmail.com</a>   |

#### **CHURCH SERVICES AT MARSKE**

|                   |                       |   |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <b>11.00 a.m.</b> | <b>Holy Communion</b> | <b>Every Sunday except 2nd (&amp; 5th) Sunday</b> |
| <b>11.00 a.m.</b> | <b>Morning Prayer</b> | <b>Every 2nd (&amp; 5th) Sunday</b>               |



It never ceases to amaze how quickly the nights start drawing in as we get further into Autumn, and even the mornings are getting dimmer. Then, at the end of this month, the clocks will go back and there really will be a feeling of the year drawing to a close. But let's be positive and take inspiration from Lorna in her letter this month and respond to her challenge by seeing what we can do to make a difference to others.

This month's issue has a bit of a pilgrimage theme, not just with Jim Jack's lovely picture of Station Walk on the front cover, but also with his piece about walking the first stage of the new Camino Inglés in our area. Look out for the next stages in future issues. John Pritchard then reports on a pilgrimage he led with a group of Americans, which started on Iona and finished at York, while Judith MacLeod's travels this Summer have enabled her to visit and celebrate Worcester Cathedral. Helen Rowan has contributed an introductory account of her family's recent epic travels in America: this, too, will be continued next month.

If you have walked the Easby Loop recently, you may have noticed a new café near Easby, so Jim Jack went to sample its wares and report on this new business. He has also provided us with an update on recent and future 'doings' of the Friends. John Pritchard continues his thought-provoking Hard Questions series with one of the most fundamental – Why believe in God? – and Jane Hatcher shares her fascinating researches about an historical character associated with Downholme and Marske. David Frankton gives us a flavour of his role behind the scenes in our church; Wendy Pritchard contributes her last Garden Notes for this season – thank you Wendy for all your interesting and informative articles; Annette Richardson invites our support for Liver Cancer UK; and both Howard Walker and Pamela Brown have contributed to Poet's Corner.

As well as the Friends' Curry Night and Blues in the Pews, I hope you'll make a note of our Harvest Festival on 5<sup>th</sup> October. Donations of food for the 'Open Pantry' run by our neighbouring parish will be much appreciated: details of what is needed are available in church.

I hope you will find this issue both interesting and informative.

*John McCormack*

**Cover photo by Jim Jack  
Station Walk in Autumn**



## Lorna's Letter

### October 2025



As I was wracking my brain for the theme of what my letter this month would be, the only thing that kept popping into my head was “encroaching darkness”. I thought to myself, No, that’s a bit of a depressing theme, and I feel, what with the state of the world now, it might be nice to write about something a bit more positive and cheerful. Perhaps a little bit about Christmas? Definitely not!

But encroaching darkness isn’t all that bad. I thrive in the autumn, when the nights are drawing in. I love to settle down at home when it’s all dark and rainy outside, candles lit, fairy lights on, fire flickering, and some sort of horror film on my TV, dog curled up next to me. The encroaching darkness means cosy times ahead, because it’s candles season. This is the time where the morning dog walk will coincide with the sunrise, bursting over the horizon in glorious sprays of colour that chases away the remnants of the night.

Because there can’t be light without darkness. We can’t have the good without the bad. In short, there can be no resurrection without Good Friday.

It feels like we’re in a time of encroaching darkness just now. Political violence dominates the headlines from both sides of the Atlantic. Wars rage on with new weapons being unveiled every day. It can all feel hopeless. But this is the time when we can do our best work as Christians. We can reach out our hands to all who need it – especially at this time of year. The lonely, the sad — being that comforting candle flame, or that burst of sunrise over the horizon.

So, happy “encroaching darkness” everyone. It’s time to look to the light of the world and make some light of our own.

Blessings,

*Lorna*





**St Mary's Church Richmond**

# **Harvest Festival**

**Sunday 5th October**

**10.00 am**

**Welcome to All**

Food Donations will be taken  
in aid of "Open Pantry"  
in the Parish of Easby with  
Skeeby, Brompton on Swale,  
Bolton on Swale

## CAMINO INGLÉS

Over 20 years ago, 3 members of the congregation of St Mary's walked the whole way to Santiago de Compostella in Spain. The late John Horseman recounted their exploits in this magazine when Sheila Harrison was editing. The recent opening of new sections of the trail in our area, and a hefty shove from his wife, Jan, prompted our roving reporter, **Jim Jack**, to at least start a journey to complete the northern leg as far as Hudswell — or even Hull.

Now let me be clear at the outset. There is no likelihood of me doing the whole walk — Finchale to Hull to Southampton, ferry to Santander and on to Santiago — although Jan could probably do it in a few days with lead in her boots and having no more than a couple of Double Deckers and a flask of water.

There are a number of Caminos starting in various countries, all converging on Santiago. In North-East England, efforts continue to create a start point of the Camino Inglés at Finchale Priory near Durham City, ultimately linking up with other existing trails and are identified as part of a Camino Inglés, to complete an English route arriving in Southampton. We felt that it would be good to support this regional initiative, so we decided to give it a go. But why Finchale?

About 900 years ago, a man called Godric made a pilgrimage to Santiago. A former peddler, sailor and even pirate, he came to Lindisfarne, where he was converted to Christianity. In a vision, Saint Cuthbert promised Godric a hermitage. The Bishop of Durham allowed him to move to Finchale, where he lived for the last sixty years of his hundred years of life. People sought him out in Finchale, before they set out on their own pilgrimages to Santiago, to learn from his experience. When setting up this part of the Camino Inglés, it seemed fitting that Godric's role should be honoured with this little-known starting point. How to do it today with no Godric to advise? We were drawn by the age-old answer to the question 'How do you eat an elephant?' (as if anyone would want to). Answer — in bite-sized chunks.



A good first chunk seemed to be Finchale to Durham Cathedral, a walkable distance of 4 miles. Research suggested that the best way to do this section was to take our car to Finchale and park there, walk to Durham and take the bus back to Finchale. The paths looked good; there were no signs saying 'Here be Dragons' or 'Beware of the Sheep'; so any excuse for at least not starting drained away.

There was one immediate link with the Spanish pilgrimage experience. We happened to choose the hottest Saturday of the year to begin our journey. Rucksack packed; suncream liberally applied; bus times researched; we headed for Finchale. This ruined priory, a casualty of Henry VIII's looting of the monasteries, sits on a shady bend on the banks of the River Wear, a 35-minute drive up the A167.

Parking for the walk is on the privately owned Finchale Caravan Park, with a barrier-controlled entry and exit (pay £4 on departure, cards accepted —even if you are an English Heritage member). There is ample parking and the area is beautifully maintained by the owners. Toilets are free and there is a small indoor café and kiosk with outdoor seating. It is to this kiosk we repaired, pausing to chat to the site-owner who was watering an attractive array of plants, to get our Camino passports stamped. Once done, no turning back!



**The starting point with official stone**



**Distinctive Camino way-mark**

Heading up a steady incline on a quiet road out of the site, we walked for about a mile before reaching a T-junction. Ahead lay a turning circle for the bus service to HM Frankland Prison. Turning right here, we advanced no more than 200 yards before a finger post on the right-hand side of the road directed us to a tarmac bridleway on our left between two sections of the prison. The fact that the post carried the distinctive Camino logo helped.

Leaving His Majesty's guest house behind, we quickly moved into a delightfully shady part of the path, passing a dog kennels on the left. At the first division in the road, we continued along the right-hand level pathway, still under shady trees on both sides. As the path began to head downwards, the trees on the right gave way to open views over grazing land, where sheep would safely graze — but it was too hot to do this, so they contented themselves with lying in the shade and watching us pass by.



