

CONNECTIONS



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

June 2023

Price £1.80

**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 Worship for All	Every Sunday apart from 1st Sunday (no communion) Every 1st Sunday
4.00 p.m.	Café Church Fun-Key Church	3rd Sunday (every 2 mths—Jan, March etc) Last Sunday each month
6.30 p.m.	Choral Evensong Free to Be	Second Sunday each month 3rd Sunday (every 2 mths—Feb, April etc)
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, Brompton on Swale DL10 7JP
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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
Organist	Jennifer Wallis	(01748) 822930	1 School Terrace, Marske
Treasurer	Peter Coates	(07801) 521954	Orgate Farmhouse, Marske peter.coates54@hotmail.co.uk
PCC Secretary	Jennifer Williamson	(01748)82436	rev.jenny1@btinternet.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

Having just returned from a glorious fortnight in the Outer Hebrides, I couldn't help but think what a wonderful environment for a retreat it is. Granted we were blessed with ten minutes daytime rain in two weeks, but the beauty and ruggedness of the landscape, the variety of wildlife, the uncluttered space, the lack of traffic, a relatively television-free environment and the lack of pressure to be driven by the unstoppable circling of the hands on a wristwatch allowed the time and space to reflect on our access to an appreciation of the finer parts of God's world which we are privileged to inhabit.

It took a couple of days to adjust to a slower pace of life and the reduction of things which have to be done (do they really?) but, all in all, an unstructured beneficial 'retreat.'

This month's magazine heralds the month in which the year turns with the Summer Solstice, after which, of course, the days get shorter as we begin the move towards winter!!

Our Rector summarises the outcomes of both annual meetings in the Benefice and also the changes in office holders. The magazine goes to print before the St Mary's PCC Away Day so details of the outcomes of that important meeting will appear next month—which will be a combined July/August issue.

Jan Beeton writes fascinatingly about a visit to China and what it led to for her, whilst Carole McCormack reminds us of interesting places nearer home which are worth a visit. Christine Porter highlights the annual World Environment Day which occurs this month, as does the feast day of the first British martyr, St Alban which she also covers in a separate article. Liz Kluz's researches reveal the ceremonies attached to the use of rushes as floor covering and, in doing so, alerts us to annual events which take place not too far from here which might be another grand day out. Wendy Pritchard's garden bursts forth in poppies, but not before she subjected herself to husband John's Sixty Second Interview questions. Jane Hatcher, draws attention to the impact of a local paper industry on Richmond, whilst photos from Ian Short (cover) and Chis Ibbotson, a drawing from Sam Watson, verse from George Alderson and event to attend, whilst opportunities to volunteer following the Bank Holiday Monday big help out complete the package.

And the 'retreat'? Here's a 'thumbnail' picture!

Jim Jack





Martin's Message



Our Benefice Annual Meetings

The Downholme and Marske Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) took place on 3rd May. We re-elected our faithful church officers, including Churchwardens **Jean Calvert** and Ruth **Tindale**, with **Andra Sison-Ham** and **Joyce Sunter** joining the PCC. We are extremely grateful to each and every member of these church communities – all of whom play their part in some way in the life of St Michael's and St Edmund's churches.

Special mention must be given to our ministry team of **Jennifer Williamson, Martin Clarke, George Alderson, and Paul** – along with **Jennifer Wallis** our organist at St Edmund's and Treasurers **Phil Ham and Peter Coates**.

This year has seen new people joining both churches and we give thanks that both our congregations are in very good heart – exemplified by the Confirmation Service led by Bishop John at St Edmund's in March, the first such service held there in many years!

The Richmond with Hudswell Annual Meeting to place on 7th May, the day after the Coronation. We elected **Peter Trewby and Wendy Pritchard** as our **Churchwardens**, with **Steph Williamson and Sharon Digan** joining the PCC.

Normally, on the day of an Annual Meeting the sermon is my annual 'Rector's Report' – but the busy-ness of the Coronation Weekend meant it had to be delivered in elsewhere, and here is a brief summary.

Soon after the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Richmond with Hudswell PCC met for an Away Day and set these priorities for the coming year:

- * **grow spiritually** (expanding our range of services and Discussion Groups)
- * **extend our community engagement** (through greater involvement in community events, and support programmes).
- * **increase our income** (through numerical growth and by developing the use of St Mary's as a concert and exhibition venue).

This required us also to strengthen our lay leadership and publicity, improve access to the building (along with car parking), and attract more young families to

church life, for example through our new service pattern with a more inclusive all-age service on first Sundays.

And following this year's PCC Away Day on Saturday 20th May details of our priorities will soon emerge – and likewise, a complete list of our elected and appointed church officers. Watch this space! Details in the next issue.

Some important 'Thank you's'

As we give thanks for the progress we have made in the past year, I would like to take the opportunity on behalf of us all to thank the many people who have enabled this through the giving of time and talents – and financial support. We have a huge number of people involved in the life of St Mary's: some 'up front', most not, and many more who donate so generously and sacrificially to keep us afloat financially. I would like to thank you all.

In doing so, I will mention a few names, amongst them our ministry team: **Paul, Bishop John, Scott, Martin Clarke, Pauline Shepherd, and Stewart Ridley**; Pastoral Assistants: **Jennifer Patrick and Sharon Digan**; Parish Administrator and Director of Music and PCC Secretary, **Colin Hicks** along with our musicians and singers; Tower Captain, **Susan Welch** and her team; Head Verger, **John Welch**; **Jim Jack with his editing team** for their work in producing this highly regarded community magazine; **Judith Clarke** and her talented team of flower arrangers; and **Anne Clarke** and all who provide us with welcome refreshments in our post-service times of fellowship. Thank you, one and all.

Special mention must go to our superb Churchwardens, **Peter and Jan**, our Churchwarden Emeritus, **David**, who is also our Sacristan, **Paul Carnell** our Treasurer, along with **John Challis** and everyone on the **creative committee of the Friends of St Mary's**. **Jan Jack** is also our Benefice Safeguarding Officer, a key role without which our church simply could not function. They all do far more than we realise.

I could mention the many others whose involvement also is key, both those who have been part of our church family for a long time, and those who have joined us in the last year or two. In thanking you all, I would like to single out **Scott Lunn** to whom we will sadly be saying farewell in June, and **Jennifer Patrick** who will be moving to be closer to family in Lincoln.

We ask God's blessing on both of them as they move on to the next stage of their respective ministries. And we owe a huge debt of gratitude to **Jan Jack** as she steps down from her roles as Churchwarden and Safeguarding Officer, and to **Jonathan Roberts** as he steps down from his role as a Deanery Synod representative after 9 years' service.

With Paul now away on a three-month final year placement in the parishes of Forcett, Aldbrough and Melsonby, we must prepare ourselves for the reality of his departure at some point in this coming year. He and Jeanette have enriched our lives in so many ways and when the time does come for them to move on they will most certainly go with our blessing.

Do please pray for our ministry teams, Churchwardens, PCC members and office-holders in their individual and collective responsibilities as our representatives in the life and governance of our churches.

With every blessing,

Martin

SMALL GROUPS IN OUR PARISH LIFE

Every month, we 'advertise' the existence of a number of small groups which get together on a regular basis in the parish. In this series where, we will tell you a little more about these groups and what they do to help you get beyond the title and perhaps pop along yourself to find out more.

Anne and Martin Clarke House Group

Question: What makes a really successful house group?

Answer: A combination of warm hospitality and knowledge underpinned by wisdom and experience.

Well, these are my thoughts, anyway. Seven of us who worship at St Mary's – sometimes fewer, depending upon the calls that life places on us – meet at Anne and Martin Clarke's house (1 Lawrence Crescent) every two weeks for Bible Study, discussion and tea. We are studying, broadly speaking, the letters of St Paul, but the delight of these meetings is that if anyone has questions, or seeks clarification or further information on an aspect of what we are reading, then Martin's wide knowledge and practical experience are readily available.

We read and discuss – most discursively – for about an hour and then finish the session with a chat over tea. During the months that we have been meeting, every second Tuesday afternoon, from 2pm until around 3.30pm have really become something to look forward to.

Carole McCormack



LOYAL DALES VOLUNTEERS



Recently, we published an appeal for volunteers to work with the Friends of Garget Walker House in helping those living with dementia. Here we find out what is being offered in our area. Donations to support are welcome via website.

