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HRH Prince Philip

1921-2021



> HRH Prince Philip.
Photo credit:
Press Association (PA)

TOGETHER as a Diocese and a nation we have joined in prayer to mourn the loss of His Royal Highness Prince Philip.

Churches across our Diocese have paid their respects to the Duke of Edinburgh who sadly died on Friday April 9 - two months before his 100th birthday.

Leading the tributes on behalf of our Diocese, Bishop Christine said: "The Duke of Edinburgh's devotion and steadfast support of the Queen is one of the greatest love stories of our time. By her side, he served our nation with dedication and deep loyalty.

"His commitment to duty, together with his lively wit and down to earth approach, have been part of the life of our nation for nearly seventy years. I pray today with gratitude for his life, for Her Majesty and the Royal Family in their loss, and for all who mourn."

Bishop Mark said: "We are often told that life is a marathon and not a sprint. In that case, His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh ran with extraordinary perseverance and endurance, remarkable strength and loyalty, and unparalleled commitment and dedication, both in his own right, but of course also as husband and consort, father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

"We pray for Her Majesty the Queen, her family, and all of us who mourn, that such profound loss is tempered by deep, deep gratitude and by renewed hope in the Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith."

The Diocese honoured the life of Prince Philip in a live streamed **Service of Commemoration** at Newcastle Cathedral with Bishop Christine leading the service and the Dean of Newcastle preaching. A small congregation of the Lord-Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear and other dignitaries were present.

And Hexham Abbey also held a Service of Commemoration, attended by the Vice Lord Lieutenant and the High Sheriff of Northumberland.

In a moving **video tribute** filmed

for an earlier service at the Cathedral, Bishop Christine described Prince Philip as 'an extraordinary person full of vitality, creativity, great determination and above all such loyalty to the Queen'.

She said she has been 'particularly inspired' by his work with and for young children, referencing the Duke of Edinburgh's Award which millions of young people have taken part in since the scheme was founded by Prince Philip in 1956.

Speaking of his 'unswerving loyalty' to the Queen, Bishop Christine cited Her Majesty's golden wedding tribute to Prince Philip in 1997 in which she said: "He has, quite simply, been my strength and stay all these years, and I, and his whole family, and this and many other countries, owe him a debt greater than he would ever claim, or we shall ever know."

The Very Revd Geoff Miller, Dean of Newcastle, added to the tributes from our Diocese: "As a city and a country, we mourn the passing of the Duke of Edinburgh who through eight decades has been a devoted husband to Her Majesty the Queen and a loyal and hard-working servant to the nation.

"He came to Newcastle and the North East many times, sometimes with the Queen, sometimes on his own, and many will have fond memories of those visits. We pray for Her Majesty and the Royal Family at this difficult time, and for all who mourn the Duke's passing."

Flags were flown at half-mast and bells tolled 99 times across the Diocese as the nation entered an eight-day period of mourning.

Many Sunday services included special prayers and liturgy, with some churches creating memorials to mark the death and celebrate the life of Prince Philip.

In the hour leading up to the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral - held at St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle on Saturday 17 April - churches rang single bells until 3pm when a national minute's silence was held.

■ **Read more reaction and tributes on pages two and three.**

Bishops' Diaries

May

This is not a full list of the bishops' engagements but includes the items we think might be of particular interest to you. Under the present circumstances some appointments have had to be cancelled, and there is a possibility of further cancellations. Many appointments have been changed to virtual meetings.

Bishop of Newcastle

4th	Bishop's Council and Standing Committee
5th	Spiritual Direction
6th	Bishop's Senior Staff Meeting
8th	Diocesan Synod 1300th Anniversary, St John Lee
9th	90th Anniversary, St Mary Monkseaton 900th Anniversary, Norham Castle
11th	Curates/IME2 Meeting
13th	North of Tyne Inclusive Economy Board
13th	Interviews Christ the King Team Ministry
16th	Haydon Bridge
17th - 19th	House of Bishops Meeting
20th - 23rd	Pilgrimage - Hexham Abbey - Durham Cathedral
23rd - 25th	Bishops Senior Staff Residential
26th	Shortlisting Meeting: St Peter Monkseaton Vacancy Meeting of Bishop's Staff and Area Deans
27th	Bishop's Council Meeting

Bishop of Berwick

4th	Bishop's Council and Standing Committee
5th	Transformation Team Meeting
6th	Bishop's Staff Meeting
8th	Diocesan Synod
9th	Preach and Preside at Eucharist Service at St Mary's, Stannington
9th	Confirmations Service at Corbridge
16th	Confirmations Service at Embleton and Alnwick and Coastal Benefices
18th	Transformation Team Meeting
19th	Transformation Team Meeting
20-22nd	Pilgrimage Hexham to Durham
23-25th	Bishop's Senior Staff Residential
26th	Meeting of Bishop's Senior Staff and Area Deans, Transformation Team Meeting
27th	Northern Church Leaders Spring Retreat, Bishop's Council Meeting

Gospel Readings

1st	John 14.1-14	17th	John 16.29-end
2nd	John 15.1-8	18th	John 17.1-11
3rd	John 14.21-26	19th	John 17.11-19
4th	John 12.20-26	20th	John 17.20-end
5th	John 15.1-8	21st	John 21.15-19
6th	John 15.9-11	22nd	John 21.20-end
7th	John 15.12-17	23rd	John 15.26-27; 16.4b-15
8th	John 15.18-21	24th	Mark 10.17-27
9th	John 15.9-17	25th	Mark 10.28-31
10th	John 15.26-16.4	26th	Mark 10.32-45
11th	John 16.5-11	27th	Mark 10.46-end
12th	John 16.12-15	28th	Mark 11.11-26
13th	Luke 24.44-end	29th	Mark 11.27-end
14th	John 15.9-17	30th	John 3.1-17
15th	John 16.23-28	31st	Luke 1.39-49 [50-56]
16th	John 17.6-19		

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➤ **Queen's Chaplain, Revd David Glover lights a candle in memory of Prince Phillip**

A reflection from the Queen's Chaplain

Revd David Glover, Rector of Hexham Abbey has been Chaplain to the Queen since 2017

As a Chaplain to the Queen, I have always felt that the most important aspect of my role is to pray for the Queen every day and to hold her and her family in God's care and blessing.

As our nation and Commonwealth mourns the death of Prince Phillip, and as we thank God for his years of outstanding service, we remember that first and foremost he was a husband, rock and support to his wife, Her Majesty the Queen.

He fully understood and inhabited that supportive role and gave his life so generously to enabling the monarchy to flourish.

My prayers, at this time, are full of thanks for Prince Phillip's life but also for the Queen who now faces life without her beloved husband.

I pray that she would know the abundant blessings of God, in whom she deeply trusts.