As the path levelled out once more, it passed between two farms where lay another fork. The Camino route suggests the right-hand fork, alongside the wall of Frankland Farm. At the end of this wall, we turned 90 degrees right and were exposed to full sunshine and a golden field with no fencing. ('Is Spain like this?' I





**Santiago — or Durham on the horizon?**

wondered. ‘Have we arrived at Santiago already?’ A fine view of Durham Cathedral on the distant hill, however, dispelled this fanciful notion, but still, a continental sun beat down on us, as we drew ever closer to the River Wear.

Bearing right here, and running parallel to the unseen River Wear, we met a proper road near a water-treatment plant on the left-hand side, before transferring to a pavement adjacent to Durham’s famous river. Past Crook Hall National Trust property on the right, and an ever-increasing number of modern buildings, we chose to ignore

the ramped approach to a footbridge over the river, which would have taken us near Durham Market place. Instead we elected to take the 47 steps up to the next bridge across the river, turning left at the top to wander up historic Silver Street to the Market Place.

‘What means this hectic bustle?’ I quoth, as we weaved our way between throngs of people, before we discovered we had not only chosen the hottest day of the year for our walk, but also the day of the annual Durham Miners’ Gala parade. Nothing like this on the real Camino, with banners, marching brass bands or pipes and drums, each banner telling the history of a now disappeared Durham pit — well, not unless you get to Santiago itself where, apparently, the religious parades are something to behold.

And so we chose to tarry a while, soaking up sunshine and atmosphere, as the procession moved at snail’s pace (my kind of walking) down towards Elvet Bridge, along past the County Hotel, to take the acknowledgement and applause of the guests for the day, before assembling on the Racecourse playing fields. From there, the parade moved up to Durham Cathedral, where Jan’s uncle (a miner turned vicar’s son and himself an ordained priest) had had the honour of preaching over thirty years ago at the end of Gala. It gradually occurred to us that here were people from mining communities all over county Durham on their own annual pilgrimage, honouring their forebears who had trodden the same route, drawn by a unified purpose.



**Miners’ Gala parade in Durham — their annual pilgrimage**

Tearing ourselves away from this experience, we made our own progress up the hill to Palace Green to sit on the wall outside the Cathedral for a well-earned picnic and a stamp on the passport, obtained from the desk just inside the Cathedral door,

So there we were. First leg completed, two stamps on the passport, total walking-time, including picnic and Gala spectator time, about three hours. Then it was back down to the Market Place, a left turn and down across the bridge to North Road bus station to seek out the no. 64 bus (hourly, 8 minutes past the hour). Passing the appropriately named Pity Me, we soon arrived back at the Frankland turning circle. Still a mile to go, but downhill all the way and safe in the knowledge that an ice-cream, a cold drink or coffee awaited us at the kiosk. Thus refreshed, we had sufficient energy to explore the well-preserved Finchale Priory site and walk across the footbridge over the Wear, where children were swimming in the river and people were lazing on the flat rocks, enjoying the afternoon sunshine.



‘Perhaps this would have just made a grand day out, just to spend the day on the Finchale site. River, historic building, grassy slopes, shade...’ I thought. Well, no — this is not in the spirit of pilgrimage.

Stage one completed. The first part of eating the elephant. The next chunk is already planned. Perhaps a couple of miles extra walking compared with this stage, but already a feeling that we have embarked upon a journey with a purpose. A journey whose Durham stage will take us to Gainford, via such places as the historic Escomb Church and the ever-developing faith-centre at Bishop Auckland. The idea and the challenge becomes ever more attractive, joining-up existing and well-trodden footpaths on this local pilgrimage, with much thinking and learning as we go.

Where will it end? Who knows, but each step takes us from one historic centre of the Christian faith to another, reminding us of the foundations and the people upon which our present day church has been built. We certainly aim to keep going until we reach Hudswell. After that who knows? We'll keep in touch.

Whilst the first part of the walk has its less-picturesque moments, this will be true of any pilgrimage. What we do know is that the path was kind, the surfaces easy and even wheelchair accessible — and Santiago de Compostella always remains a possible, though unlikely, option!! More likely? Just a grand day out at Finchale.

*'Give me my scallop shell of quiet,  
My staff of faith to walk upon,  
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,  
My bottle of salvation,  
My gown of glory, hope's true gage,  
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.'*

Sir Walter Raleigh

Our thanks go to Keith Taylor, Chair of the Friends of the Finchale Camino, for his helpful information and encouragement and answers to questions when posed. More information can be obtained from a number of websites such as [www.caminoingles.gal](http://www.caminoingles.gal), (yes, 'gal'), [www.pilgrimway.org.uk](http://www.pilgrimway.org.uk), or a number of walking websites found easily with a google search.

The waymarking of this first stretch described here is excellent and highly accessible, if you choose to use the ramped access to the footbridge as described. If you plan to walk any of the Camino as a linear walk, co-ordinating with public transport, or using two cars with one left at the end of the journey before you start, is important. Note that the nearest bus service still leaves a mile walk to Finchale itself.

We have just completed chunk two — Durham to Tudhoe, with delights and surprises, plus steps and three stiles, on the way. Memories of the escaping John McVicar too! Look out for part 2 next month, if the editor allows! Elephants beware!

*Jim Jack*

## CELEBRATING CATHEDRALS

In her travels this Summer, **JUDITH MACLEOD** passed through Worcester and found time to walk beside the river and visit its beautiful Cathedral. Once again, she shares her impressions of this magnificent building.

What springs to mind when the name Worcester is mentioned: the porcelain, the Cathedral, the battle, the sauce or some other association?

On our recent visit in August, it was the porcelain that popped up first. I learnt from a plaque on the walk beside the River Severn that the first Royal Worcester factory was founded in 1751. (The standard mark for Royal Worcester porcelain has the number 51 in the centre.)



As we walked along towards the nearby Cathedral, we remarked on the unusually high population of swans: there was a regatta on the water and a bevvvy on the bank! This area of the river between the railway bridge and the Cathedral is a swan sanctuary



set up in the 1980s. Other wildlife in the vicinity includes a pair of peregrine falcons, who nested in the cathedral tower this year, and lesser horseshoe bats (so-called because of the shape of a skin flap across their nostrils, which are vital for the pollination of crops and the regulation of the insect population).

It took me a while to find the Cathedral, as it was above the river path. On the West façade, my eye was drawn to the lighter stone of the portal, which stands out from the rest. In the afternoon light it was golden.

The present-day Cathedral, begun in 1084 by St Wulfstan, was preceded by two others, one in 680 and the other in 983. It has all styles of English architecture from Norman, Transitional Norman and the three stages of Gothic – Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular. It is maintained by a stonemasonry team offering five-year apprenticeships.





The nave is long and empty of seating, allowing it to be used for social events, including the showing of epic films set in medieval times. Without pews or chairs, you can admire the geometric black and white floor pattern. The Chantry Chapel (1504) erected to Arthur, son of Henry VII, is a fine internal structure covered in tracery with a fan-vaulted roof. When you reach the transepts at the top of the nave, your unimpeded view goes all the way to the stained-glass window at the North end. Here I admired the tessellated floor design.



I also enjoyed the floor patterns and painted vaulted roof in the Quire.



In the Quire lies the tomb of King John (1166-1216) known as ‘Bad’ because his reign was marked by military failure, the loss of territories in France, conflict with the church and rebellious barons. John’s signing of the Magna Carta in 1215, a year before he died, is regarded by some historians as the first step towards England’s constitutional monarchy. It established that the King is not above the law and guaranteed rights such as justice and a free trial. It was the foundation of English common law and individual freedoms such as *habeas corpus* (protection against arbitrary or unlawful imprisonment).