Going up Barrack Hill from Richmond's only set of traffic lights, past the fire station and casting eyes leftwards, we quickly come across a housing estate, designed and laid out by Dan Gracey and Trevor Powell of the Technical Department of Richmondshire District Council in the mid-1970s. The Alexandra Way Estate, with street names connected to the history of the Green Howards regiment, was originally housing for rent from the District Council. Tucked away in the bottom left-hand corner of this development is a building originally conceived (pre right to buy) as a meeting place for residents and now known as Garget Walker House. With a small paid staff and supported by volunteers, grants and donations, the building now hosts a day care centre, quietly providing an invaluable service to individuals living with dementia.



Garget Walker House in Richmond

Its name today derives from the work of two local residents, Mrs Kathleen Walker and Mrs Doris Garget, both of whom had cared for husbands with dementia. With dedication and enthusiasm, they set up an organisation, the Friends of Garget Walker House to allow the building to be used as a day care centre, at that time run under the umbrella of the Alzheimer's Society. Now it forms one of a small network of centres across North Yorkshire run by Dementia Forward, a local charity. Although both founders have now passed on, the organisation they founded continues its good work in the community.



MP Rishi Sunak visiting Garget Walker House in September 2001 and re-opening the building for the Friends

From Mondays to Thursdays, individuals in our area who are experiencing the effects of the condition and have a diagnosis confirmed by the Memory Service can book to join the support activities organised for them on a day care basis. Not only are these activities varied and stimulating, they also offer some 'respite' for their family carers. This gives family members some 'me' time, which, of course, can

include focussing on the things they need to do for themselves; even without having to look after another adult at the same time. Caring for carers in this way – with free time, 1:1 advice and networking with others in a similar position- are all supported by the work of Dementia Forward. “Being able to drop my wife off this at the Hub Club this morning and sit here with my feet up, feeling confident that she is properly looked after is brilliant,” is feedback from one carer which would undoubtedly be mirrored by others.

The Hub Clubs run at the Richmond Centre provide a full day of meaningful activity for a person with dementia living at home. Run by trained Dementia Activity workers and supported by trained volunteers, there are group activities such as music, games and craft work combined with one-to-one experiences, all depending upon what provides the spark for the individuals attending.



Music activity at Burton Leonard Hub Club

At Garget Walker House, there is a lounge where group activities often take place, a dining room in which lunch is served, a small games room (which has just taken delivery of a new dartboard with safe darts) and a refurbished kitchen, all on the ground floor.

Outside there is a terraced area over which a gazebo can be erected in the sunnier months, some raised beds for gardening activities and a number of seating areas, all located in this quiet part of the Alexandra Way Estate and surrounded at the back by a wooded area which adds to the feeling of calm and privacy.

These invaluable Hub Clubs charge £45 per day. As stated earlier, each individual is carefully assessed by Dementia Forward before being accepted to attend. This helps to ensure that what the Clubs offer is appropriate and that the individual will derive genuine benefit from attending. The outcome of assessment can also mean that the cost may be met by a grant from Adult and Community Services of North Yorkshire Council. Dementia Forward has a contract with the North Yorkshire Council to provide these hubs at eight sites—including Richmond—around the county.

As well as the facilities on-site at Garget Walker House, the centre arranges off-site visits to local places of interest e.g. Georgian Theatre, with volunteers supporting staff in making these fun days out stimulating.

There are also other relevant activities which the organisation supports. In the Town Hall each Tuesday afternoon, there is a drop in café run by volunteers where

visitors can have a light lunch or snacks and also join in whatever activities are on offer from volunteers on the day. It is well known that music has a powerful impact on people living with dementia and music and singing is often on offer at this Time Together Tuesday café. By networking with other community groups, Dementia Forward is able to expand the type or amount of supported activity on offer at other times in the week.

Helping out

On my visit to Garget Walker House, the dedication and resourcefulness of the paid staff shone through. Equally, it became obvious that the opportunities for and offerings of volunteers of all ages to support the staff and the participants in Dementia Forward activities are many and varied. At a time when the numbers who are taking on volunteer commitments are falling nationally, the number of people reporting the symptoms and effects of the various forms of dementia is on the rise. Thus the importance of individuals offering whatever skills and talents they have is growing.

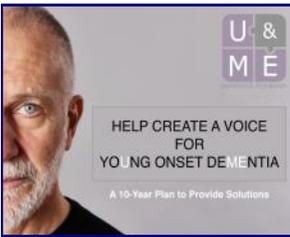


At Garget Walker House, some volunteers simply join in the daily hub activities, talking with and supporting those attending. There are also young people in the 16-18 age group who volunteer time as part of a Darlington College Health and Social Care course. Some younger volunteers do so in their own time, giving experience if they are contemplating a career in one of the medical professions. Dementia Forward provide the training and support needed and people who have particular skills, for example in art or craft work or music can offer time to work alongside the day visitors or even lead activities. Time Together Tuesday at the Town Hall is also volunteer run.

Behind the scenes, volunteering to support the organisation also offers opportunities for those who may be more comfortable working 'backstage'. When I visited, Neil Cutler and Doug Waugh, volunteer Trustees of Dementia Forward, were visiting to look at the improvement works being carried out in the kitchens and games area whilst also examining future needs for the upkeep of the building itself. Each has had experience of caring for and supporting a partner with worsening dementia-related conditions, giving each a very personal reason for giving time to the charity to ensure that the support offered can flourish. Other volunteers run fundraising activities at a local level as the Friends of Garget Walker House create a pool of funds to enhance what the facility in our town has to offer.

This volunteer support becomes more crucial as time goes on – and from all age groups. One of the emerging problems is the increase in young onset dementia, meaning that the condition can affect young families as people with jobs to hold down and mortgages to pay find their lives turned upside down as the condition takes hold. Support activities may need to be more energetic to cater for this type of demand, and also benefits from volunteers who are close in age to this younger group of service users.

Holding all of this activity together in North Yorkshire is Dementia Forward. The organisation itself was set up in 2012 by an experienced, professional team who were dedicated to supporting people affected by dementia across the county. The value of their services is emphasised by the fact that there has been a 50% rise in people



diagnosed with dementia since the charity was established, with 7.5% of the clients today living with young onset dementia ('young' = under 65). They accept referrals from health professionals (e.g. GP) or social services, but about 40% of the contacts are through direct requests from families. It is here that the free Helpline (03300 578592 – Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 4.00 pm) has proved invaluable.

Dementia Forward provides a 'gateway' through which individual concerns, often about a family member becoming confused or forgetful, can be confidentially discussed and advice given. They are also on hand to support and guide the caring family through what inevitably becomes an increasingly difficult phase of life. As one family carer put it, "you were there in my darkest hour with your lovely calm voice and demeanour and did all of the things for me that I needed. You.. put me on the right path."

If what can be offered is appropriate for the assessed needs, a member of the Dementia Support Adviser team will be linked with a family to provide a single point of contact for advice, guidance, practical suggestions or simply a listening ear. Following an initial home visit, they help understanding and planning, inform on financial benefits and support activities, choose relevant services and help all to remain connected to the local community. Full details can be found on the Dementia Forward website – www.dementiaforward.or.uk.

And for those who feel that they can offer their help as a volunteer – activity supporter, driver, trustee, fund-raiser (the list is as varied as the skills on offer)- a call to Debbie Lennox, the organisation's volunteer co-ordinator, will always be welcome (see the Helpline number above). Your help would be appreciated. As ever, donations are also welcome to help to sustain this increasingly important local service.

A TIME IN MY LIFE

JAN BEETON, who sings in church music groups and is a governor of our primary school, has a professional background in education. She enjoyed many happy experiences on holiday together with family, but the idea of holidays on her own with which life suddenly confronted her had no appeal. However, the chance deposit of a leaflet in her lap offered a visit abroad which combined travel and finding out about other ways of educating children. This, indeed, was a different time in her life, and one journey led her to a new way of holidaying—travelling, learning and giving. She generously shares her thoughts and observations with us here.

I wonder why so many of us share an urge to move beyond our own familiar places and ways of living? For some, holidays may be a brief escape from dull routines, to one with sunshine and jollity. Having just come back from the Arctic, that's not always so, as there was plenty of jollity, but ice and snow were predominant. Travelling to distant countries, there is the opportunity to see the world afresh, observing other cultures and religions.

Growing up in post-war Liverpool, in a financially straightened family, holidays as we have come to know them didn't exist for us, but exciting treats were walking to Stanley Park for the day or maybe a bus ride to Otterspool Promenade. Taking the ferry to New Brighton was a once-a-year extravagance! Discovering Christian Endeavour Holiday Homes opened up possibilities for me and my mother, once my older sisters were independent. I have very fond memories of staying in various large houses in England and Wales with new Methodist friends.