A short reflection on bereavement in these Covid times

THE death of the Duke of Edinburgh brings to my mind the bereavements many of us have faced over the past year of on-off lockdowns.

The show of public respect for the Duke and the sharing of something of the man by those who knew him and worked with him reminds me that while we cannot all give a 41 Death Gun Salute in honour and respect of those we have loved and lost, we do demonstrate our respect in communal ways nonetheless.

We commit the names of our loved ones to prayer lists in our churches and hear them remembered; we publish obituaries and share, with those who did not know them, something of the life and character of our loved one; we include their name in the book of remembrance held in our church and hear them remembered each year. We hold a funeral to say our goodbyes surrounded by others who knew and loved the departed and whose presence also provides us with the support and physical closeness we need at that time.

The show of public respect for the Duke of Edinburgh also reminds me of the limitations there have been in the way we have been able to express our grief in our personal bereavements: the limited numbers who can gather to provide mutual support at a funeral, who can meet after funeral services to renew or maybe restore family ties, and who can celebrate the life of the one we have lost. These are ways that we have taken for granted but, very suddenly, those ways have not been allowed to us and many of us have felt our grief magnified because of that.

I have also been reminded of the robustness and resilience of human beings in the face of loss. Either

Wellbeing

by **Patty Everitt,**
Counselling
Advisor
(Interim)



slowly or quickly we do come to accommodate our loss – not forgetting but learning to live with that loss without having to relive the painful emotional and physical ache of grief.

Learning to accommodate loss takes as long as it takes; every bereaved person is different, every person lost to us is different; every relationship is different. There is no right or wrong in the way we grieve or in the time it takes us to learn to live with loss. Grief does come in waves and can sideswipe us when we are not expecting it. But there is hope. The waves come less often over time and the intensity of our emotional and physical response reduces, until we have found our own way of accommodating our loss.

Living with our loss does not mean forgetting the person we have lost or what they have been to us. Step-by-step we start to remember more and more of the joys and good times, and we experience less and less of the pain of loss. We learn that too, over time.

We humans have a tremendous capacity for finding hope, even if it takes a while.

■ For more information about the Diocese's counselling provision, [click here](#).

His Royal Highness, Prince Philip 1921-2021

Life of HRH Prince Philip

HRH Prince Philip was born into the Greek and Danish royal families, on 10 June, 1921. After being exiled from Greece as a young child, Philip grew up in France, Germany and the UK, and joined the Royal Navy in 1939, serving in the Mediterranean and Pacific fleets during the Second World War.

In 1947 he abandoned his Greek and Danish royal titles, and took the name Mountbatten from his maternal grandparents.

He married Elizabeth on 20 November 1947, and was given the title Duke of Edinburgh. He left active military service when Elizabeth became HRH Queen Elizabeth II, and was later endowed with the title HRH Prince Philip.

He retired from royal duties in 2017, having completed over 20,000 solo engagements. During his long service as consort to the Queen he became patron, president, or otherwise connected, to over 800 organisations. His award scheme has inspired millions of young people across the world to serve their communities, and to develop their learning outside the classroom.

Cathedral 'honoured' to welcome Duke in 1990

A TABLET lies in Newcastle Cathedral marking the occasion on 12 April 1990 when Her Majesty The Queen, accompanied by His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, visited the city to distribute the Royal Maundy money.

The royal guests were greeted by the Provost of Newcastle and the Maundy service included hymns sung by the Cathedral Choir, with readings from the cathedral's canons.

Ellie Robertson, who retires from her long-standing post as Cathedral Secretary later this year, worked at the Diocesan Office in Mosley Street at the time and remembers the buzz and excitement of the day, when she attended the service with her colleagues.

One of the cathedral's old guidebooks recalls it was 'a great honour for the cathedral and the people of the diocese of Newcastle'.



> A memorial to Prince Philip at St Peter's Falstone

A prayer on the death of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

Merciful God, be close to all who mourn, especially The Queen and all members of the Royal Family. May they know the comfort of your love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



A contemporary article in the Journal newspaper reported that the royal ceremony would provide lifelong memories for four Tyneside children who were chosen to be Children of the Royal Almonry.

They were Gemma Graham, 11, of Christ Church School, Shieldfield; Jessica Mayhew, nine, of St Paul's Elswick; Graham Thompson, 11, of St Anthony's, Walker; and Adrian Blackett, nine, of Archbishop Runcie, Gosforth.

Each child carried a nosegay (posy of flowers) throughout the procession and, after the service, stood next to The Queen and Prince Philip for the official Royal Maundy photograph. We wonder if any of the grown-up children are out there reading this today.



> This floor tablet opposite the Collingwood Monument in Newcastle Cathedral celebrates the day of the Royal visit in 1990

Bishop's Letter

With Bishop Christine Hardman

THE death of Prince Philip, and its impact on his wife, family, and the nation, amidst our fragile hopes emerging from the Lockdown, the promise of the resurrection, and the coming of spring, is a painful reminder of what it is to be human, and followers of Christ. There is still darkness, and great challenges for our lives and for our world, but there is also light breaking through.

Before his crucifixion and death, in the Gospel of John, Jesus says to his disciples, 'Do not let your hearts be troubled' (John, 14:1-3). Malcolm Guite, Priest and Poet, reflects on these words:

Let not your hearts be troubled

Always there comes this parting of the ways,
The best is wrested from us, born away,
No one is with us always, nothing stays,
Night swallows even the most perfect day.
Time makes a tragedy of human love,
We cleave forever to the one we choose
Only to find 'forever' in the grave.
We have just time enough to love and lose.

You know too well this trouble in our hearts,
Your heart is troubled for us, feels it too,
You share with us in time that shears and parts
To draw us out of time and into you.
I go that you might come to where I am.
Your word comes home to us and brings us home.

Malcolm Guite: Parable and Paradox, Canterbury Press, 2016

How could the disciples not be troubled at the unfolding events, the 'best' being wrested from them? Jesus does not take away the emotional pain of his crucifixion from his disciples, or their fear of what might happen to them. Sharing with their humanity 'in time that shears and parts' Jesus gives a hope that draws his disciples, and each of us, into a bigger picture of a life, love, and home that death cannot take away, as he comforts them and us with the words, 'Do not let your hearts be troubled'.

It is sometimes hard to see the bigger picture of God's love when everything seems lost, or we feel overwhelmed by our own emotions, it's much easier to do this when things are going well. The hard times require us to name an absence, which can obscure our perception of God's light. Eastertide is a gift to us in times such as these. Here, amidst the heartache, we find a calling back to the heart of God where we can re-familiarize ourselves with the hope that is already within us, and for the world.

After the events of Easter, the disciples found a new way of being. Jesus was no longer with them in the way that they had come to love, things were not as they had been previously, but in his resurrection they found hope and a new reality which gave them great courage for their lives and ministry in the years ahead.