There are other people of interest associated with the Cathedral. One is Oswald, who became the first Bishop in 961 and then Archbishop of York in 972, holding both positions simultaneously until his death. He later became a saint. In the nave there is the tomb of Stanley Baldwin (1867-1947), three times prime minister of the UK. There is also a memorial window dedicated to the composer, Edward Elgar (1857-1934), who was born in a village outside Worcester and had close links with the Cathedral. The window depicts ‘The Dream of Gerontius’,



which he composed in 1900.

For music lovers there is the Three Choir Festival – a week-long festival held annually — which rotates among the Cathedrals of the three counties of Hereford, Gloucester and Winchester. There is also an annual Elgar for Everyone Festival each year. If you like organs, this Handel organ in the South Transept dates from the seventeenth-century. There is a 30-strong choir of men & boys and 18 girl choristers, who sing at 2 services on Sundays and once a day during the school terms.

Outside in the cloisters, part of a Benedictine monastery until Henry VIII dissolved it in 1540, you can see the external wall of the round, twelfth-century Chapter House, the first one of this design in the world.



For those who love this great Cathedral, it is lucky that it survived both the Dissolution and the Civil War, when Royalists used the building to store munitions for the Battle of Worcester in 1651.

Entry to the Cathedral is via the North door, where visitors are invited to make a voluntary donation of £7.

*Judith MacLeod*

## HARD QUESTIONS

In the Summer edition of *Connections*, **JOHN PRITCHARD** wrote about one of the hardest questions of faith - Why do bad things happen to good people? He is going to continue with a series looking at some of the tough questions that any thoughtful believer or unbeliever faces, starting with the most basic:

### Why believe in God?

In my experience, people believe in God because they believe in God, and it's not usually because of rational argument, it's more of an instinct. If pressed, they find it hard to say why. It just makes sense. There are reasonable arguments, and next month I'll look at some of them, but for now let's just clear the ground a little.

#### 1. **The God many people don't believe in, I don't believe in either.**

There are many variants on the 'old man in the sky'. The belief is dressed up to appear a bit more adult, but still imagines God as a kind of magical figure from a fairy story. The atheist writer Richard Dawkins is a prime culprit in setting up a 'straw man' that's very easy to knock down. His is not the God I believe in.

#### 2. **We can never prove the existence of God.**

It would be like Harry Potter proving that JK Rowling exists, or Hamlet proving Shakespeare. The created figure and the creator exist in completely different dimensions of reality. Logically and of necessity God will always be beyond our understanding.



#### 3. **Indeed, to talk of God 'existing' is itself a bit of a stretch!**

God isn't another object in a field of objects. God and the universe don't add up to two of anything, any more than the Eiffel Tower and my appendix constitute a pair of objects. God isn't a 'thing'; he is the ultimate source and context for everything that exists, the ground of all being, the reason for reality. St Bonaventure wrote: 'God is a sphere whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.' Think about it!

#### 4. **We will always struggle to find words to describe the God we instinctively believe in.**

If I am Harry Potter rather than JK Rowling, I'll always use words that are

inadequate. I'll probably use metaphor instead, so 'God is like....' a father, a mother, a spirit, a cloud, a lover, a river. The philosopher Wittgenstein once poured a cup of freshly brewed coffee into a cup and asked his students to describe the smell of it. They struggled. Wittgenstein said, 'If we haven't got words to describe properly the smell of a cup of coffee that we can hold in our own hands, how can we think we have the words to describe God?'



5. **No God worthy of our worship would force us to believe in him.**

It would mean that we would lose that most essential human attribute – the freedom to make up our own minds and to make our own decisions. It would be like me making my children repeat a hundred times every night, 'my Dad loves me,' rather than letting them discover it for themselves in the way I actually loved them day by day. To be forced to believe would be coercive and the very opposite of a loving parent, or a loving God.

6. **Knowing God is a different kind of knowledge.**

It's like the knowledge of the artist, the philosopher, the poet, the lover. This kind of knowledge isn't superior to that of the physicist or the biologist; it's just different. It's personal knowledge, and you don't 'prove' people so much as meet them. So it is with God.

All this is only to say that arguments about belief in God will only take us so far, because ultimately we believe for a whole range of instinctive reasons that are hard to express. So we shouldn't be ashamed of being somewhat incoherent when asked about our belief in God! God-talk is like that.

Nevertheless, in the next **Connections** I'll make a number of suggestions and arguments for why that instinct of belief is well-founded.

*John Pritchard*

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### THE 200 CLUB

Congratulations to our latest Winner

September — no: 57 — Bob Hill



## MY BUSINESS IS YOUR BUSINESS

Known to some as the Drummer Boy walk, the round trip from the Station, along the old railway line to Easby Abbey and then back by Lombard's Wynd, has seen a new business open up about half-way round.

The day in late August when **JIM JACK** stopped for a break, the new Easby Loop café was doing steady business with walkers calling in for refreshment on a warm, late-summer's day. Keen to find out more, he arranged to call back for a chat with owner, Nick Perks.

The newly-established Easby Loop Café is an interesting new venture in itself. What makes the initiative even more striking is that, serving the public from the black, well-appointed trailer, is the youthful figure of twenty-year old Nick Perks, preparing food, making drinks and chatting warmly to everyone passing by.

Tucked away to the left of his mobile kitchen and servery is a secluded, sheltered seating area with picnic benches and garden tables offering beautiful views in two directions along the River Swale. Whilst the venture is the brainchild of Nick, he is quick to give credit for the idea to his grandmother, whose house lies just up river from the trailer. Nick's grandparents owned this house and an adjacent unused barn. His grandmother felt that it could be converted into a café some fifteen years ago, but the idea went no further.



Along the River Swale

Nick himself was born and raised in Tanzania and that is where he spent the first thirteen years of his life. The government there, however, was creating ever more challenging circumstances for white families, so the Perks family reluctantly decided to leave and move to Richmond, with Nick moving to Richmond School for the latter part of his formal 11-16 schooling. Summer job, 'A' levels and a career in accountancy beckoned.

Summer work as front-of-house, and later as bartender, at the Tan Hill Inn, however, proved to be a turning point. At this, the highest pub in England, an unexpected opening arose in the kitchens when the chef left. Andrew, the owner, asked Nick if he would give it a go. Nick says he already loved cooking, but this new challenge affirmed a genuine passion in him for cooking and presenting food. Although the hours were long, he was learning the trade of chef all of the time.

It was not only in the preparation and organising of the cooking of food that Nick's interest grew. He also found himself observing the importance of how the product of the kitchens was presented and served to the customer. Another lesson which grew on him was the need to achieve consistency in the quality of the dishes served in the dining room. It was not enough to do an excellent meal once; the trick was to keep on doing it at this high level. He found himself taking notes on what he was doing (especially what worked — balance of ingredients, timings, sequencing, order of preparation, etc.) to achieve this consistently high standard of food.



**Nick — hard at work**

Nick says he has a lot to be grateful to Andrew for, especially the opportunities and the trust placed in him to learn and practise the trade. The upside of this promotion was responsibility and experience. Also due to the remote location, this was a chance for Nick and girlfriend Meg, who was also working at Tan Hill, the chance to save much of what they were earning. The downside was living and working on site, where, without noticing it sometimes the days were very long — at worst 16-17 hours.