Otterspool Promenade, Liverpool

Finding a New Direction

A lifetime after those days, with thirty-four years of great holidays with my husband and children, I suddenly found myself on my own, wondering what I could do with myself. Colin had died in November 2002, my children were at universities or beyond, and I found the excess of holiday advertisements at New Year dispiriting. Then, going back to work after Christmas, a leaflet fell into my lap from a journal I was reading in the staffroom, inviting people to apply for a study-tour of Early Years Education in China. China had only recently opened to Western travellers, and this seemed an amazing opportunity, although I had almost left it too late for all the visa hurdles.

The company organising the tour, Master Travel, was not really a travel organisation but was an offshoot of a publishing firm which held the contracts for medical and educational journals such as Hospital Doctor, Primary Education etc. Early group tours (I believe the first one was for ophthalmologists wishing to provide surgical support in India) grew to attract other specific groups with any advertising done in their own journals.

Widening Horizons in China

This first educational tour to China was hugely comprehensive and we visited obstetric and neonatal units, nurseries, all ages of schooling, places for extra-curricular activities particularly for music, dance and various sports including gymnastics and finally a teacher training college of Beijing University.



We travelled to some major cities including Beijing, Xian, Shang-hi as well as many rural areas. Visits in rural places, controlled by communist groups were very formal and we had many question and answer sessions facilitated by interpreters to understand each other's methods. One headteacher discussed how in the West, pupils would raise their hands to ask questions if they didn't understand anything. In China, pupils would not want to lose face, thereby shaming their families.

It was suggested that as guests we could take small items such as pens, stationery, picture books and so on, in our luggage to gift if there was an opportunity. June, with whom I shared a room, was a lecturer in a Further Education College. She had managed to get about thirty of her budding nursery nurses to sew wonderful cloth dolls with removable clothing. We spent much time during our journeys spotting young children, perhaps in



paddy fields, persuading the bus driver to stop and watching her race out to gift a

doll, with me in tow to photograph the occasion for the students.

We had begun our tour in Beijing, where we visited Tiananmen Square and a bustling Forbidden City. There we met a group of elderly people, the last of that generation who bound the feet of young girls. It's almost impossible to imagine the pain of a lifetime walking on broken feet .



While we were in the South of China, it became evident that a major infection was impacting on life in the country with hotels closing and transport being affect-

ed. This was the SARS epidemic of 2003 which almost prevented us returning home. Issued with the masks with which we have become so familiar during the Covid Pandemic, we caught a last flight to Beijing, but needed consular help for a hotel to be opened for us. Beijing was a ghost town with completely empty roads. I'm not sure how we were given permission, but we visited the Forbidden City again, this time totally empty, which allowed for a good group photo.



Moving On

The tour to China, was the start of almost annual study tours across the world. The aim of Master Travel was that we should share our skills and expertise wherever possible and on most of the tours there would be a specific project which we

could support. For example, in Thailand we helped with a Roman Catholic orphanage cum school cum hospital for the street girls of Bangkok This was at the height of the AIDS crisis. Sometimes our support was straightforwardly financial, at other times we could use contacts back in the UK such as when we visited villages on the West coast of South India after a devastating tsunami. Some of us in education were able to send out replacement materials. Some formed links between pupils.

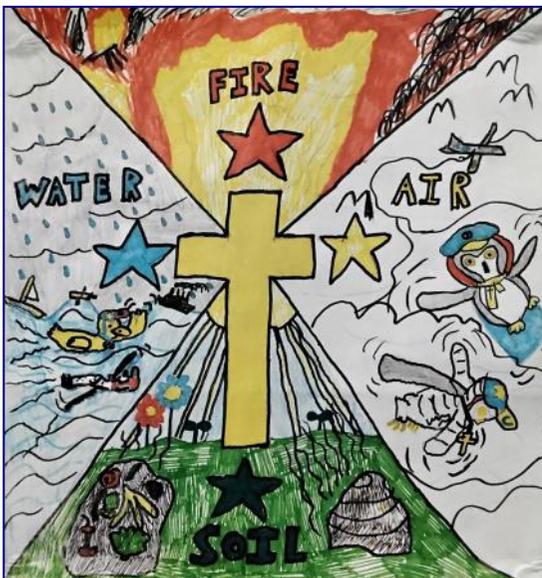
The people we meet on journeys can be inspirational. I've tended to share rooms in accommodation and my next tour in 2004 to Brazil was no exception. I was paired with a very elderly woman, Joan Antcliffe MBE, with an amazing history. She had had a calling as a teenager to be a missionary in Africa, and after selection by UMCA, The Universities Mission for Central Africa, she was sent to Malawi, then Nyasaland. Her time in Malawi and then Mozambique during the war of liberation was harrowing. Late into the nights, she could talk of the struggle to get children to safety. Her work has been praised by Desmond Tutu in a foreword to her written account "Living in the Spirit".



**Joan Antcliffe MBE
(1921 –2019)**

China was just the beginning, but I've now travelled through most of Asia, India and Central America with working tours. Possibly the most unusual study tours were up in the Himalayas in Ladak and in North Korea, which I can tell you about another time.

Jan Beeton



An elemental
drawing from
Sam Watson

GRAND DAYS OUT

CAROLE McCORMACK leaves the dogs at home for this month's visit by offering her recommendations and observations about a well-established visitor attraction in Bedale.—**Big Sheep and Little Cow**

Readers will probably have noticed that I try to find Grand Days Out which are local, reasonable, or cost-free – and often child-friendly. Hence this month's visit to Bedale.

Something for children

The Big Sheep and Little Cow Farm is delightful. It is well-signed in Bedale and there is ample parking. The cost for a single entry makes one think twice (£25 for two adults with an entrance-free toddler) but season tickets are available which are really good value. For £60 (same people attending) entrance is unlimited for a period of 6 months – under £3 a weekly visit for 2 adults and one child). It's the sort of thing that appeals to young children on a regular basis and as there is an indoor play area, could be a good wet-weather option.

Staff are very helpful and extremely pleasant. They accompany visitors to sheep, lambs, a Shetland pony, guinea pigs, rabbits, pigs and llamas – and facilitate small children's enjoyment of cuddling and petting animals – with all the necessary health and safety provisos. There is a land train (extra £1 per person cost) which the children love; and cycles – also good tea and coffee are available.



Something Historical

Bedale Church is a fairly short walk from the farm – and we safely left our car parked there. St Gregory's is a beautiful, peaceful and historical building. The

Domesday Book says that a place of worship existed on this spot from 1086, and parts of the original Church are incorporated into the present building which dates from 13th Century.

Several wall paintings were uncovered during restoration work in the 1920s. These include The Creed and The Lord's Prayer above the nave and a depiction of St



George fighting a dragon in St George's Chapel. The paintings are thought to be over 500 years old and the one of St George is considered to be quite rare as it shows St George fighting the dragon as being left-handed. Probably these wall paintings were covered in whitewash during the Reformation.

One of the oldest ringable bells in the country (weighing 2,900 lb or 1,300 kg) was brought from Jervaulx Abbey in 1360. And, after the dissolution of the monasteries, another artefact – the east window of the Lady Chapel in the south aisle – is believed to have been transported from Jervaulx to St Gregory's.



Something for everybody

Adjacent to the Big Sheep and Little Cow Farm is Bedale Station, one of the six

stations of the Wensleydale Railway. This heritage railway runs through Wensleydale and Lower Swaledale and was originally built in stages by different railway companies in the mid-19th Century.



The Bedale and Leyburn Railway, financed by local landowners, was an 11½-mile (18.5 km) extension between Leeming Bar and Leyburn which was authorised on 4 August 1853 and opened on 1 February 1855. Historical information about the railway shows how valuable a community resource it was, carrying goods and passengers – but services dwindled over the years. Its passenger services were lost in 1954, and almost half its route mileage went by the early 1960s, but the line survived until 1992 by carrying limestone to the smelters on Teesside. When this traffic finished, the Ministry of Defence decided to use the line for the occasional transport of military vehicles. This kept the railway alive for just enough time for the Wensleydale Railway Association to build support for the continuation of the railway, and eventually to form a company which took on a 100-year lease on the 22 miles of line from Northallerton (Castle Hills) to Redmire.

Today the Wensleydale Railway is a tourist and heritage line starting at the County town of Northallerton and running to Redmire on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, passing through Bedale and the Dales market town of Leyburn. Predominantly it is a heritage diesel line, with steam services operating over selected weekends, special events and the summer months. Christmas and Easter are prime times for these special trains and events and details are given on the website: [Home - Wensleydale Railway \(wensleydale-railway.co.uk\)](http://www.wensleydale-railway.co.uk) and social media .