As the Queen mourns the loss of her husband, we join with her bringing with us our own losses of this last year. As a people of hope, with her, we pray for the courage to journey from the familiar and into the unknown, trusting in the love of God to sustain and inspire us afresh for whatever lies ahead, until we too are brought home.

Tribute from the Archbishop of York

The Most Revd Stephen Cottrell

I join with many of you across the country as we mourn the death of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh. Prince Philip was a remarkable man who lived a life of service dedicated to his country, to his wife, Queen Elizabeth II and his family.



At 18, Prince Philip joined the Royal Navy and served with distinction throughout the Second World War. At the same time, the beginnings of a cherished friendship with Princess Elizabeth began to blossom.

That friendship resulted in a marriage which lasted for over 70 years and has been a source of mutual joy, support and comfort in private moments but equally as they have both navigated a very public life together.

Having become the longest serving British consort, Prince Philip has been unstinting in his support, leading Her Majesty to famously comment, 'he has, quite simply, been my strength and stay all these years.'

His faith in Jesus Christ was an important part of his life and one which shaped who he was.

For so many in this country and around the world, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an enormous part of Prince Philip's legacy. The award has allowed countless young people to develop and discover skills, which have instilled confidence in them and given them an encounter of working together for the common good.

Prince Philip was patron to hundreds of charitable organisations, covering a wide range of disciplines all of which benefited from his wit and wisdom and his inquisitive mind.

Do join me in praying for members of the Royal Family as they mourn and may God bring them comfort. As we give thanks to God for a life lived to the full, may Prince Philip rest in peace and rise in glory.

“Forever Our Lighthouse” Memorial unveiled for Revd Steve



➤ Above, the carved peace bench was unveiled at the service, the message on the bench reads ‘Reverend Steve Forever Our Lighthouse’, right, Revd Steve Wilkinson who was a much-loved vicar and chair of governors and a beautiful prayer that was composed by pupils in Class Three

PUPILS and staff at Humshaugh Church of England First School held a very moving memorial service for Revd Steve Wilkinson, their much-loved vicar and chair of governors, who died last year.

The whole school Collective Worship took place on the last day of term before the Easter holidays to commemorate the one-year anniversary of Steve’s death.

Steve, vicar of Humshaugh, Simonburn and Wark, and Rural Dean of Bellingham Deanery, sadly died on April 4 last year after he was diagnosed with a brain tumour.

The children sang some of Steve’s favourite hymns – including ‘My Lighthouse’ – and Year Four read some of his favourite verses from the Bible.

Pupils in Class Three composed a wonderful prayer, and Revd Sarah

Lunn reflected on some of the children’s favourite memories of Steve, aided by lovely comments from the children, before finishing with a blessing.

A carved peace bench was unveiled as a permanent memorial to Steve and was adorned with



Class 3 prayer

Dear Revd. Steve,

Thank you for being our lighthouse, Shining your light so we can see through the darkness of sadness.

Thank you for being so lovely, friendly and kind. Thank you for the fun times at Messy Church. Thank you for being kind to us when we were sad. Thank you for everything you did for us. Thank you for being there for us.

We miss you Revd. Steve and think about you all the time.

We miss your happy laugh and your big smile.

Hope you have a good happy life in Heaven.

You are Peace and Love.

Amen

hearts, each one signed by a child or member of staff.

Jude Long, Head-teacher of Humshaugh First School, said: “Revd Steve was an inspirational leader. “The children and staff at Humshaugh First School loved how happy, kind and caring he was. He

was our lighthouse - shining in the darkness and we miss him dreadfully.

“The beautifully carved ‘peace’ bench under our willow arch is a permanent memorial to Steve and his spirit lives on in the smiles on the faces of the children.”

Watch a video of pupils reading their special prayer for Steve [here](#).

Tribes of Myanmar

A memory sparked by Bishop Christine has led Donald Lloyd to reminisce about an unexpected encounter with an Archbishop in South East Asia almost 40 years ago, and the fascinating gift bestowed upon him which he treasures to this day.

BISHOP Christine gave the Homily at our Zoom service on Palm Sunday. In it she recounted receiving a present from an Archbishop, the detail of which is not the main point, but I was reminded that I had received a present from an Archbishop.

Myanmar, I shall always call it Burma, is a country close to my heart, particularly in its present state of violent turmoil and suppression. The situation in 1983 when I was there was similar, being under the control of the Generals. While no violence was evident, certain events at the power station where I was working illustrated how the people lived in fear, but that is another story. The people are, as in most countries, friendly and generous in the extreme. It is particularly harsh to see them subjugated so violently.

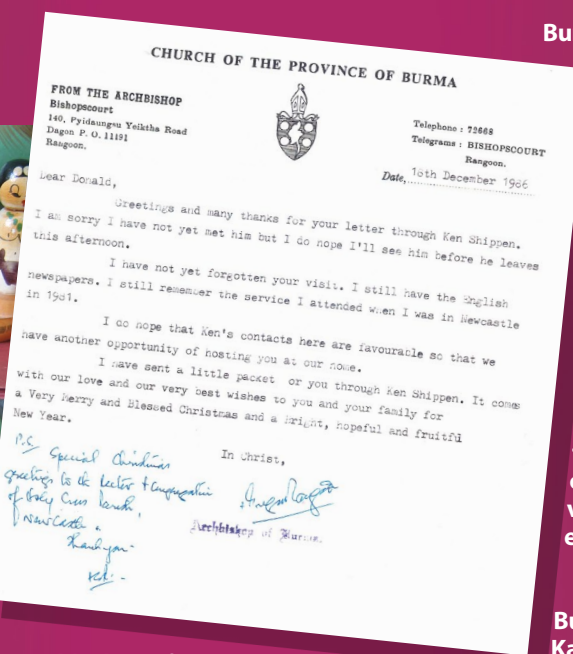
Before leaving to go out for my second stint in 1983, I was asked by a lady of our congregation to deliver some paperback books for the Mothers Union, Rangoon Branch, to an address in Rangoon. I did not know or recognise anything from the



➤ The ten pairs of dolls represent the tribes of Myanmar, and a letter sent to Donald by the Archbishop of Burma in 1986

address. The door was opened fortuitously for me by the Archbishop of Burma, Gregory himself no less. We had an easy conversation about why I was in Burma and he asked if I was free next Tuesday evening to come to dinner. When the Archbishop asks you if you are free on Tuesday evening, you are free!

At the meal, a gathering of just four souls round a modest square table, sat the Dean of Rangoon Cathedral, the Archbishop of Burma, Gregory and the Retired



Burma. An odd present to give a rough mechanical engineer perhaps, but it was all he could offer. The level of material existence in Burma was on a much lower plain than the UK.