After a year in this role, a job with more predictable hours and closer to home came up at Catterick Golf Club, that of head chef. His application was successful, with Nick becoming the second youngest head-chef in the country. Here was a greater opportunity to put his learned ideas into practice and restaurant profitability grew, but a change of ownership of the golf club catering led to a move to Ellerton Lake cafe. Here, owner Simon and his son James, who was also a chef, were great teachers and supportive of his learning. Nick's growing experience, coupled with a desire to work for himself with free rein to implement his learning was growing. So he and Meg, a stalwart friend and supporter, took time-out to go travelling and decide upon the next step — and so to Easby Loop Café and running a business at the age of 20.

He is forever grateful for the circumstances which helped him to set up what we see today. He had access to a piece of a land which was family owned. Not only an ideal location half-way round a popular walking route, but this obviously reduced start-up costs. His father is an accountant, so managing the business finances had professional advice behind it when needed — another cost saving.

And, although standard careers work in schools rarely offers help towards self-employment, Nick found his Business Studies course at Richmond School under Mr Stamford extremely helpful in guiding his thinking about running a sole trader enterprise. He also had a group of really good friends, and Meg beside and behind him and probably as excited as he was by the challenge ahead, so there was much 'free' labour. Friend Tim picked up the trailer, bought second-hand and re-designed for its new purpose; Raj who came over from Blackpool and worked for a week with him; girlfriend Meg, Jess, Nathan and several other friends from school — all contributed to the work and encouraged him in the project. Family support was also crucial: Nick is not slow to acknowledge the great support and encouragement he received from his own family throughout.

Frustratingly, the target date for opening of 1st May passed by with some necessary works incomplete. Understandably, the very dry summer, which would have meant good café trade, also meant that the skilled people he needed to complete important installation works had a busy time completing other outdoor projects. Nevertheless, work was completed; the sitting-area set-out and securely fenced; services to the trailer site fully installed and checked; necessary clearances and food hygiene certification achieved; and the business opened on 1st July.

The windfall time gained through these delays was put to good use. Nick spent months developing and taste-testing his 'smash' burger, making marginal changes to add to the core ingredient of lean low-fat mince to achieve what he and tasters believed to be the ideal combination. All steps recorded for a 'perfection', which is now applied to the preparation and cooking of this 'signature' burger to achieve consistency.

The same development process was applied to his home-made pasta sauce and to other menu offerings, such as additions to a basic portion of chips to make more variety of 'loaded' tastes available. Whilst I was there, he was gathering feedback from a Ripon family in a light, conversational way about their views on the food they had been served (going beyond the usual quick visit to the table, common in many restaurants, comprising 'Everything all right with your meal?')



**Chips — with a bit extra!**

Nick also strengthened his understanding of how to cost the business side of food. Fresh ingredients have a limited-life usage, which does not increase if it rains! So he learned how to factor in the cost of high-quality local ingredients; reliability of supply; how to cut 'waste' to a minimum; allow for vagaries in trade

depending on weather; whilst still offering a reasonably priced refreshment stop which gives a profit but not a 'killing'. If consistency is one of the cornerstones of his business, then reasonable pricing is another. 'Why?' I ask. 'Because this business is in the community and serves the community. I want people to enjoy coming, and to keep coming back' is the essence of Nick's reply.

Consistently good customer service is something which Nick also wants to achieve. His restaurant experience helped him notice a disconnect elsewhere between kitchen and customer. Very personable as an individual, Nick clearly enjoys talking with people who visit, rather than just take an order and deliver it. He greets passers-by who don't stop, and chats to people whilst the order is being prepared. He will even give a free drink to people, if an order has been a bit slower than he wants it to be.

The time gained from the delayed opening allowed fine-tuning of the menu board which was finally written-up early morning on the opening day. The shutters were lifted on time at 8.30 a.m. on that first morning and Nick, Meg, family and friends waited to see what the reaction to the hard work and planning would be.



And how has it been? Beyond expectations, he freely admits.

Even with the opening delayed by two months, turnover has been much above what was planned. Social media responses on Google have shown ratings of 4.9 out of 5, indicating that his cornerstones of consistency on food quality, customer service and personal attention in serving, getting to know, and listening to the walking, running and strolling community of Richmond, whilst charging reasonable prices, is working for him.

As with other sole-traders, it's clearly hard work, and the 'busy-ness' brings its own challenges. The sun will not always shine — literally and metaphorically. If



it does, then inevitably the question 'What next?' arises. I sense that the core beliefs of serving others, consistency in quality, an eye for detail, care for people and an awareness of community will go with Nick and Meg wherever their road goes. And, dare I say it, Nick's approach to service is one from which a few of an older generation could learn. Oh, and if you can't hear the drummer boy's beating drum on your walk, it may be because he's stopped for a burger or cake and coffee at the Easby Loop Café!

*Jim Jack*



## NOTES FROM THE PAST

For her delve into the past this month, **JANE HATCHER** has researched the story of someone who was born 300 years ago and certainly has local connections, not just to Richmond but also to Downholme and Marske.

### An Erstwhile Parson of Downholme

For a short time, from 1803 to 1808, Downholme had a parson called Revd Thomas Barker Kirkby. His middle name came from his mother, the former Mary Barker of Catterick, who was 43 when he was born in 1775. His father, 10 years younger, was Revd Thomas Kirkby, the vicar of Hornby, and it would seem he assumed his son would have a bright academic future, and follow him into the priesthood. So he paid for his son to board at Richmond Grammar School in the time of Anthony Temple's mastership.

Thomas Barker Kirkby was a pupil alongside many illustrious schoolfellows: all four Hutton brothers from Marske – John a year older, James a year younger, Matthew 2 years younger, and Timothy 4 years younger – plus Timothy's exact contemporary, the artist George Cuitt the younger. A slightly older boy also there then was the elder James Tate, born in 1771, who would eventually succeed Anthony Temple as headmaster in 1796, before moving to London as a Canon of St Paul's Cathedral in 1833.

But the first of many setbacks which seem to have afflicted Thomas Barker Kirkby occurred when he was 14. His mother "died of a consumption 4<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1790: aged 56 years, 11 months & 18 days", according to the record of her burial with her Barker relatives in their family grave at Catterick. Nevertheless, he was sufficiently bright at school to follow Tate up to Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, before transferring to St Catherine's College.

After ordination as a deacon in 1798 he became his father's curate at Hornby, and continued as such after being priested in 1800. He was presumably still living with his father, and possibly an aunt and uncle, in the family home, which seems to have been in Catterick, Hornby not having a vicarage until one was built in that little village in 1828. It would seem that the



**Hornby Church**

housekeeper employed to look after them, Catharine Hogg, had become a very important part of the father's life, for on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1796 he made a very strange Will.

The first bequest was of £150 to his "Trusty Friend and Neighbour" Thomas Booth of Killerby, the family later commemorated in 1900 by the Booth Memorial Institute in Catterick Village, who was to invest it to provide income for the testator's sister Mary. On her death that principal sum was to go to Thomas Barker Kirkby, who was appointed sole executor, and was left the residue of his estate. He was also to deal with the thorny subject of his paternal Uncle John's "imprudent" indebtedness to the father.

But the greater part of the Will concerns his housekeeper Catharine Hogg, who was to have a significant proportion of the vicar's household furniture and fittings such as might "be thought Necessary to furnish a room for a Single person". She was to have a year's wages and a "plain and decent" mourning outfit, a small chest of drawers and an "elbow chair", plus a bedstead with its hangings and bedding, four kitchen chairs and a table, a clock, fireside equipment including a "teakettle", candlesticks and snuffers, six cups and saucers and teapot and six silver tea spoons, cooking, laundering and spinning goods, also "one Seeing Glass", a Bible and a Prayer Book.