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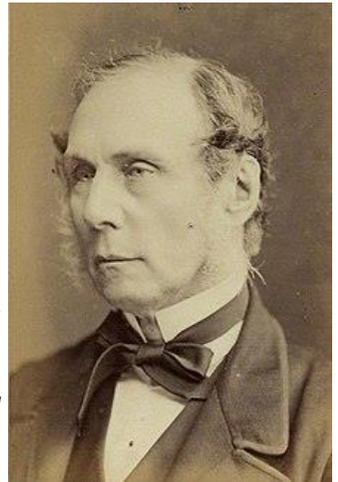
Carole McCormack

NOTES FROM OUR PAST

As well as being a centre for religious houses, Richmond had its own industries which contributed to life in the area. Paper production became important throughout the country, supporting the growth of sales of book and newspapers in Victorian times. **JANE HATCHER** tells us of the determination of Henry Cooke to bring production to Richmond and how this brought an influx of Irish workers to the town. Her piece also highlights how politicians of national significance were here in earlier times.

An Irish invasion of Richmond?

The 'Looking Back' section of the *Darlington and Stockton Times* recently made mention of Richmond's parliamentary by-election 150 years ago. This had been caused by the elevation of the sitting MP, Roundell Palmer, to the position of Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain in 1872. The subsequent by-election would obviously be important for Richmond because, since 1867, there had been only one Richmond seat, though there had previously been two, since the time of the charter granted to the town by Queen Elizabeth I in 1577.



Roundell Palmer (1812–1895)
1st Earl of Selborne

What caught my eye in that article in the *Darlington and Stockton Times* was some information, new to me, about one of the candidates for the seat. This was Charles E Brunskill Cooke, who was defeated in that election by Lawrence Dundas who, the following year, would become the third Earl of Zetland. It was not, of course, surprising to me that it was a Dundas who was successful in 1872 [or indeed also in the next by-election in 1874], because Richmond had been a 'Pocket Borough' in the hands of the Dundas family since the 18th century.

Demands for Paper

But what did surprise me was to learn that lawyer Charles Edward Brunskill Cooke was the son of local paper-mill owner Henry Cooke. I knew a lot about Henry Cooke, because he established what became the largest of the several paper mills in the Richmond area. But I had not realised that it was his youngest son, Charles Edward Brunskill Cooke, who aspired to be the M.P. for Richmond in 1872.

In the early 19th century there was an increased need for paper. As more people

became literate, more paper was in demand for writing and printing, and also it was used more widely for wrapping the increasing number of goods produced by the Industrial Revolution.

The father of Charles, Henry Cooke, who had previously been producing paper at Egglestone Abbey Mill, had decided in 1823 to move to Richmond, where he thought he would be able to increase the scale of his business. So he took over the derelict Whitcliffe Mill, lying to the west of the town, which had once been a mill for grinding corn and for fulling cloth. It had more recently become a cotton spinning mill, but that business had gone bankrupt and so the site was vacant.

Henry Cooke was interested in a site which offered a large flow of water to drive his machines. But the River Swale is notoriously fickle, and as he tried to get his new premises established, the mill dam was swept away by floods time and time again. It would not have been surprising if Henry Cooke had given up at this stage, but he must have been a dogged individual. He persevered, and his Whitcliffe Paper Mill eventually prospered, and he came to be Richmond's largest employer.

After Richmond's railway line opened in 1846, coal was brought cheaply into the town from County Durham, and so Henry Cooke invested in a steam boiler to augment the water power. And he also created large dams, where the river water could settle in order to become clean enough to be used in making finer paper. People living in Richmond in the 1920s and 1930s remembered when severe winters froze those dams, which were then used for ice-skating! And there was also a lido for swimming nearby.

But back to Henry Cooke. There was plenty of room for expansion on the Whitcliffe Mill site, which was well placed to take advantage of the new turnpike road that since 1836 had linked Reeth to Richmond by a valley-bottom route, so much more convenient than the old steep road. Paper was then made from linen rags, which needed washing and sorting. It was only much later that wood pulp was used. Processing the linen rags was very labour-intensive, and many Irish families came over and settled in Richmond, with fathers, mothers and children all working at different tasks of the process.



The Old Paper Mill, Richmond

How they heard in Ireland about the work available in Richmond, I don't know, but come in numbers they did. The 1851 Census for Richmond records Irish-born

families called McAllister, McCann, McCanna, McCloskey, McDermott, McDonald, McGuinness and McKnight. I also don't know whether it was by accident or design that there was another development which took place on Reeth Road and which complemented Henry Cooke's paper mill. This was the creation nearby of a convent of nuns of the Religious of the Assumption order. The Richmond convent began about 1850 in a house called The Hermitage, and was largely funded by the Roman Catholic 7th Duchess of Leeds of Hornby Castle near Catterick.

Expanding Richmond West

The nuns initially ran a school, and an orphanage where domestic skills were taught. New convent buildings were opened in 1869, designed by the architect George Goldie, who had been born in York, but became a leading Roman Catholic architect based in London. The Convent later became a private boarding school for girls, and more buildings were added, designed by the architects Clark and Moscrop of Darlington. The Assumption School closed in 1993.

Those Irish workers at Henry Cooke's Paper Mill, who mainly lived on the west side of the town, particularly in the poor cottages then on The Green, would have attended church in the small Roman Catholic chapel in Newbiggin. This had been there since 1809, when land was given for it by the Lawson family of Brough Hall, who were staunch Roman Catholics. That first small chapel was rebuilt on a much larger scale by Sir John Lawson in 1855, and this later building became the chancel of the present church, which was completed in 1868 to a design also by George Goldie. The former presbytery next door, which is dated 1869, and is now flats, was also designed by Goldie.



George Goldie, architect

-o0o0o-



The 'notoriously fickle Swale' destroying a different riverside mill,(not Cooke's)/ the Castle Mill, on January 29 1883

(photograph from 'Remembering Richmond' by Julia Ghent and Hubert Blades)

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY—5 JUNE

As was pointed out in the May edition of 'Connections', every month now uses a number of days or even weeks to bring various matters of concern to our attention. In amongst the World Bicycle Day (3rd), Sausage Roll Day (5th), World Giraffe Day (21st), not to mention Fathers' Day (18th), 5 June as United Nations World Environment Day and (relatedly?) World Ocean Day on 8 June. **CHRISTINE PORTER** tells us more about Environment Day at a time when care for our environment has never been more heavily emphasised and how its themes have strong relevance to the Christian faith in practice in modern times.

God has clearly placed humans in a position of responsibility over our beautiful Earth: *"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."* (Genesis 2:15). God commissions us to take care of the Earth in a way that sustains, protects, and enhances his works so that all creation may fulfill the purposes God intended for it. We must manage the environment not simply for our own benefit but for God's glory. God did NOT give us the Earth to do with whatever we please.

But we did just that. We treated the Earth exactly as we pleased. The world's population soared, and we industrialised and manufactured. We cleared ancient forests and

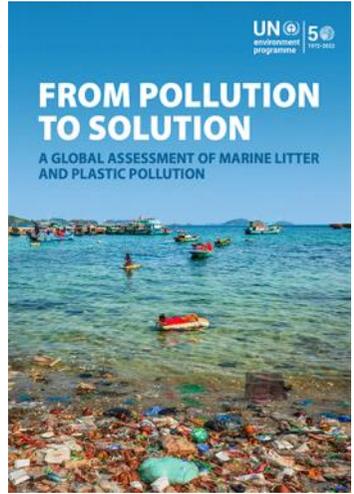


grasslands, introducing intensive animal rearing and commercial farming. We produced chemicals and pollutants. Perhaps worst of all: we polluted waterways and oceans - even the air that we breathe. We have now realised that we need to take action on the environment.

The United Nations established World Environment Day (WED), celebrated annually on 5 June, to encourage awareness and action for the protection of the environment. It is supported by many non-governmental organizations, businesses and governments, from around 143 countries across the world. The first WED was held in 1973, and each year the programme has focussed on a theme. The first theme was "Only One Earth". Since then other themes have included issues e.g. marine pollution, overpopulation,

global warming, sustainable development and wildlife crime. This year is the 50th anniversary of World Environment Day, with the spotlight on seeking solutions to plastic pollution.