I was at a loss as to how to respond to the gift. From conversations at the dinner I knew that the Archbishop was always trying to keep up with events in the UK. He asked if I had any journals or similar I could leave. By happy circumstance I had kept the ‘Times’ and some other papers I had bought to read on the flight out. Many weeks out of date but he was obviously very grateful to have them. Not a fair exchange on the face of it.

The picture shows the Naga, Mon, Burmese, Arakan, Chin, Shan, Padaung, Karen, Kayam and the Kachin.

They are continually on display in my home office. A present I treasure now and will always treasure.

Attempts at maintaining correspondence by letter and email failed totally to achieve any replies. Not unexpected in the circumstances. By chance a colleague was due out in Burma some three years later and I asked him to deliver a letter. I was therefore intensely gratified to receive a letter in return from the Archbishop. He advises that he still had the newspapers I had left with him!

Archbishop of Burma, who it turned out was the first Burmese to hold the Office, and me! What a fantastic privilege. Conversation never seemed to halt and flowed easily. One meal that will not be forgotten.

Oh yes, the tribes of Myanmar.

I had completed my tasks of commissioning power station boilers and called in at Bishops court to take my leave. Archbishop Gregory handed me a parting gift, a box in which were ten pairs of small dolls. They represented the ten tribes of

HEXHAM Abbey has now reopened following completion of the first phase of vital roof repairs.

Works on three areas of the roof - Chancel East End, North Transept and North Nave Aisle - began in December and were completed at the end of March.

The essential repairs were needed to counteract deteriorating slate roof coverings which had required continual maintenance over the last decade.

It was feared if the work was not carried out, the timbers would decay and rot, causing irrevocable damage to the mediaeval roof - regarded as being of the highest significance to the fabric of the Grade I-listed abbey.

Costing in excess of £500,000, the restoration was funded by a £356,861 grant from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund, with the remainder coming from the Hexham Abbey Restoration Trust.

During the renewal of the roof, a large proportion of the green Westmoreland slates have been re-used. However, some insulation to the roof construction has been installed to reduce the abbey's carbon footprint.

Challenges were met along the way, as works to the roof progressed, including the discovery of asbestos which had to be carefully removed before repairs to some rotten timber could continue. Part of the roof, which had undergone previous repairs and had been replaced with grey Welsh slate, has now been renewed with green Westmoreland slates to match the rest of the roof.

The abbey has also taken the opportunity to make provision for a potential nesting place for peregrine falcons in the decorative pinnacles - which may also help to reduce pigeon droppings around the East End of the abbey and Market Place.

Scaffolding which has adorned the Abbey since Advent last year is methodically being dismantled, with the last pieces of the structure expected to be removed by mid-May.

Revd David Glover, Rector of Hexham said: "This has been a huge project which

Abbey's mediaeval roof is modernised



has been vital in preserving the abbey both as a beacon for Christian worship and as a place of rich and nationally important heritage.

"The project was completed on time despite losing many working days to harsh winter weather and, for that, I am very grateful to our contractors, Hodgson Sayer and Kaeffler. I am also hugely grateful to the Chair of our Buildings Committee, Richard Thornton, who has done a huge amount of work to ensure the project was successful."

The abbey was closed throughout the works, with the first in-person service taking place on Palm Sunday.

Parish Eucharist, Evensong, Morning

Prayer and Evening Prayer services resumed in April, and the Refectory Café (outside seating only) and the Abbey Shop have now re-opened.

In line with the Government's lockdown roadmap, the abbey will open for general visiting and the café will fully re-open on Monday 17 May.

For more information, [click here](#).

Abbey welcomes additional funding

THERE'S double cause for celebration as the abbey has also been awarded £291,000 from the second round of the Government's Culture Recovery Fund.

This award will help the abbey to safely re-open, enhance the visitor experience, safeguard jobs in the abbey and Refectory Café, and ensure it can recover from the financial impact of the Covid pandemic.

The abbey is among more than 2,700 recipients to benefit from latest round of awards from the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund.

This is the second grant the abbey has successfully secured from the fund after it was allocated over £350,000 during the first round of awards.

Revd David Glover, Rector of Hexham Abbey said: "The awarding of this grant is wonderful news for the abbey and will help to ensure that we move into the future with confidence and hope."

In addition to funding essential repairs and maintenance, the award will enhance the welcome and visitor experience through a series of opening events over the summer months to engage with a new, more diverse audience.

Kemps in Killingworth!



CELEBRITY father and son Martin and Roman Kemp paid a visit to St John's Killingworth during filming for a TV programme which delved into their family history.

The well-known pair were tracing their family roots as part of ITV series DNA Journey where they discovered an ancestral connection to Killingworth and St John's.

It was revealed that through his mother's bloodline, Roman was related to the Appleby family of Killingworth.

Revd Sarah Moon, Interim Minister of Killingworth Parish, explained to Roman that his great great grandparents William and Catherine Appleby married at St John's not long after the church was built, circa 1860 - and showed him the marriage record.

William was a train driver and he and Catherine married so they could travel together to

Egypt where William could take up the opportunity to drive the royal train - a very prestigious job!

The Kemps were introduced to members of the Appleby family during filming at the church and also FaceTimed Roman's mum, Sharon Appleby, to fill her in on what they had found out.

Sarah said: "I always try and say yes to (reasonable) requests, trying to practise the radical hospitality we see in the Gospel, and it does mean no two days of ministry are ever the same!"

"Saying yes to the filming request was just such an opportunity, the chance to welcome folk into church and hear about the central part St John's Church has played in their families lives for the past 150 years was such a privilege."

If you missed it, the programme is available to watch on [ITV Hub](#).

COME AND JOIN US ON OUR NEXT BIG ADVENTURE - AND LET US BE PART OF YOURS!

ONE of the things that has always struck me in the 20 years or so I have been working in the field of volunteer coordination, is the passion, drive and enthusiasm that motivates those people who choose to give up their precious time to support a place or a cause. With so many organisations competing for people's time, it's important to recognise that there are many reasons why a volunteer chooses to support you and to make sure that you can fulfil their requirements as much as them fulfilling your organisation's needs.

Having now spent 18 months with the volunteers here at Newcastle Cathedral, pandemic notwithstanding, I can attest to the fact that here is no different!

Here at the Cathedral, the next stage of our journey is well under way, not just in terms of physical refurbishment of the building and its heritage but also in revitalising and expanding the community of people who share in its life. The ongoing coronavirus pandemic has made it impossible for most of our volunteers to carry out their roles which play such an integral part



View from the Lantern

By **Lucy Cooke**, Volunteer Coordinator at Newcastle Cathedral

in our life and the planned expansion of our volunteer team has been delayed significantly. However, we look forward with optimism to a time in the not too distant future when we can open our doors once more and welcome back our wonderful volunteers and hopefully some new recruits too!