**Spinning Wheel**

In fact things would change, when on 7 May 1799 Catharine and the vicar were married, by Licence, at Hornby Church by Edward Hardy, the curate of Bolton-on-Swale Church. One of the witnesses was Elizabeth Kirkby, who was presumably another relative. The couple had just over a year of married life together, until Revd Kirkby senior died, suddenly according to the Hornby burial register, "about 4 o'clock on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> July 1800. Aged 58 years and 9 months." He was buried in his family grave at Catterick 3 days later.

Thomas Barker Kirkby was now appointed curate at Marske, where the Rector, Revd Richard Horne, was an elderly man needing assistance in a geographically large parish. When Horne died in 1803, Timothy Hutton of Clifton Castle offered Thomas Barker Kirkby the lowly but permanent post of Perpetual Curate (an archaic and now obsolete term) of Downholme, which came under Walburn. This manor Timothy had inherited, because although he was the youngest son of his generation, he was the only legitimate one, and thus could inherit that part of the

Huttons' estate which, unlike Marske itself, was not 'entailed'.

While at Marske, Thomas Barker Kirkby had, on 28 June 1802, married Mary Busby of the hamlet of Skelton near Marske. They doubtless lived in a house belonging to one of the Huttons, for the erstwhile Downholme Vicarage was not built until 1858. They had two children, a son William, who died in 1836 aged 33 in San Sebastian in Spain, and a daughter Mary who became the first wife of Richmond saddler and keen amateur botanist Henry Wood, and died in Richmond, also aged only 33.



**Timothy Hutton of  
Marske and Clifton**

It would be interesting if Timothy Hutton had given us in his diaries some hint of what sort of sermons he had heard his appointee give, but unfortunately the only reference is somewhat disparaging. At Clifton Castle on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 1805 Timothy noted: "Mr Kirkby came at half past ten o'clock and very much in liquor, it destroy'd the pleasure of the evening."

Should we infer that poor Thomas Barker Kirkby had become an alcoholic? He died aged only 32, and was buried on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1808 at Catterick, where he had been living. He left a long and somewhat rambling Will, in which many details are left blank, which was proved on 14<sup>th</sup>

November that year. It states that his marriage settlement from Mary had been £1,000, which had been invested with William Steanor Goodburne and George Macfarlan, both prominent Richmond businessmen. He had £600 due to him from mortgages which he left to his children, and another £300 would come to him when his stepmother Catharine died. A scrawled note written by himself, not the legal clerk, added that he was only leaving his aunt Mary one shilling! So not the sum that she might have anticipated from his father's Will!

Of course our Parson did not live to see either of his children grow up, but his wife Mary lived on as a widow many years. She died, at the age of 57 which suggests she was older by 5 years, on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1837, at Whashton Springs, a handsome Georgian villa just beyond the Richmond boundary on the road to Kirby Hill. But she was buried, not at Kirkby Ravensworth, in which parish Whashton lies, but at Marske, where an inscribed tombstone, sadly now almost unreadable, commemorates, in chronological order of death, her son William who died in Spain, herself, and her daughter Mary Barker Wood.

*Jane Hatcher*

## CHARITY OF THE MONTH — OCTOBER



Several years ago, **ANNETTE RICHARDSON** lost a good friend to Liver Cancer, which is why she proposed this national organisation as being worthy of our support this month. The facts and figures below have been obtained from the charity's website.

Liver Cancer UK is part of the British Liver Trust, the leading liver health charity in the UK. It works to improve liver health for all and support those affected by liver cancer and liver disease.

The facts below make for rather grim reading, but are indicative of the scale of the problem.

- Over the past decade, the number of people dying from liver cancer has risen the fastest out of all the 20 most common types of cancer in the UK.
- Each day, 16 people in the UK die from liver cancer, which is around 6,000 people every year.
- The number of new cases of liver cancer has risen the second fastest amongst the 20 most common types of cancer over the past decade in the UK and now averages about 17 new cases each day.
- Liver cancer has one of the lowest survival rates of any cancer in the UK. This is because diagnoses of liver cancer normally happen so late, with only 3 in 10 being diagnosed early at stages 1 or 2.
- Liver cancer is often not diagnosed until it is too advanced for treatment to be a realistic option. It is often undetected until these late stages, because symptoms usually take a long time to show and are not unique to liver cancer, meaning they are hard to distinguish from symptoms of more common, and less serious, conditions.
- The likelihood of getting liver cancer increases after age 40 and the rise in the number of cases after age 40 is greater in men than women. Only a small proportion of liver cancer cases occur in children.

Thank you in advance for what I hope will be your generous support.

*Annette Richardson*

## THIN PLACES

This Summer, **JOHN PRITCHARD** led a party of Americans on a pilgrimage to 'Thin Places' - places where heaven and earth seem close. Their journey took them from the Western Isles of Scotland to the East Coast of Yorkshire, and it must have been a moving and memorable experience for all involved.

Perhaps I shouldn't have said the walk to St Columba's Bay would be 'easy to medium'. I realised this when the last group returned 4 hours later from a walk I said would take 2. Nevertheless, Iona had done its magic and these 17 Episcopalians from Nebraska, who I had just picked up from Glasgow, were enchanted by the saint and the story of his arrival in 653 into this very bay – Columba and 12 companions, whose faith spread like a flame of fire across Scotland and into Northumbria.

Columba passed the torch to Oswald, king in Bamburgh. Oswald called for Aidan to come over to the east coast and bring the flame of Christ to the hearts of his people. Aidan then passed the torch on to Cuthbert, whose story was told by Bede, who also wrote of Hild and Chad and Cedd and the redoubtable Wilfred. And so we are all the beneficiaries of those courageous, determined, ascetic, slightly mad Irish/Celtic monks.

My Episcopalians (what Anglicans are called in the States) were a fascinating bunch. Many had history in the US Air Force. A few had been here before and loved it. All wanted to explore the deep roots of faith in Britain, and found themselves this August with me as their tour manager and chaplain.

Iona stole their heart. The serenity and beauty, as well as the wild setting and the



The Abbey  
on Iona



wonderful stories, meant this was an early highlight of the pilgrimage. We worshipped with the Iona Community in the twelfth-century abbey, guarded by its seventh-century standing crosses. We wandered and wondered; we ate and prayed; some bought wool and others bought crosses. And we were unexpectedly blessed with the weather.

My role wasn't without variety. I preached about how these special places were often on the edge between land and sea, just as Jesus negotiated his ministry so often on the edge of the sea of Galilee, and as we as Christians today need to be boundary-walkers, on the edge of society to encourage, challenge, and bless. But soon afterwards I was having to arrange a doctor's appointment on Mull and a hospital appointment on the mainland for a man with a suspected DVT. The only compensation was a distillery visit in Oban as we waited for the all-clear, but even then the whisky I was interested in turned out to be an impossible £89.

When we arrived in Edinburgh, after a very long day that had started eleven hours before with a leap over the surging water on to the Iona-Mull ferry, I was told at our hotel that there was no booking for my tired party. This was soon rectified, but my reserves of patience were running low. Edinburgh is a must-visit for a group of Americans, but we got back on our Celtic journey on Holy Island, where the wonderful vicar inspired us with tales of Aidan, Cuthbert, peace-making and a quarter of a million visitors a year.

**Holy Island**

**or**

**Lindisfarne**



We moved on. Durham was rich in Cuthbert and Bede, and my enthusiasm ran away a bit as Wendy and I had lived under their shadow for seven years and they were personal friends. A visit to Escomb quietened me down, as the peace of that little seventh century church, one of only four such churches from the Anglo-Saxon period, settled on us all and the churchwarden's enthusiasm charmed us.