Over the last 70 years, plastic - an incredibly versatile and durable material - has permeated seemingly every nook and cranny on earth. Plastics can provide important benefits, from life-saving medical devices to safe and long-life food storage. However, unnecessary and avoidable plastics, particularly single-use packaging and disposable items, are polluting our planet at alarming rates. Decades of economic growth and an increasing dependency on throw-away plastics has led to a torrent of unmanaged waste that pours into lakes, rivers, coastal environments, and finally out to sea, triggering a ripple of problems.



A Focus on Plastics

While plastic has many valuable uses, we have become addicted to single-use plastic products — with severe environmental, social, economic and health consequences. Around the world, one million plastic bottles are purchased every minute, while up to five trillion plastic bags are used worldwide every year. In total, half of all plastic produced is designed for single-use purposes – used just once and then thrown away. Plastics, including microplastics, are now ubiquitous in our natural environment. They have even given their name to a new marine microbial habitat called the “plastisphere”.

The bracelet slogan, WWJD, has popularised the notion of asking “*What Would Jesus Do?*” in various situations. It’s worth pondering what his response might be to the critical issue of the environment if he were alive today. Because environmental degradation wasn’t a problem in his day, Jesus said very little about the human relationship to the natural world. But we can certainly make some assumptions based on his values, teachings, and actions. And since the church seeks to act in his name under the guidance of his Spirit, many church leaders have made pronouncements about the urgency of caring for the earth.

Historically, many Christians saw little connection between the health of the earth and the mission of Christ. Much theological and spiritual emphasis was given to

fleeing the world and putting one's sole hope in life after death. Thus the world had little value in itself. It was merely the backdrop for the great drama of personal salvation, a purely spiritual endeavour. Maybe because a thriving planet provided the basic support necessary for the spiritual quest, it was taken as a 'given' and didn't need to be theologised about. But now in the wake of a dying or extremely ill planet, we are suddenly realizing that God's dream can't materialize without the aid of the natural world.

When we examine the life and teachings of Jesus, he certainly spoke up boldly about the critical issues of his day. He proclaimed that his mission was to bring glad tidings to the poor, liberty to captives and release to prisoners (Luke 4:18). He was concerned for the sick, downtrodden, and anyone oppressed by unjust systems. The whole environmental tragedy is rife with injustices—the rich exploiting the Earth for their greed at the expense of the poor and powerless who bear the heaviest load of negative consequences. Jesus would never have sanctioned or been silent about that.

We all know the famous last judgment passage in Matthew 25 where Jesus makes the feeding, housing, and clothing of those in need the criteria for salvation. In our day, the stakes are raised to a much higher collective level, beyond just individual actions. By every *unsustainable* personal or societal choice, we choose to create more deserts and starvation, more impure and scarce water, more erratic devastating storms, that will harm millions of people and animals. By every *sustainable* choice, we choose actions that will contribute to the feeding, housing, and clothing of our fellow human beings.

Jesus lived close to the land and drew the images for his parables from creation. He also had a rapport with the natural world. We don't have to guess at what position Jesus would take. We know he would be speaking out for a more committed stewardship of the Earth. Were he alive today, Jesus would be outspoken in challenging each one of us, and the powers that be, regarding the pillage of our beautiful Earth.



Christine Porter

God of creation, who loves all he has made and all that has evolved, open the eyes of your people, that your love might be reflected in our care for the planet. Through Jesus Christ, who walked this earth and calls us by name. Amen.

Rt Revd Nicholas Baines, Bishop of Leeds

POETRY FROM DOWNHOLME

GEORGE ALDERSON uses verse to remind us of Jesus' promise to all.

Come In

If you live in fear and dread,
Hear what Christ, OUR Saviour said.
“Come to ME, all you who fret.
I’m the friend you’ve never met, yet!
I will sort your problems out!
Trust ME, children! Have no doubt.
There is NOTHING I can’t sort.
There’s no reason to be fraught.
I changed water into wine.
Even though there was no vine!
I have made a blind man see
Which confused the Pharisee!”
So the list goes on and on.
Jesus comforts EVERYONE!
All they need to do is pray.
He is ready every day.
NO ONE is beyond his reach,
Which is what he came to teach.
So you’ll find he works for YOU!
Every word I say is true,
Though you may well be surprised
By the methods he’s devised
Which will bring about success!
Jesus Christ will ALWAYS bless!
He is God, personified,
Therefore NO ONE is denied!
Even if you’ve erred and strayed,
So, you think, he’ll be dismayed,
He has heard it all before!
Bring your sins! Knock on his door.
He will smile and say “Come in!
Want a new life? Let’s begin!”

George Alderson

THE FLOWER GUILD

Our churches are open to all for a large proportion of daylight hours. The special atmosphere of quiet reverence and calm is created by the church environment itself. One contributory factor to this atmosphere is the beautifully presented and maintained displays of flowers which greet worshippers and visitors alike. The Flower Guild, led by **JUDITH CLARKE**, takes on the responsibility of providing this special part of St Mary's.

Consider the lilies of the field...

The Flower Guild needed to give lots of consideration to lilies as we prepared for our Easter celebrations in April. If we buy them too late, they will not be at their best for Easter Day, if we buy them too early they may be past their best for our celebrations. But I am ahead of myself.

What is the Flower Guild?

The Flower Guild is a loosely formed group of people, mostly women but men would be most welcome to join us, who want flowers in church to make it feel welcoming. As one of our group said, 'It makes the church feel cared for'. Between us we share the year into fortnights and agree to put flowers in church for that period at our own expense, although our finances are strong enough to give support at an expensive time of year. Some have special skills making more elaborate arrangements, for instance one of our group had years of making displays at the church in the Tower of London, others just enjoy having flowers so sometimes they are simply in vases; whatever any individual chooses to do is most welcome.

There are several special celebrations during the year, the first one is Easter, when people are asked to give donations towards the lilies in memory of loved ones. Members of our congregation are most generous and give more than is actually required for lilies; the church always looks so very special as Spring arrives.

This year we had an extra, unusual and splendid event. A Coronation. Dates for the year were given long before we knew when the coronation would be, one particular arranger discovering that she had the opportunity or was it an ordeal? She worked very hard to make the arrangement fitting for the occasion and I am sure we were all delighted with her stylish design.

Our Patronal Festival takes place in September when the Mothers' Union kindly buy flowers and make the arrangement. This is quickly followed by Harvest when we buy flowers but also fruit and vegetables. The type of gift brought to a Harvest Festival varies hugely from fresh, to packets, to tins but to begin the proceedings The Guild makes a display of produce, which along with all other gifts is taken to The

Beacon on Catterick Garrison. The Beacon is a large modern building on Catterick Garrison which provides self contained flats for ex-service people who have found themselves homeless. However short the period of service, a home can be found here until the individual is able to move on. The residents are always delighted to receive our gifts.



And then we come to Christmas when flowers can be very expensive, but of course, your generosity has already prepared for this. The church invests in the Christmas tree, the Guild taking responsibility for decorating as much of the church as possible. As we decorate for the two main festivals there are several people in church which becomes a hive of activity. One of our group is not particularly interested in arranging flowers, she feels they should be in gardens, which is a valid point of view. But she supports us with coffee, hot cross buns and mince pies as appropriate and we couldn't manage without her, this is thirsty work. Clearing up all the mess is another task we all share for flowers and foliage can make for a rather Messy Church, although I know there is another meaning for that. will now be able to appreciate, the expense of floral decoration of our beautiful church is something with which the church does not need to concern itself. You, the congregation give generous support to the Flower Guild and together, with various other groups, we make St Mary's appear cared for, for we know what a special place we have.

Judith Clarke

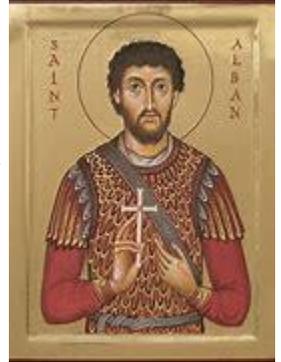


FOR ALL THE SAINTS

22 June marks the feast day of St Alban, the first recorded British Christian martyr. **CHRISTINE PORTER** looks into the life of the saint, the reasons for his martyrdom and the legends which remain.

Saint Alban

Saint Alban is considered to be the first-recorded British Christian martyr and is remembered in the Church of England with a festival on 22 June. Along with fellow Saints Julius and Aaron, he is one of three named martyrs recorded in Roman Britain, in the early days of Christianity. St Alban is traditionally believed to have been beheaded in Verulamium (modern St Albans) sometime during the 3rd or 4th century, and he has been celebrated there since ancient times.