Our volunteers are an integral part of everything we do here at the Cathedral, to support and enrich the lives of all who work for, worship with and visit us. Some of our current volunteers have come from within the Cathedral's worshipping congregation. Their motivation comes perhaps from within their personal faith and an attachment to the church to which they belong. You'd be forgiven for thinking that this would be true for most if not

all of our regular volunteers, but that isn't the case. Some of them are interested in history and are fascinated by the position and impact the Cathedral has had on the developing city of Newcastle over the centuries. Some are inspired by the Cathedral's sense of radical welcome to devote time to supporting that particular function. Many are motivated by faith, but many are not - we are open to volunteers of all faiths and none.

Volunteering at Newcastle Cathedral is about history, celebration, worship, the past and the future, being part of a community, helping people, welcoming visitors...

Volunteering at Newcastle Cathedral could be about YOU!

The only crucial requirement to being a Newcastle Cathedral Volunteer is a desire to be part of our continuing journey and to use your skills to support us along the way. In return, the Cathedral offers

opportunities to develop new skills, make new friends and meet a rich and varied range of people.

It is an immense privilege to be playing my part in that process and I look forward to meeting and welcoming many new volunteers to our team, from as diverse a range of communities as possible, and to learning about what it is that draws them to this place and what keeps them here.

Why not consider joining us too and get in touch! In the first instance, I am especially interested in hearing from potential volunteers who would be interested in joining our visitor welcome team or becoming a tour guide - sharing our wonderful building and its heritage and history with our visitors. However, do please get in touch whatever your interests are. There are lots of ways of getting involved!

Please contact me at lucy.cooke@newcastlecathedral.org.uk to express your interest in volunteering at Newcastle Cathedral. I will look forward to hearing from you soon!



► **Leila McDermott**, a volunteer at Newcastle Cathedral

Easter 2021 celebrations in Newcastle Diocese



> A stunning floral cross stands outside St Peter's Church Falstone

DESPITE living under the shadow of Covid restrictions for more than 12 months, our churches have continued to demonstrate their ingenuity and creativity during a second Easter in (semi) lockdown.

Some churches celebrated Easter virtually whereas others opened their doors, welcoming

people in person for Easter services and celebrations – and some churches did a mixture of both.

Throughout the Diocese, we have witnessed some wonderful acts of kindness, worship and faith during Lent and Easter – from handing out 300 Easter bags to school

children to giving out daffodils to passersby to creating beautiful displays for people to take in as they walk past church grounds.

Over the next couple of pages, Link features a round-up of some of the Easter celebrations that have taken place in our Diocese.



> 'He is risen!': An Easter display at St Peter's Church Falstone

Pots and Pans Gloria



> Revd Fr Jonathan Lawson takes part in the 'Pots and Pans Gloria'

ST Gabriel's Heaton came up with a spectacularly noisy and novel way of celebrating Easter without congregational singing.

Inventive Choir Director, Tim Burke, composed a 'Pots and Pans Gloria' which premiered at the church's Parish Eucharist on Easter Sunday.

The congregation were invited to bring along their pots and pans from home, and together with singing from the choir, the church came alive in a cacophony of joyful noise to the melody of the Gloria.

Armed with a baking tray and a wooden spoon, Revd Fr Jonathan Lawson, Vicar of St Gabriel's, joined the congregation in music as kitchen utensils and cooking apparatus were happily banged and clattered.

Watch the ['Pots and Pans' Gloria here.](#)

Easter joy in a bag



> Busy at work filling the 305 Easter bags

By Elisabeth Bainbridge, Ann Purves, David Pearson and Frances Dower Kirkwhelpington and Cambo

WE were delighted to be able to offer our local primary and first schools a rather different present for Easter this year: a bag of Easter joy as a gift from the churches near them.

Easter is an important festival for Christians. On Easter Day we normally gather in our churches to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus.

Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions, we could not present a whole 'Easter Trail' as in recent years, but instead we delivered a bag containing the 'Easter Story' and some special Easter-themed

activities. We were in touch with all the schools in order to gauge the viability of the project and they were very thrilled to receive them.

We worked in happy collaboration with Judith Sadler and Jane Abrams from the Bellingham Deanery, both with a long and rich experience of working with young children.

This year we have included the schools of Longhorsley, Whalton, Belsay, Cambo, Chollerton, Humshaugh and Wark. The bags were given to Years 2, 3, 4, and in Belsay and Whalton also to Years 5 and 6; and in total 305 children received a gift. Early Years received an Easter egg and listened to the story.

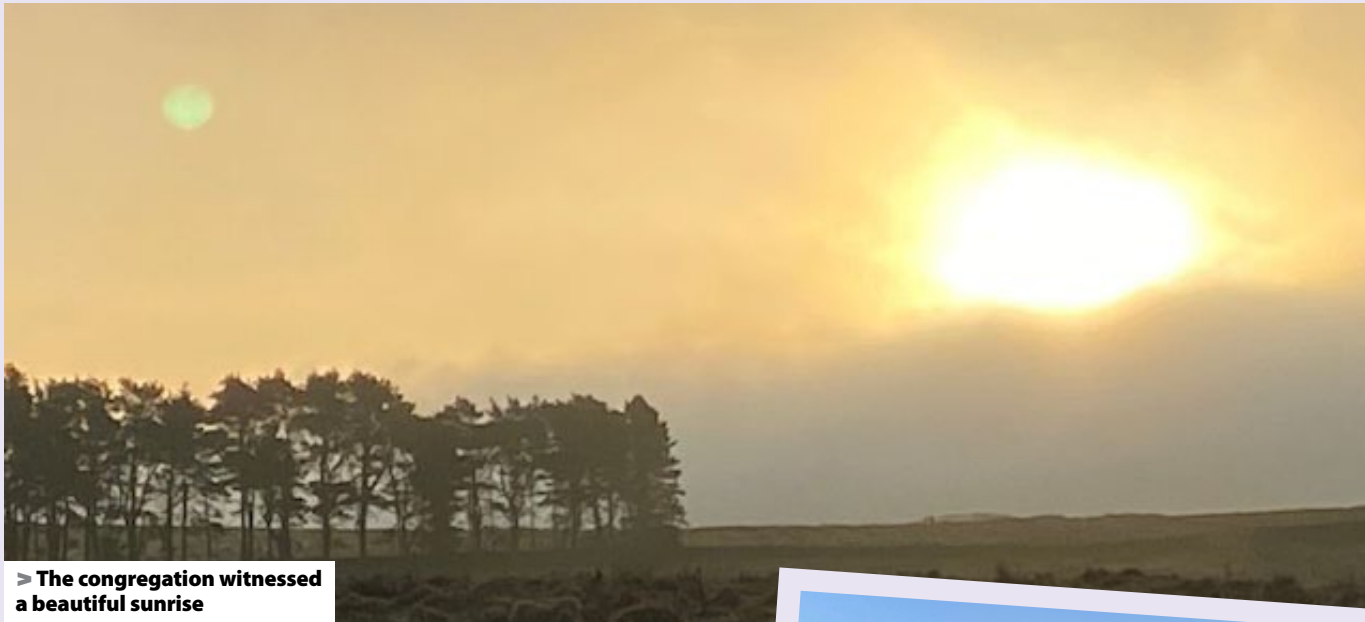


> The contents of each Easter bag

Each bag contained an explanatory leaflet for teachers and parents. They were designed to help cover the RE Syllabus and to be used either in class or at home. Inside each special bag was the Easter Story in a scroll, an Easter card to design, some spices, a little cross, a heart, a bookmark, and a foil-wrapped egg, of course, and much, much more... and we have included instructions on how to 'Make an Easter Garden'.