**Whitby Abbey**



**Rievaulx Abbey**

‘Keep up!’ I said to the group. It was Whitby next, where Hild and Dracula competed for our attention, but where the fish and chips won everyone’s heart. (It’s a pity we all left the restaurant without me paying for our meal – but that’s another story). We finished that day in Rievaulx, caught up in the majestic serenity of that glorious abbey, where we were reduced to silence.

Our final destination was York, where we were treated to a night-time prayer walk with the Dean, an old friend who also gave us his personal guided tour of the Minster, with its roots back in the baptism of Edwin and Hild in 627. The Minster’s foundations are dangerously shallow and the magnificent building soaks up funds at an alarming rate. But people flock there – 300 for Evensong on an ordinary Wednesday evening.

Outside the Minster, ‘Mad Alice’ took us on an invigorating tour of the city itself, but that too is another story.

At the end of the two-week pilgrimage, I delivered 17 people to the coach bound for the airport, and I’m proud to say they were the same 17 I had met in Glasgow. They had visited many ‘thin’ places and heard many tales of extraordinary faith. We had met deans, provosts, vicars, guides, and saints alive and dead. We had entered a particular strand of the early Christian story and been enriched by their faithfulness, their prayers, their miracles, their art and poetry.

And they had recognised, perhaps, the shadow of the Galilean, and become more devoted followers of his way.

*John Pritchard*

**Friends of St Mary's Church  
Richmond**

# **Curry Night**

**At  
The Town Hall  
Richmond**

**Saturday 18 October  
7:00 pm**

**Bar and Bingo !**

**Vegetarian option**

**Any dietary requirements contact 07712135601**

**Tickets £15 in advance from  
“The Book Stop” Market Hall  
Richmond  
Limited Numbers**

## FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

### *A BUSY SUMMER CONTINUED ...*

A bit like the dry weather, the late summer brought more of the same — in this case, busy-ness — for the Friends Committee. Much time and energy was invested in the Plant and Produce Sale over the August Bank Holiday weekend, with many committee members pitching in with collections of items for sale and equipment to make the day go smoothly. We were delighted to receive such a lot of varied items for sale, and a steady flow of visitors mixed spending on take-home items with refreshments from the excellent Belles Café and the Burger bar outside. Richmond Methodist Church and Skeeby Village Hall kindly loaned extra tables; there was live music in abundance; and a mid-day showing of one of Mike Porter's video diaries created great and, in many cases, poignant interest.



**The Band — Lorna Heatley, Colin Hicks, Helen Rowan, Jim Jack, Sandy Still, Rod Hall**

We were also pleased to showcase the work of two community groups, the Landscape Trust and the Richmondshire Building Preservation Society, with their plans for the old Grammar School. All of this meant we have been able to raise over £2,700 towards the £12,000 needed to do improvement works highlighted by the Quinquennial Review — a record total for this event and, thanks to the many who stayed to help at the end, a record for the shortest clearance time! **THANK YOU** to all for your generous support of time, sale items and attendance. You really are Friends of St Mary's, in deed as well as by being members of the church community.

### ***FOLK CONCERT — 5th September.***

Following on from the Comedy Night, this was another new venture for the

Friends and one likely to be repeated. Almost 200 tickets were sold to hear Edwina Hayes captivate with gentle storytelling and beautiful song — in the first half her own songs and the second half with audience requests. She even helped to clear tables at the end, before driving back to Driffield to prepare for a gall bladder removal the following morning! The evening was started off by Sandy Still from Manfield Church and Rod Hall with yours truly getting together again to play in public since they last performed as part of the folk band Fourum. The use of staging and lighting added to the professional appearance of the night.



**Edwina Hayes**

Edwina really enjoyed herself and is passing our name to some of her contacts, well known in the folk world, recommending St Mary's as a welcoming and enjoyable venue to perform in. A special thank you to Bob Hill, who assiduously set up and pulled together the whole event and to the quiet, behind the scenes work of Andy Lovell in publicising the concert and acquiring lighting effects to enhance the church as a performance venue for the evening. Our second venture into on-line ticket sales was also worthwhile, with one third of the tickets sold being through Eventbrite. As well as a good night, it raised another £900.

With money still coming in from the Plant and Produce Sale, and adding in the July Coffee Morning, the Musicality concert in June, Bar provision at the Swaledale Festival events and Blues in the Pews in August, a provisional amount of over £6,200 has been raised towards our £12,000 target.

### ***CURRY NIGHT — SATURDAY 18th OCTOBER (WITH ADDED BINGO)***

Tickets are now on sale for our third annual Curry Night at the Town Hall. Last year's highly enjoyable and successful Curry Night had a surprise inclusion of some bingo. Enjoyed by many and requested for this year, this will again be part of the evening — but the main feature will again be the superb food produced by the Challis family aided by David Frankton. Only 100 tickets available, so make sure you get yours straight away from John Challis or Andy Lovell in Church or from the Bookstore in the Market Hall.



***LOOK OUT FOR THE NEXT QUIZ NIGHT — 8th NOVEMBER.***

***Tickets £10 each***

*Jim Jack*



**Friends of St Mary's and  
Found The Note present**

# **Nothing in Rambling**

**for lovers of early Blues**

**plus support  
Drystone Blues Collective**

**7.30 pm Friday 24 October  
St Mary's Church Richmond**

**Bar**

**Tickets £10 adv £12 Door from**

**The Book Stop Indoor Market Richmond**

**Blues Night Records**

**Eventbrite**

**foundthenote@yahoo.com**



## ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes to keep our church running smoothly? Someone familiar to us all is **DAVID FRANKTON**, who quietly and unobtrusively makes sure everything is ready for worship. This month he gives us an insight into what his role involves.

Here's a question for the next Quiz Night. What connects a County Durham village with the person responsible for seeing that the church is prepared for services and supplied with the necessary equipment and provisions?

The answer, with a subtle change of the next to last letter, is Sacriston, and in recent years I've become the St Mary's Sacristan. The duties of this job are many and varied, but here are just a few.

Keeping a supply of clean linen for the altar available at all times is a constant task. This includes the long white altar cloths; Corporals, a napkin-sized square of white linen used during the preparation of the sacrament, not to be confused with a junior NCO; and Purificators, the handkerchief-sized squares of linen used to wipe the chalice during administration. There's also a selection of table and tray cloths of varying sizes. I'm well-practised after decades of washing uniform and helping to fold napkins at work. You're never too far from an iron or a sewing machine in this job. Top tip – if an item can stand up by itself, you're using too much starch.

The different coloured covers and frontals on the high altar and pulpit are changed with the church seasons. At the time of writing, we're displaying green for ordinary time, with a quick change to red for St Bartholomew's day. It's always worth keeping an eye on the Lectionary, which helpfully gives details of the required colours on a day-by-day basis. The nave altar is deliberately kept plain and uncluttered, apart from the day we celebrate our Patronal Festival, when we display the special frontal made by Ann McDonald and her team to mark the Millenium. We like to keep things colourful.



Current green altar frontal at St Mary's

We use at least seven different sizes of candles for different purposes and times of the year in our church. This includes the Paschal Candle, mounted on its special stand, which is first lit on Easter Eve and then used on various occasions during the year. Ordering this, and others, from our suppliers is a twice-yearly task. There's a bewildering selection to choose from, so it's worth spending some time identifying the sizes needed. This ordering also includes the different sizes and types of communion wafers we use. 'Wine', in the form of QC Sherry, comes from Bargain Booze in the Market Place. As a life-long tee-totaller, this is my twice-yearly visit to an off-licence! The lady behind the counter always asks after Hamish, who sometimes lived in our church porch. Usually to be seen with a can in his hand, he was a regular, and much missed, customer.