Even though historians record that he lived in Verulamium, little is known about his religious affiliations, socioeconomic status, or citizenship. According to the most detailed account of early Christianity in Britain, found in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, in the 3rd or 4th century Christians began to suffer "cruel persecution". The date of Alban's execution has never been firmly established. Original sources and modern historians indicate a range of dates between 209 and 313. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle lists the year 283, but Bede places it in 305, "when the cruel Emperors first published their edicts against the Christians". However, most historians agree on the following account of Alban's martyrdom.

Alban met a Christian priest fleeing from persecutors and sheltered him in his house for a number of days. The priest, who later came to be called Amphibalus, meaning "cloak" in Latin, prayed and "kept watch" day and night, and Alban was so impressed with the priest's faith and piety that he found himself emulating him and soon converted to Christianity. Eventually, it came to the ears of the authorities that Alban was sheltering the priest. Orders were given for Roman soldiers to make a strict search of Alban's house. As they arrived to arrest the priest, Alban put on the priest's cloak and clothing and presented himself to the soldiers in place of his guest.

Alban was brought before a judge, who just then happened to be standing at the altar, offering sacrifices to "devils" (Bede's reference to pagan gods). When the judge heard that Alban had offered himself up in place of the priest, he became enraged that Alban would shelter a person who "despised and blasphemed the Roman

gods" and, as Alban had given himself up in the Christian's place, Alban was sentenced to endure all the punishments that would have been inflicted on the priest, unless Alban complied with the pagan rites of the Romans. Alban refused and declared, "I worship and adore the true and living God who created all things." (These same words are still used today in prayer at St Albans Cathedral).



Roman Amphitheatre, St Albans

The enraged judge ordered Alban to be scourged, thinking that a whipping would shake his conviction. But Alban bore this punishment patiently and joyfully. When the judge realized that torturing him would not shake Alban's faith, he gave orders for the prisoner to be beheaded. Alban was led some distance to execution, and presently the company came to a fast-flowing river that was impossible to cross - believed to be the River Ver. Although there was a bridge at that location, a mob of curious townspeople, who wished to watch the proceedings, had so completely clogged the bridge that the execution party could not get across.

Filled with an ardent desire to be martyred as soon as possible, Alban raised his eyes to heaven, and the river dried up, allowing him and his captors to cross over on dry land. The astonished executioner threw down his sword and fell at Alban's feet, moved by divine inspiration and praying that he might either suffer with Alban or be executed for him. At first all the other Roman soldiers were hesitant about picking up the executioner's sword. But then a second executioner came forward and, together with Alban and the crowd, went about 500 paces to a gently sloping hill, which was completely covered with all kinds of wild flowers and overlooked a beautiful plain. (Bede observes that it was a fittingly beautiful place to be enriched and sanctified by a martyr's blood).

When Alban reached the summit of the hill, he began to thirst and prayed that God would give him water. A spring immediately sprang up at his feet. It was there that his head was struck off, as well as the head of the first Roman soldier who had been miraculously converted in an instant and had refused to execute Alban. However, immediately after delivering the fatal stroke, the eyes of the second executioner popped out of his head and dropped to the ground, along with Alban's head, so that this second executioner could not rejoice over Alban's death. In later legends, Alban's head rolled downhill after his execution, and a well sprang up where it stopped.

On hearing of the miracles that had taken place at Alban's execution, the astonished judge who had condemned Alban immediately ordered further persecutions to cease, and began to honour the Saint's death.

St Alban is the Patron Saint of the Liberal Catholic Church worldwide. Additionally there are churches, festivals, and places dedicated to Saint Alban in around 20 countries, including other European countries, Australia and New Zealand, Canada and the USA, as well as countries in Africa and Asia.

Every year, during the weekend closest to his feast day (22 June), St Albans Cathedral hosts the "Alban Pilgrimage", with huge puppets re-enacting the events of Alban's martyrdom around the city of St Albans. In addition to St Albans Cathedral, there are over twenty churches in England and Wales dedicated to Saint Alban including a church at Earsdon Village in Northumberland which, incidentally, is the nearest one to Bede's Holy Island.



The annual Alban Pilgrimage

200 CLUB

The winner of the April Draw was no. 39, John Challis.
The May draw was won by no. 180 Matthew Scrafton
Congratulations, John and Matthew

ALL IN THE GARDEN GREEN

WENDY PRITCHARD turns our attention to her garden in June and a flower which she looks forward to seeing burst forth in colour as the days get longer and warmer, as well as thinking of what will take their place as they complete their allotted span. She provides the photos too!!

I love June in the garden. Everything is bursting with life; the insects are having a field day and all is fresh and green. Roses are just starting into flower and beautiful gardens have become destinations for afternoons out (especially if they have tea rooms!) Garden centres are now places to avoid unless you have somewhere to plant all the tempting specimens you didn't intend to buy when you went in.

In my garden, the big clump of oriental poppies will be having their glorious fortnight in the spotlight. Inevitably, just as all the buds have opened into wonderful red technicolour, we'll have some strong winds that will rip the delicate petals off and toss them into the air. So, let's enjoy this spectacular show whilst we can!

Oriental poppies are big blowsy show-offs, usually red or orange but with plum, white or pink variants. Their flowers have blue-black centres ringed with delicate silky petals, topping tall hairy stems that rise from a base clump of serrated grey-green leaves. They form big clumps that come back year after year and their seed heads can be used in dried arrangements.

If you're tempted to introduce some of these into your garden, be very careful where you plant them. They like full sun in well-drained soil, and develop a deep tap root (one which goes straight down into the soil). They can be bought as 'bare roots' - you buy a bit of root, which miraculously starts into growth in spring. So be warned - it's very hard to move a full-grown clump of oriental poppies if it's in the wrong place. Any attempt to dig it up will almost inevitably leave some bits of the root behind, so that next spring up it grows again, with even more shoots than before. Oops ...



Oriental poppy leaves die down in summer leaving a big gap in the garden before the new growth starts again, so it's helpful to have some other plants nearby that

will spread into their vacated space. You can cut off the old leaves without doing any harm. Otherwise, they're no trouble at all and are tough as old boots. The seed heads develop holes round their top and act like pepper pots, shaking out the ripe seed. Nature is so clever! Each seed head holds hundreds of little black seeds which look very like the ones you can buy to use



in baking. But beware – all parts of oriental poppies are poisonous, so don't be tempted to scatter the seeds on top of your cakes! Poppy seed for baking comes from an annual poppy with Latin name 'papaver somniferum'. But then so does opium, so you'd need to grow the particular baking variety or your cakes will have quite an effect!

Wendy Pritchard

AN ABUNDANCE OF GARDENING—NEED SOME HELP?

Last month Wendy Pritchard shared her gardening ideas with us and we were probably all inspired to follow her example but we do not have the time.

Help is at hand from one of our church family, Richard, whom you may have seen at church on Sunday mornings with his family. Richard serves with the Army and lives on the Garrison. Apart from his military expertise, Richard is very good at gardening, including as a trained chain saw operator, so can do all those heavy maintenance jobs which have built up over the winter. He is available evenings and weekends.

Please contact him at richymwwangi@yahoo.com or 07365 516085 to discuss rates and timescales – he will be delighted to hear from you.

Alexe Roberts

TRINITY SUNDAY—4 JUNE

This month we celebrate Trinity Sunday. The doctrine of the Trinity is one of the most important of the Christian faith, for it goes to the very heart of what God is like. The Bible is quite clear: there is one God, but He is revealed in three 'persons' – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Bible reveals a pattern: God the Father lives in heaven and has never been seen. God the Son became the incarnate Jesus Christ, who made known to us the Father, and God the Holy Spirit, who is unseen, has been sent to live within and to equip His people, the Church.

MUSINGS FROM MARSKE

LIZ KLUZ, inspired by thoughts of spring cleaning, has been prompted to look at churches in former times when there were no cleaning aids—and, indeed, when churches were used for far more than just worship. From floor coverings to seating arrangements (with the box pews at Marske very much in mind), her researches offer some insights in to times past and revival in the form of customs today.

At this time of year the very words “spring cleaning”, accompanied by enough sunshine to dry a line of washing or two, can have a remarkably energising effect. Curtains and cushion covers, carpets and rugs all get spruced up and suddenly paint charts become very appealing. It’s a time for replacing old worn out items with something fresh and new.

I’m writing this on the first day of May, to catch an early deadline, but of course it will be June when the magazine is published so most people will have finished their seasonal clean up unless the three bank holidays this month have given some of us an excuse to postpone mucking out for a bit longer.

We take modern technology for granted as we plug in our Dysons and load our automatic washing machines, taking the back-breaking strain out of housework but in the days before wood or stone floors, keeping homes clean must have been so difficult.