Funding for this project has come entirely from our Easter Trail account held by Cambo PCC, and made up of kind donations from local sources and from the diocesan St Hild fund. Since we were unable to run the trail in 2020 we have been able to finance this year's bags for all seven schools completely.

Easter 2021 celebrations in Newcastle Diocese



> The congregation witnessed a beautiful sunrise

Spectacular sunrise service

By Jill Swaile Church Warden St Peter's Falstone

BELLINGHAM Deanery celebrated very early on Easter Day with a sunrise service led by Revd Sarah Lunn our Rural Dean.

The service was held at St Aidan's Church Throckington which is built on a craggy outcrop on the Whin Sill between Colwell and Little Bavington and some 700 feet above sea level. Around 30 of us met just before the dawn and were blessed to witness the most spectacular sunrise on this special day.



> Easter Day sunrise service at St Aidan's Throckington

Surprise! Pom poms and flowers for Easter in North Northumberland



> Over 400 pom poms are brightening up St Aidan's Bamburgh

WHEN you open the door of St Aidan's church in Bamburgh in the next few weeks, expect a feast of colour and light.

We may have been in lockdown, but that has not stopped the community working together to decorate the church for Easter.

Over 400 pom poms as well as chicks and flowers have been made by people across the village and used to decorate St Aidan's.

"When we went into lockdown after Christmas, even though we were still open for worship, lots of people were asking what we could do to keep our great community spirit going", said the Revd Louise Taylor-Kenyon.

"We couldn't have our regular village winter events, so we decided that making pom poms was a bit of fun that would brighten up the long winter days, using an idea from Stamfordham and Matfen churches. They've been made by so many people across the community, men and women, old and not so old, and our wonderful flower team strung them together and decorated the church for Easter – in a Covid-secure way, of course.

"After the emptiness of Lent and Holy Week, opening the doors on

Easter Day to a riot of colour was amazing, and has lifted everyone's spirits. The church has been open for private prayer and Sunday worship all year, but this helps us look forward with confidence to the future as we build on the growing numbers of people who are venturing back to 'physical' church. Even though we have a thriving virtual congregation on Zoom which extends across the Benefice, and further afield, we know how important it is for people to come together in churches as well."

All three parishes in the benefice have pulled out all the stops; St Mary's Belford has been beautifully decorated with flowers, and St Hilda's Lucker, the only church of the three that had to close, took advantage of this to have a huge churchyard clear-up, so that headstones hidden by brambles and undergrowth for years can now be seen once again. "Some of them look as though they were put in place yesterday," says Louise, "even though they are over 150 years old."

It's been a tough twelve months, but this remote corner of Northumberland is showing that there is plenty of energy and ingenuity in the churches and surrounding communities. The future looks bright.

A tree for all seasons

By Chris Harding, Churchwarden of St Peter's Humshaugh

ST Peter's Humshaugh have a tradition of using their Christmas tree again at Easter.

The Christmas tree is displayed in front of the church to help brighten the village, but is then stored safely until Easter.

For Good Friday a cross is made from the trunk and one branch and leaned against the bare altar.

On Easter Sunday the cross is then decorated with bright, seasonal flowers, in celebration of the day, and placed outside the church for all to see.



> The tree at Christmas



> The decorated cross on Easter Sunday

Easter service marks end of sheriff's term



> Left to right - Canon Alan Hughes, Mrs Susan Hughes, Revd Charlotte Osborn, Lt Colonel Tom Fairfax and Mrs Miki Fairfax

EASTER is about endings and new beginnings. Lt Colonel Tom Fairfax began his year as High Sheriff of Northumberland for 2020-2021 with a service led by his Chaplain.

Appropriately Tom marked the ending of his term with them both joining the Easter Sunday service in Saint Michael's and All Angels Church at Ford with their wives Miki and Susan.

Revd Charlotte Osborn was marking the start of her ministry with three services, Ancroft, Lowick and Ford with around 100 attending overall, 60 at Ford alone.

Worshippers were masked, socially but not spiritually distanced, a great encouragement for the future of church life after lockdown eases.



> Good Friday cross

Three recipients in our Diocese receive the Maundy money



> Terry Gurr



> Sandra Hood



> Colin Davidson

RECIPIENTS of Maundy money are nominated by their local dioceses for contributions to their local church and community. Given the current circumstances, the Royal Maundy Service 2021 could not go ahead this year.

Instead the Maundy money was blessed at the Chapel Royal, St James's Palace, before being posted to recipients alongside a letter from The

Queen. This meant recipients could still receive their Maundy money and purses, and instead mark the special occasion from their homes.

Three people nominated by Bishop Christine in our Diocese for their exemplary Christian service within the community have received the Maundy money this year.

Sandra Hood, Terry Gurr and Colin Davidson were all honoured and

received the red and white purses. Sandra has been committed to the Church her whole life and recently retired as Churchwarden at Newcastle Cathedral after many years of faithful service. Terry is a member of the Church of the Good Shepherd at Battle Hill and has done a tremendous amount of inspiring work with young people in his area. Colin is the parish organist at Morpeth Parish and has been since 1968.

The Queen distributes gifts according to the number of years she has lived. This year, as Her Majesty is 95, 95 pence worth of Maundy money has been distributed to 95 men and 95 women in recognition for their contribution to community and to the church.

Each recipient of Maundy money is given two small leather purses by The Queen, one red and one white. The first contains a small amount of ordi-

nary coinage which symbolises the Sovereign's gift for food and clothing. This year the coins are specially created to commemorate Her Majesty's 95th Birthday, and the 50th anniversary of Decal Day. The second purse contains Maundy coins up to the value of the Sovereign's age. The coins are legal tender but recipients normally prefer to retain them as a keepsake. The coins have kept much the same form since 1670.