**Paschal  
Candle**



**Laying-up for Communion  
with small chalice**

We have some fascinating church silver, with the regularly used items being stored in the safe. Keeping everything cleaned and maintained is an interesting and rewarding part of the job. The small chalice used at the 8.00am Sunday service was designed and presented to the church by Christopher White. I'm sure he would be pleased to know that it is in regular use. All the silver is washed, sterilised and put away after every service – you're never far from a sink in this life.

Saturday evening sees the weekly set-up for the following morning. Doing as much as possible in advance always pays dividends. Jobs which take a few moments in advance, always seem to take much longer if left until the morning. It also helps to identify possible problems in advance, so locking the door knowing everything's ready is really quite satisfying.

The increasing use of the church for concerts and events, especially on Saturday evenings, is beginning to cause problems. Matching the expectations of the hirer with reality is often a challenge. Removing the staging and instruments; clearing catering; replacing furniture; and cleaning up after the event seems to take longer each time. An audience shouting "Encore" after the last item in the programme, delays the time we can start cleaning and setting up. Some users don't always appreciate that this is a working church building. We're trying to build up a team of willing volunteers who are prepared to help with this job, hence the appeal in September's magazine. The concert season is fast approaching – if you can help,

we would love to hear from you. Many hands make light work.

As a member of the finance team, I also operate the cash office. This involves counting collections; completing the necessary paperwork; and making regular trips to the Bank. Our branch of HSBC has mysteriously turned itself into a restaurant, so we're using the recently opened Post Office Banking Hub in King Street. We're lucky to have this facility nearby, for many towns have lost their bank branches. I'm becoming an expert in spotting foreign coins and there's now quite a collection in the vestry drawer. If you need some German Deutchmark coins, I offer a good exchange rate.

Helping at funerals offers its unique challenges. It's a great privilege to be with friends and family as their relative and friend makes their final journey, but it often needs some quick thinking and discreet manoeuvring to keep things on track. Having been part of several family funerals in recent years, it's good to know that there's someone looking after things. There's certainly more to it than just handing out Order of Service booklets.

So, if I'm not in church, I'm probably queueing up at the Bank, standing at the sink, or attached to an ironing board .....

*David Frankton*

## FROM THE REGISTERS



**We give thanks for the lives of those  
who have died.**



|                        |                |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Ronald Sidgwick        | 19th July '25  |
| Muriel Salvin          | 24th July '25  |
| Francis Matthew Gibbon | 7th August '25 |

***May they rest in peace and rise in glory.***

*Whatever we were to each other, that we are still.*

*Speak of me in the easy way in which you always used..*

*Let my name be ever the household word that it always was.*

*Let it be spoken without effort, without the ghost of a shadow in it.*

*Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?*

*I am but waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near...*

*All is well.*

## TIME OF OUR LIVES — Part 1

Who would have imagined that listening to a Dolly Parton CD, and then wondering where Dollywood (sic!) is, would have led to a two-week visit to America this Summer. But this is what happened to the Rowan family, so Mum, **HELEN**, has kindly agreed to share their experiences.

What might you expect from a trip to the USA in 2025? For many in Britain, the US today (outside of Disney) seems to have become synonymous with President Trump or perhaps the stereotypical ideas of gun sales, fast food and personal injury lawyers. There was evidence of all of these on our travels, but our experience of America was so much more than this... and here is the story of our trip to Tennessee.

Our adventures began right from the start — sheep on the road to Edinburgh airport, a man arrested off our flight to Boston, the immigration computers crashing as we tried to enter the US? It all happened. By the time we reached Atlanta, we were so tired that we barely noticed the wall of humidity that hit us as we stepped out of the airport and, reaching our hotel, we all fell rapidly to sleep.

Atlanta is the capital city of the state of Georgia and our first day trip was a drive deeper into the state. Heading two hours south-east to the city of Warner Robins (population circa 86k), we discovered a city that is a major logistics hub of the US Airforce and has a fantastic Museum of Aviation. More importantly, this gave us a chance to catch up with a friend of Helen's (a university lecturer), his wife and baby daughter, and our conversations gave us much to reflect on regarding the effects of federal government funding on university positions.



The following day our journey began in earnest, as we headed west from Atlanta to the city of Tupelo (pop. c.38k), which is most famous as the birthplace of Elvis Presley. Our route took us through northern Alabama (where I was tickled to see that the state boundary sign welcomed us to "Sweet Home Alabama") and into Mississippi.

After around 5 hours driving, and with the outside temperature reaching around 35 degrees, the children were delighted to stop at the Tupelo Veterans Park with



a “splash pad” where they could play in the water. This was the first of many places honouring military veterans that we saw during our trip — perhaps unsurprising given that Tennessee is known as the “volunteer state”. Afterwards, we drove past Elvis’ tiny childhood home before heading to our hotel.



**Birthplace of Elvis Presley**

Our plan for the following day was to visit the Tupelo Buffalo Park and head to Memphis via the university city of Oxford. All was going well until we ran over a lump of wood on the road (we saw a surprising amount of debris on the US roads, especially pieces of tyre tread) and within 10 minutes our tyre was totally flat. Fortunately, we had been able to pull up at a filling station, where the staff were lovely and incredibly helpful. I took a (very dirty) taxi to the Park with the children, while Stuart dealt with roadside recovery. We never did get to see any buffalo, but it wasn’t too long before we were back on the road with a temporary tyre and heading to Oxford at 50 mph.

Oxford, MS (pop c. 27k) is a gorgeous town, which is the home to the University of Mississippi. It was in Mississippi that we really started to appreciate the beautiful southern drawl and phrases such as “y’all”; “I gotcha”, and “you’re welcome” became commonplace. We also began to enjoy the iced sweet tea (often from a self-serve soda fountain or urn with unlimited free top-ups) that became a feature of the rest of our trip.



**Oxford City Hall — with phone box!**

Stopping for lunch in Oxford’s historic town square, we were amused to find a British telephone box — there was no clue as to why it was there! The children tried a Shirley Temple (grenadine with ginger ale) and we got talking to two lovely ladies who wished us “Hotty Toddy” (you have to imagine this in a southern drawl) as we left the cafe, which is the classic greeting of those who went to “Ole Miss”, the university. After a lovely visit, we

headed on through the countryside through fields of soy and cotton, passing tiny houses set on huge grassy plots with no hedges, to the industrialised outskirts of Memphis (pop c. 611k). We had finally reached Tennessee!

*(To be continued next month)*

*Helen Rowan*

## NOTES FROM THE GARDEN

For her final offering for this season, **WENDY PRITCHARD** turns her attention to a plant that, hopefully, will provide her with some Autumn colour in her garden. Thank you, Wendy, for all your articles this year.

If plants were humans, they'd be busy re-arranging their wardrobes now, bringing out the winter clothes and putting away the lightweight summer dresses. It's time for them to dress in yellows and browns, with some blazing reds to add interest. I have a lovely small tree in the garden, a mountain ash called 'Joseph Rock', which has yellow berries and leaves that go brilliant red. As it's a favourite of a local blackbird, I need to enjoy the berries whilst I can!



**Echinacea**

There should be a few annuals still in flower unless we've had a frost – geraniums, lobelias, begonias etc. – and maybe some Michaelmas daisies and dahlias will still be going strong. I'm hoping that the echinaceas that I've just bought will be joining them. My garden is probably full, but I have no will-power when visiting places that sell interesting plants, so there are now three echinaceas that have to find a space. Two have bright pink flowers and one has pale yellow.