For thousands of years, the ground floor surfaces of dwellings were made from compacted earth, chalk or clay mixed with manufactured lime, ash or occasionally milk which acted as a binder and waterproofer. Animal blood had similar properties as well as adding a rich red colour.

Church floors were also made using this method but were cold to stand on for any length of time so a thick layer of rushes and grasses were spread liberally over the surface to provide some insulation. It was usual for bodies to be buried under the floors of churches so fresh supplies of fragrant rushes were needed regularly to cover the odours of decay. It was not unusual for people to bring their dogs into church and, along with sheep and cattle straying in from time to time, the rushes



Replicating rush covering in St Mary's Redcliffe, Bristol on Rush Sunday

would have become very unpleasant. Early- to mid-summer was the time for clearing out dirty, damp old rushes and replacing them with a fresh crop and the ancient custom of *Rushbearing* was practised in churches all over Britain. In King James 1's *Book of Sport* published in 1618, Rushbearing was noted as being a pastime which was permitted on Sundays.

Communities got together to harvest the rushes and in many areas the custom was to build an elaborate stack of rushes on the back of a cart which was then pulled by



The Rush Cart, Sowerby Bridge



Rushbearing in Ambleside

a group of local men to the church where everyone helped to spread them over the floor. It was another welcome excuse for folk to get together and celebrate often leading to heavy drinking and bad behaviour which some local worthies found unacceptable forcing an end to the practice! As time went on, earthen floors in churches were replaced by stone flags or wooden planking so there was no further need for rushes but in some areas the enjoyment of the ceremony was too good to let go and it continued until the early 1900s.

Long after it outlived its original purpose, there are still a few places in Britain which celebrate Rushbearing every year. Crowds flock to Ambleside on the first Saturday in July to watch a procession of young children carrying symbolic "bearings" made of rushes, flowers and moss, followed by members of the clergy and a brass band as they make their way through the streets to their local church where the bearings are displayed for a week. At Grasmere on August 5th, Rush Maidens wearing green and white dresses and carrying a linen Rush Sheet filled with rushes, reeds and flowers sewn onto it follow a processional cross made from golden flowers. Warcop and Musgrave, just off the A66 in Cumbria, also celebrate Rushbearing in a similar way. However, Littleborough, Gorton and Saddleworth in Greater Manchester and

Sowerby Bridge in West Yorkshire carry on the old tradition of piling the rushes on the back of a cart.

With few comforts such as solid floors or seating, attending church could be an uncomfortable experience for people as they were expected to stand throughout services. In the 13th century the first backless stone benches began to appear in some churches for the use of infirm members of the congregation. They were placed against the walls of the nave and the expression “going to the wall” was possibly coined at that time. Wooden benches had replaced the stone ones by the 14th century and were positioned into the centre of the nave and by the 15th century they had become commonplace.

Until The Reformation in the mid 1500s, the only people who were seated in churches were the clergy, the local lord of the manor and his family as well as local dignitaries. The rest of the congregation had to stand during the service. However in 1569 changes were made and worshippers were expected to stay in church to listen to sermons rather than leaving after the Eucharist had been celebrated. It was at this point that fixed seating became necessary and box pews were introduced allowing families to sit together. Those with money and status paid for their own pews to be installed or paid rental to the churches. This was a popular way of raising revenue for the church but was divisive and often meant that the ordinary people couldn't afford to pay and still had to stand.

An advertisement for the sale of Clints Hall in Marske appeared in The Newcastle Courant on 16th October 1840 which listed all the attractions of the property including “the enjoyment of a large family pew and 9 smaller ones for the owner and his tenants in the Parish Church of Marske”. Within a decade the private ownership of church seating had become controversial and in 1866 The Free and Open Churches Association was founded ending that particular privilege. By the middle of the 19th century, box pews were being replaced by bench pews in many churches but a few still survive today in different parts of the Britain.

At Marske we still have our box pews which were installed in about 1823 after a damning report about the dilapidated state of the church was sent to the churchwardens by The Bishop of Chester in 1822.

Liz Kluz



PATHWAYS IN PRAYER

One of the features of modern life is the range of distractions which living in an advanced economy offers. These become even more powerful if accompanied by the thought 'I'm bored' (a phrase strongly discouraged in our house from when our children were very young—and impressionable!). However, I digress. In his latest 'Pathway', JOHN PRITCHARD starts by accepting that feelings of boredom can get in the way—and offers ideas on re-focussing.

BOREDOM AND DISTRACTIONS!

I once wrote a book on prayer (How to Pray, SPCK) in which the then Archbishop of York wrote in his commendation, 'an author who admits that sometimes prayer is simply boring, just has to be taken seriously!' But so it is. Not all of life is champagne and fireworks and every human activity has its down times.



Sometimes we'll wonder what we're doing throwing prayers at the ceiling and wishing we could call it a day. We don't feel we're getting anywhere and God is probably as bored with what we're doing as we are. So what now?

1. Accept it, be honest. It's OK. It's part of life. And it's OK to bale out and come back another day. On the other hand, most of those who know a lot about the journey of prayer say that it's when we go through these dark patches rather than avoid them that we discover the deeper treasures of prayer.

2. Return to a structure like PRAY. Prepare – find your place, light a candle, be still for a while. **Remember** - as in rejoice/repent at what's been happening in your life, **Ask** – for your special people and the world's hard places.

Yield – open your life to God for this day. Structures are there to hold us through uncertain times, operating a bit like the banks of a river giving shape to the river rather than just letting it carelessly flood the fields.

3. Use trusted prayers and hymns. Collect prayers and hymns that speak to you and for you, and let them bear the weight of your praying rather than you having to think about and articulate prayers for yourself all the time. I have a file of such prayers and a few well-used hymns pasted onto cardboard kept in my prayer place.

4. Take a cup of coffee into your prayer time! I've done this for years and it brings encouragement on a bad day and comfort on any day!

John Pritchard

SIXTY SECOND INTERVIEW

JOHN PRITCHARD turns to his wife, Wendy, to get her responses to his twenty questions. I'm not sure if he discovered anything to give him ideas for future birthday presents, but I wonder if he had some surprises when he received her responses. Long serving school governor and newly, elected Church Warden and Wendy gives us her quick fire answers.



First memory? I remember distinctly that there was a bird bath in the garden we were living in when I was about two years old. Sadly, my parents were equally certain that there wasn't!

Favourite meal? Almost anything somebody else has cooked, and will wash up afterwards.

Favourite music or musician? Annie Lennox

Pet dislike? Big black spiders

Best holiday? The National Parks of America – stunning scenery with someone else driving. (We went with Saga as we're getting old ...)



Annie Lennox

Childhood hero? My dog – I thought if I was nice to him, he's turn into a prince. It didn't work

Favourite hobby? Gardening

Luxury on Desert Island? Gardening tools and some packets of seeds.

Recent TV you've enjoyed? The answer ought to be something to do with gardening, but it's actually 'Call the Midwife'.

Worst fault? Thinking I can solve every problem and not being prepared to give up.

Two best films ever? *Pretty Woman* (particularly the shopping scene) and *The Princess Bride*.

Favourite drink? Tea

Regret?

Not being brave enough to do adventurous stuff like abseiling. I went up in a helicopter for the first time a few years ago and loved it. Think what I've been missing!



Scene from 'Pretty Woman'

Best recent book?

A Terrible Kindness by Jo Browning Wroe

Favourite charity?

Christian Aid

Place you feel happiest?

When I'm with our daughters and their families (closely followed by the garden...)

Three dinner companions?

Billy Connolly, John Bell and Alexander McCall Smith

What do you pray for most?

Other people

Traditional or new Lord's Prayer?

I do a sort of merged version of the two!

Epitaph?

She did her best.



-o0o0o-

COFFEE MORNINGS IN JUNE



Come in to a warm welcome.

Anne and Martin Clarke invite you to an

'AT HOME' COFFEE MORNING

You will find us at **1 Lawrence Crescent**

10.00am to 12.00 noon

Saturday 10th June 2023

Toasted tea cakes, biscuits, cakes, tea and coffee and good company

St Mary's Town Hall Coffee Morning

Saturday 17 June

9.00 a.m.—12 noon

Coffee, tea, raffle, stalls. Please support.



BEHIND THE HYMNS

Anyone who has been a viewer of 'Songs of Praise' over the years will recognise this month's choice by **CHRISTINE PORTER** as a favourite across many denominations of the Christian faith for the gospel tradition embodied in its personal words and a melody which reinforces the feelings in those words. Well-recognised, often sung—but how did it come about?