2020/21 – A year to remember

By Tom Fairfax, whose term as High Sheriff of Northumberland has just come to an end

THE last 12 months have been as interesting and challenging a time as I can remember. When I think back to this time last year, we were just beginning to be aware that Covid was going to be a challenge, but I don't think that any of us were aware just what disruption it was going to cause.

When I was installed as High Sheriff of Northumberland in April 2020, it was clear that things might be different. Actually, I'm not really sure it has been, though the format has changed somewhat. 2020/21 has created a set of conditions which have been selected for those people who are prepared to step forward and serve. One of my chosen themes for my year was to recognise 'duty of service' and this year has provided a setting for just that.

Whilst I don't want to understate the impact of Covid, and for some it has brought particular challenges and sadness, I would like to focus, a little, on the positives from the last year.

Many years ago, a wise old lady told me that in life, we are defined, not by circumstances, but by how we deal with them. We are defined by our decisions and by our actions. We are defined not by the times we fall over, but by how quickly we get up. Whatever challenges fate throws



> Tom Fairfax

at us, we can all choose how we respond, and I think we have a duty to use this gift as well as we can.

Over the past 12 months, I have been stunned and humbled by the people I have met, physically and digitally, and by the amazing things

that they have been doing and achieving.

I think one of the biggest challenges has been the uncertainty. I am aware that many exciting plans have had to be mothballed or changed. Disappointment can be hard, especially when lots of work has gone into planning and preparation, but with imagination, we can improvise, overcome and move forward. It has been truly inspirational to see how various people have stepped forward to find new ways to deliver effect in the pandemic.

In conjunction with the Community Foundation, we were fortunate to be able to give the High Sheriff of Northumberland Awards to 44 incredibly diverse organisations throughout the county. Of these, three stunning organisations stood out and were awarded prizes as Best Group, for Youth Leadership and for Innovation in the Face of Covid.

The Country Trust, for example, normally arrange visits for school children, particularly from urban environments to schools to farms so that they can experience and learn about where their food comes from. Finding that these visits were unable to take place, the Country Trust put their thinking hats on and produced 'Farm in

a Box' where a combination of videos, video conferencing and boxes full of farm produce were pressed into service to bring the farm to the children.

Adverse conditions are a time for leaders to shine, and this has been very clear with a number of youth organisations such as Bad Apples (who support many young people in Blyth through the disciplines of dance and the performing arts, were awarded the Best Group award.

Young people have been particularly impacted by this year and we gave the youth leadership award to the Northumbrian Young Farmers, who have been particularly active in more rural areas supporting the agricultural community. All of these organisations have faced Covid and found ways to seize the initiative and operate under the Covid cloud.

It has been hard to pick out a few examples, as so many people, both individuals and groups have done amazing things. People who have seen Covid, not just as 'difficult conditions' but as an opportunity to step forward.

In a year where health has been a focus, we have heard much about the battles fought by the health sector professionals and who

have worked so hard to keep us safe whether it be in hospitals, care homes, at home or in transit. It is easy, however, to forget the other rafts of folk who have been working tirelessly under difficult circumstances to support us; the Police, Ambulance, Fire, Mountain Rescue and Coastguard, who have faced a raft of Covid-related challenges in addition to their normal busy task list.

We have also seen a number of other sectors and individuals formally volunteering to kick in and support the front line both directly or as fundraisers. Particularly the armed services, retired and serving clergy and other volunteers and essential workers from many sectors who have stepped forward to serve both directly and in supporting roles.

Come the moment, come the people! I will remember the year 2020 to 2021 as the year where, when faced with adverse conditions, people throughout the community stepped forward to serve, not for recognition, but because there was a job to do. Many would want to forget this year, I must disagree. 2020/2021 is a year during which it has been a privilege to serve with so many amazing people doing incredible things!

A year with Long Covid

Revd Thomas Sharp nTSSF SCP is a PhD student at Durham University and curate at Newcastle Cathedral. In this edition of Link, Thomas gives an insight into his experience of living with Long Covid and how it has strengthened his trust in God.



> Thomas Sharp has lived with Long Covid for 14 months

WHEN Covid hit the news, I thought that as a 29-year-old I could focus on supporting others. But in March I developed a cough.

I had been ill before, but this was different. I'd experienced illness for which I was unprepared, but I'd never experienced illness for which the world was unprepared too.

I don't remember much of the intensive illness, but I remember the fear and the pain, and I remember the loneliness.

As I began to come through the worst of it, I felt better, but it took months to realise how ill I really was.

I had what is now being called Long Covid. The doctors did their best, but were honest that for patients in the first wave all they could really do was learn from us.

A year on, I no longer experience crippling chest pain. I can get out and about, though no exercise as yet.

I can concentrate for a portion of the day. And the consultant has said there is no long-term damage to my heart and lungs.

I have good days when I can do exciting things, and I have normal days when I can't. I

am so grateful when I can do exciting things, even going in to work or working from home.

But my life has changed. At the age of 30 my life has been (to an extent) paused.

I hope to be able to recover some of my plans for the future. But I have had to grieve many of them and let them go.

My research is on Karl Rahner's theology of death and sickness, how important it is for Christians to experience death in our daily lives. So I guess I've now got a lot to write about!

I'm struck by what Covid has revealed about what really matters to me. There are things I have lost which I have really grieved, and sometimes they weren't the things I was expecting. Grief reveals what really matters to us, where our treasure is.

More importantly, Covid has stripped away

many of my fantasies of control. We all have them.

For Jesuits like Rahner, stripping back the comfort of planning our own future is one of the goals of Christian formation.

Serious illness has forced me to ask what God is doing, rather than planning what I want to do.

Long Covid has taught me better to trust in God's guiding hand, even when God leads me into the valley of the shadow of death.

I wonder how each of us has learned from grief and loss of control in our lives, especially in the pandemic. I wonder how the church has learned.

This pandemic continues to be awful, but we must learn from it as God leads us through it. My experience has been awful, but I do thank God for the growth in grace he has gifted through it.

Schools: Hampers and Hope

By Revd Julie Mooney, Chairperson of Wallsend Churches Working Together

MINISTERS from Wallsend churches have worked together recently on an initiative called Schools: Hampers and Hope.

The idea came from Emma, one of the Wallsend Community Insights coordinators.

We wanted to offer thanks, prayers and support to staff and teachers in the local schools by making up a gift hamper for the staff room.

We have good relationships with many of our local schools through our 'Open the Book' and other school assemblies so agreed this was a wonderful opportunity to support them further.

As churches together, and working in partnership with the Wallsend Community Insights Team, we made up hamper baskets full of treats and prayers for our local schools. Many hampers included a tin of Heroes chocolates in recognition of the staff being our 'local heroes'.