Echinaceas (coneflowers) come from North America and were first sent to England in 1699. They are drought tolerant, like sun and are easy to grow, as long as they don't get waterlogged in winter. They usually have single pink flowers which can be four inches across, but they can be white, red, orange or yellow as well. Breeders have produced some attractive double flowers recently, and also some very weird ones! Echinaceas can grow over a metre tall, but modern hybrids are generally shorter. The petals droop down as the flower ages, with a central cone remaining where the seeds are set. The job of the outer petals is to attract insects to pollinate the tiny central florets which make up the cone. The name echinacea comes from the Greek 'echinos', meaning 'hedgehog', as these central cones look spiky (they're not). They can be useful bird food in winter though, so it helps to leave a few in place for the hungry birds.



**Echinacea going to seed**

Native Americans used preparations of the roots for over 400 years as a general cure-all. They introduced European colonists to the plant and it was widely used during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to treat scarlet fever, syphilis, malaria, blood poisoning, diphtheria, snake bites and even anthrax infections. I'm really grateful not to have been an ill person living then! Today, people use extracts of the entire plant to stimulate the immune system and reduce the length and severity of colds and flu. The results of clinical trials have been mixed, however, with some showing it to be effective and others showing exactly the opposite! The global annual market for herbal formulations of echinacea has been as high as \$320 million in recent years. Sadly though, I don't expect my three plants to make me rich!

*Wendy Pritchard*

### *The Gardener*

*Our gardener comes to work each day, he wears smart morning dress!  
You see him in the borders, he seldom leaves a mess.*

*You see him on the lawn edge, he's searching down the side,  
There isn't any hope for pests, from him they cannot hide.*

*He brings his wife to help him, she wears a suit of brown  
The sort of suit a lady wears when going into town.*

*Sometimes he disappears from view, so in the bushes seek  
And if you're still you catch a glint, a bright sharp yellow beak.*

*He really is a wonder, he works so hard each day  
But he will keep planting brambles, no matter what we say.*

*Then when his work is finished, he washes in the pond  
Though if the weather's chilly, this isn't too prolonged.*

*He then flies to the roof ridge or stack to gain more height.  
And there he sings with joy to praise 'the all enacting might'.*

*Photo: Wendy Pritchard*

*Words: Howard Walker*

*Levisham Hill*

*The open air, the wild wide space,  
I feel you here, and I see your face.  
The earthy smell, the bracken so brown, so far away from the rush of  
a town.  
The scent of forever – change doesn't occur  
The incursion of sheep from the stillness defer.  
Reaching out – one can touch a cloud –  
Tranquillity reigns, the dew is a shroud.  
The meandering paths, that go who knows where,  
The freshness, the stillness of the open air.  
The beauty is captured on canvas, in lines –  
But the freedom of thought remains undefined.  
The village disturbs the stillness of time,  
Centuries of moorland, unchanged, so sublime.  
Where the skies meet the bracken in a haze of purple heather,  
There's a feeling of "belonging" and absolute 'together'.  
There's an industry of wildlife, no competition to fight,  
When "change" means only sunrise, turning darkness into light.  
There is no such word as "stranger", the elements welcome all,  
"Material Power" are unspoken words, no greatness in combat with  
small.  
The village lies in slumber deep, in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales,  
No-one can describe the beauty here, or reveal its secrets and tales.  
Deep down the hill lies the railway, a track undisturbed through time,  
Where the white smoke puffs as the train departs and meanders its  
way up the line.  
It captures the years of my childhood,  
and I still feel that tingle and thrill,  
That I felt long ago. Pray God, let it remain,  
on returning to Levisham Hill.*

*Pamela Brown*



## WORD SEARCH

To St Luke, whose feast-day is 18th October, we owe a beautifully written gospel as well as the Book of Acts. He was a Greek physician and faithful travelling companion to St Paul. Under house arrest near the end of his life, Paul noted 'only Luke is with me'. Luke's gospel focuses on the compassion of Christ, and offers us moving parables, such as the Good Samaritan and Prodigal Son. Women figure more prominently in Luke's gospel than in any other: look out for the extended story of the Virgin Birth, and stories of Mary, Elizabeth, and the woman who was a sinner. His gospel also features more poor people, more lepers, more 'sinners', who are all shown to be 'inside' the love of Christ. In Acts, Luke skilfully links sacred and profane history, as subsequent archaeology has shown. He tells of how the early Christians moved away from Jerusalem into the pagan world, and especially on to Rome.

Luke

Feast

Day

Written

Gospel

Acts

Greek

Physician

Travelling

Faithful

Paul

Compassion

Parables

Prodigal

Son

Good

Samaritan

Women

Poor

Lepers

Sinners

Jerusalem



Pagan

Rome

Early

Christians



### Sudoku - Easy

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

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### Sudoku - Medium

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

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They knew it was left over from the Harvest Festival, but not what it was, or where...



"Good news on the lottery-funding for the organ repairs, Vicar – three of our numbers came up for £25!"

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 / guardians wishing to stay during the rehearsal time.

**For more information or to sign up for the Song Squad**

**Contact Chris Denton 07817 386070**



Usually last Sunday in every month

Next service — **26th October '25**,

For children and the young at heart.

Why not come and join us?

[www.richmondhudswellparish.org.uk](http://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:

**31st October '25**



### **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

**2nd October '25**



## Puzzle Solutions

### Sudoku — Easy

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

### Sudoku — Medium

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

### Wordsearch



**Deadline for November '25 edition; Monday 13th October.**  
**To contribute letters, articles, etc. please contact**  
**connections.ed24@gmail.com or 07866 033263**

## INFORMATION POINT — ALL ARE WELCOME

**There are a number of groups working in the church. All are welcome if you fancy contacting the group and being part of what they do.**

**Keith Robson reminds us that the Happy Bodgers are operating once more for help with odd jobs. Keith's contact number is (07866) 325843**

## AFTER THE CARDS AND VISITORS

Bereavement is a very difficult time for the spouse/partner left behind.

Starting again on your own is even more difficult.

Carrie and friends would like to help you with the next step.

*Our informal meetings are on the first Wednesday of every month at the Morro Lounge, Richmond Market Place starting at 1.30 p.m.*

Please phone Carrie Stephenson (01748) 850103 if you would welcome any more information. The approach is very informal and relaxed

TELEPHONE SUPPORT IS ALSO AVAILABLE.

Do please get in touch.

## PASTORAL CARE — A CONTINUING SERVICE

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.

We are refreshing the **Prayer Circle**, 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. Whatever you wish to share, in confidence, we will support you in prayer.

If you would like prayer (or to be a pray-er), please contact **Anna** via [boycead11@gmail.com](mailto:boycead11@gmail.com)





***Welcome Hub  
Summer Garden Party***

## **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.**

We meet in the Cafe at  
**Greyfriars, Queen's Road**  
**Refreshments available**

Everyone is welcome  
*Contact Sharon McCormack*  
**07791 426659**

Our 'Welcome Hub' has now been running successfully for nearly three years.

This summer a garden party lunch (see above) was organised for volunteers, at the home of John and Rhoda Fraser, as an appreciation for their support, and as an opportunity to meet together as a team. Thank you, Rhoda and John, for your kindness and generosity, and for the lovely food and beautiful garden setting.

If you would like to learn more about joining the volunteering team at 'Welcome Hub', please contact the Co-ordinator, Dr. John Ridley, on 01748 818653

or [JohnRidley7449@aol.com](mailto:JohnRidley7449@aol.com)

## **WELCOME HUB**

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Dru Yoga teacher

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