Blessed Assurance

In June 1961, the great American evangelist Billy Graham came to Manchester City's Maine Road ground after the football season had ended. This four-day crusade in Manchester attracted over 100,000 people to the stadium, which was one of several venues for Billy Graham's UK tour.



The most popular of the crusade's hymns was **Blessed Assurance**, a typical gospel hymn of the late nineteenth century. It is simple, truly evangelical in spirit, and a fine testimonial hymn of praise. It has an emotional appeal that comes from its rousing tune and from the personal experience of redemption and the joy of serving Jesus the Saviour.

- 1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of his Spirit, washed in his blood

Refrain: This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

- 2 Perfect communion, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight.
Angels descending bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love. **[Refrain]**

3. Perfect submission, all is at rest.
I in my Saviour am happy and bless'd,
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with his goodness, lost in his love. **[Refrain]**

The Writer

These words were written in 1873 by a remarkable American hymn writer Frances Jane ('Fanny') Crosby, who was born in New York on March 24 1820, into a family of strong Puritan ancestry. In spite of tragically becoming blind through a medical accident at the age of 6 weeks, she eventually became very well educated. At the age of fifteen she entered the New York Institution for the Blind, where she received an excellent education and in 1847 progressed to being a teacher there.

One evening in 1873 Fanny was visiting her friend and composer Phoebe Palmer Knapp as the Knapp home was having a large pipe organ installed. The organ was incomplete, so Mrs Knapp, using the piano, played a new melody she had just composed. When Phoebe asked Fanny what she thought of the tune she replied "*Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine!*" The two of them then continued to sing the melody together, while Fanny composed the lyrics.



Fanny Crosby (1820-1916)

The hymn reflected Fanny Crosby's walk of faith, as expressed by the apostle Paul in Philippians 1:21, "*For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain*". As Fanny later explained [about the text she had written](#):

*"Sometimes a tune is furnished for me for which to write the words. The hymn titled "**Blessed Assurance**" was made in this manner. My dear friend Phoebe Palmer Knapp (Mrs. Joseph), so well-known as a writer and singer of most excellent music and as an aid and inspiration to all who knew her, had composed the tune; and it seemed to me one of the sweetest I had heard for a long time. She asked me what it said. I replied, 'Blessed assurance.' I felt while bringing the words and tones together that the air and the hymn were intended for each other".*

Crosby's text and Knapp's tune were published in John R. Sweney's Gems of Praise in 1873. The hymn was also published in both the American and British editions of the Ira D. Sankey hymnals. Sankey, who was a good friend of Fanny's, once related this anecdote about the comfort that **Blessed Assurance** had provided: "*During the recent war in the Transvaal, said a gentleman at my meeting in Exeter Hall, London, in 1900, when the soldiers going to the front were passing another company whom they recognized, their greetings used to be, "Four-nine-four, boys; four-nine-four;" and the salute would invariably be answered with "Six further on, boys; six further on."* The significance of this was that, in '*Sacred Songs and Solos*,' a

number of copies of the small edition of which had been sent to the front, number 494 was 'God be with you till we meet again'; and six further on than 494, or number 500, was 'Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine'" (Ira Sankey *My Life and Sacred Songs*, 1906).

It has since become an immensely popular hymn in English-speaking Christendom and, in the intervening years since its composition, Fanny Crosby's words have comforted millions across the world in the face of fear, persecution, sorrow and doubt.

Christine Porter

ADVANCE NOTICE OF JUNE/JULY EVENTS

Swaledale Festival Events hosted at St Mary's

29 May 7.30 p.m. Tim Kliphuis Sextet - jazz/classical violin
2 June 7.30p.m. Manchester Baroque- features period instruments
6 June 7.30 p.m. Connaught Brass—young classical brass ensemble
Tickets from Festival Office or www.swalefest.org

Friday 30th June: Blues in the Pews. Following the successful test event held in March at St Mary's, Blues in the Pews returns at the end of June with guest artist GREG BRICE and the resident band. Look out for details in pew sheet and posters.

Sunday 2nd July: Annual Mothers' Union annual 'Afternoon Tea in the Garden'— marvellous food and company at this great event. Afternoon teas in the Scrafton's garden from 3 p.m —or order a takeaway! Box to collect from 2.00 p.m. onwards

Piano Recital in St Mary's. Yorkshire (and international) pianist Jill Crossland has booked St Mary's to give a recital on Sunday afternoon **July 2nd** at 3 p.m. including works by Bach and Mozart. Jill has played all over the UK and abroad, including frequent appearances at Wigmore Hill, South Bank and Sage Gateshead, and also at the Vienna Musikverein, Vienna Konzerthaus and Leipzig Gewandhaus. Jill has critically acclaimed recordings with Warner and Signum Classics, and her complete Bach 48 Preludes and Fugues was described by the Penguin Guide as 'a remarkable achievement, ranking with the finest.' Tickets are £7.50 from Castle Hill bookshop, online from Eventbrite, or at the door. (U-16s free). Refreshments will be available.

Saturday 22nd July 2 p.m. Annual Church BBQ in Rectory Gardens Food, music and games. An enjoyable afternoon guaranteed.



Chris Ibbotson has sent in this fine image of St Mary's at night with the recently installed floodlighting in operation. Thanks, Chris.



Last Sunday in every month.

Next service

Sunday 25 June 4.00 p.m.

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**THIRST!!
(The Men's Group)**

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**CASTLE TAVERN,
Richmond Market Place**

Next meeting: 1 June

Contacts: Rev Paul Sunderland or Leonard Scrafton. Just turn up and be welcome!



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 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.

The Pastoral Team at St Mary's has a **Prayer Circle** at St Mary's. If you have something which you would appreciate prayer for, whether for yourself or for someone you care about, we would be privileged to pray about it. No prayer request is ever too small or trivial. Whatever you wish to share, in confidence, we will support you in prayer.

To ask for prayer you can either telephone, email or text Rev Martin on 821241, fletcher_martin@yahoo.co.uk or 07762 440094; or Paul Sunderland (07989 178196) paul.sunderland@leeds.anglican.org—or speak to any member of the Pastoral Team and they will place your prayer in the circle. Please be assured your requests are confidential.

- ◆ *To be a praying member of the circle or a member of the Pastoral Team, please speak to Rev Martin or Paul. They would love to hear from you.*



Sudoku - Easy

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

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Sudoku - Medium

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

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Word Search

Many of us know the song 'Day by Day' – the folk-rock ballad from the musical Godspell. It ran: Day by day, day by day, Oh dear Lord, three things I pray: to see thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, follow thee more nearly, day by day.

But did you know that the lyrics are based on the prayer of Richard of Chichester, a bishop in the 13th century? Richard was greatly loved. He was charitable and accessible, both stern and merciful to sinners, very generous to those stricken by famine, and a brilliant legislator of his diocese. He decreed that the sacraments were to be administered without payment, the clergy to be chaste, and the laity to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days.

Richard was also prominent in preaching the Crusade, which he saw as a call to reopen the Holy Land to pilgrims, not as a political expedition. He died in 1253. In art, Richard of Chichester is represented with a chalice at his feet, in memory of his having once dropped the chalice at Mass!

- Day
- Rock
- Ballad
- Musical
- Godspell
- Dear
- Lord
- Three
- Things
- Pray
- See
- Clearly
- love
- Dearly
- Follow
- nearly
- bishop
- sinner
- generous
- famine
- sacraments
- laity
- crusades
- pilgrims
- chalice



Puzzle Solutions

Sudoku — Easy

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

Sudoku—Medium

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

Wordsearch

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

Deadline July/August edition : Saturday 10 June

To contribute letters, articles, etc

contact stmarys.maged@gmail.com or 07754 283161

How we can support Richmond's Food Bank

For readers who add to their weekly shop by buying items for the Foodbank based at the Influence Church, this is an updated list of the most useful donations

Tins : meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, soup, beans, pasta, tinned meals (e.g. chilli, stew), pies, rice pudding, spaghetti

Packets: pasta, pasta sauce, noodles, cereal, porridge, rice, biscuits, spaghetti; flapjack

Jars: pasta sauce, sandwich fillings, jam, spreads, tea, coffee

Also: UHT milk, squash, washing up liquid, deodorant, bars of soap, tampons, sanitary pads, nappies (0-3 mths); laundry detergent or powder; toilet rolls (4 packs) ; shower gel; shampoo

More information : storehouse@influencechurch.co.uk

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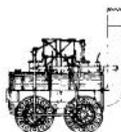
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