The staff were thrilled to receive the treats, saying: "Thank you for thinking about us and for your generosity"; "It is so nice for the work of our tremendous staff to be recognised in this way"; "We really appreciate your thoughts and kindness"; and "It is so nice to feel so appreciated".

So, a huge thank you to our local school teachers and staff from Wallsend Churches Working Together. We really do appreciate all that you do.

If you would like more information about this, please contact Revd Julie Mooney on 0191 2627518.



> Revd Julie Mooney delivers a hamper to Churchill Community College

MISSION requires means and the financial challenge behind the work of bringing good news has certainly been compounded by the pandemic.

The use of new technology and equipment for instance has been key, but it's not just imagination that we've needed in order to find new ways of ministering, it's the money to pay for it.

So when a new £4m Local Connections Fund opened earlier this year to support charities and grass roots groups, many churches were understandably keen to apply.

The fund, which is a partnership between The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and The National Lottery Community Fund, was created to help to bring people together in safe and secure ways. This includes by covering the cost of technologies and equipment to make people feel more connected within their communities.

One project that has successfully launched as a result of a Local Connections Fund grant is the Virtual Ark in the Park at Church in the Park, Great Park. The grant was used to purchase a library of tablets which were then pre-loaded with a series of apps for which simple instructions and user guides were created.

Funding for re-imagined mission

By Joanne Christie, Generous Giving Adviser @JoanneCTweets



In partnership with
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
THE NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND

Revd Ruth Hewett explains the aim of the project: "By using a library of tablets we are able to unite those people who would usually fall outside of the technical sphere, in safe and secure environments, such as their own homes, care homes or even hospitals. People can have access to their friends and families, the 'outside' world such as digital shopping, and a direct line to Ark in the Park community events such as our regular 'Coffee and Conversation', writing groups and book clubs. They can also access our Church in the Park services which are broadcast on



> Eric and Colin at Bowmont House receiving their tablets from the Virtual Ark in the Park project

YouTube every week."

A number of residents at Bowmont House, the local care home on Great Park, were recently delighted to receive loan tablets, especially one lady, Irene Powell, who was able to video call her family in Australia for the first time.

A similar project was also funded in Alnmouth, where social isolation can affect older residents. Liz Walford, Treasurer of St John the Baptist church, said: "This project aims to address loneliness and isolation by fostering relationships and connections between

digital-savvy and digital-learner residents; providing equipment access and support to use it. It will help our community to be more resilient and closer together."

Away from technology, there was also funding for projects using other creative ways to bring people together safely.

St Columba's Wideopen, working in collaboration with Daverson Hall and Woodlands Hall created the Wideopen Wellbeing project.

Revd Dr Pauline Pearson said: "As we

begin to find our way back to normality, at first we will be able to meet only outdoors. For those who would just like somewhere to sit and chat to a friend we are creating 'places of wellbeing' by installing new seats and planters in outdoor spaces, where people will be welcome to sit and meet. Our space is at the east end of the church. We hope that Wideopen Wellbeing will be part of building the sort of community we want as we emerge from the pandemic."

Having the right resources in place makes a huge difference in allowing us to keep turning outwards to our communities with love and care.

Whilst finding the funds to invest in the work of bringing good news will always be a challenge, it is also a necessity for our vision of growing church bringing hope. Having support available for projects like these provides us with a wonderful opportunity to engage better with our communities and respond to human needs.

For those who missed out on applying to the Local Connections Fund this time, a second round of funding provided by The National Lottery Community Fund is due to launch this summer. For further information click [here](#) or get in touch with the **Generous Giving Team**.

MONTHLY E-BULLETIN



HAVE you signed up to our monthly Diocesan e-Bulletin? Delivered straight to your inbox on the last Friday of each month, the e-Bulletin features the latest news, information, upcoming events and resources for the Diocese as well as our monthly Prayer Diary.

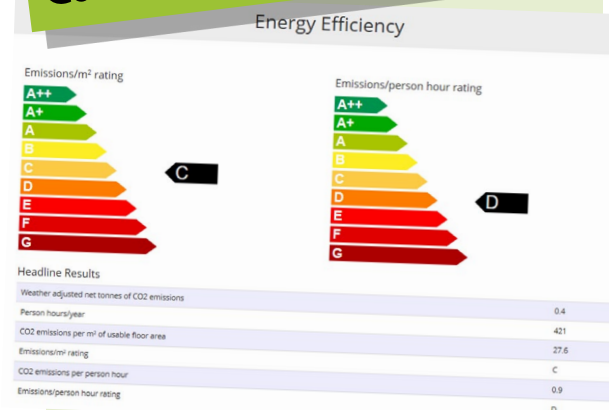
You can sign-up at www.bit.ly/ebulletin-resub or via our Facebook page @nddiocese

Climate Sunday



By **Bethany Hume**, Assistant Secretary

Carbon net zero corner



► Climate Sunday is asking for churches to hold a climate-focused service ahead of COP26

THIS year, the UK is hosting COP26, the next annual UN climate change conference, in Glasgow in November.

COP stands for Conference of the Parties; this summit brings together heads of state, scientists and campaigners to agree coordinated action to tackle climate change. You may have heard **COP26** mentioned in the news, or by a charity that you support, but what can we do in our churches in the lead up to it?

Climate Sunday is inviting all churches to hold a local climate-focused service in advance of the COP26 Climate Conference, to explore the theological and scientific basis of creation care, to pray, and to commit to action.

Climate Sunday is being organised by Churches Together (CTBI)'s Environmental Issues Network, partnered with the Church of England and other denominations as well as Christian environmental and development agencies, such as Christian Aid, A Rocha UK, Tearfund and Operation Noah.

A Climate Sunday service can be held on any date before November which is convenient for your church, many churches in the Diocese of Newcastle are joining in united together in holding a service on Sunday 6 June.

This coincides with the same weekend as **World Environment Day**, which schools and businesses in our region often participate in, themed on ecosystem restoration.

This weekend in early June also kicks off the start of Churches Count on Nature, a week-long count of the biodiversity in our churchyards, read more below! You might like to consider hosting an outdoor event that addresses these two environmental concerns of climate change and biodiversity.

Helen Forbes, Parish Environment Champion at St Cuthbert's Allendale, shares the plans for their Climate Sunday service: "One of the ways we are reaching out into the community with our Eco Church project is by organising a Climate Sunday service on 27 June, an outdoor event at the recreation

area outside the village hall followed by a picnic and walk. We plan to invite members of the community to lead the service and local environment groups to share the work that they have been doing."

On the **Climate Sunday website** there are **free resources** for a Climate Sunday service to suit different traditions and styles of worship and you can **register your service online**.

There are lots of ideas of how your congregation can consider making a commitment as a local church community to take long term action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and join in calling on the UK government to act on climate change in advance of COP26.

Join in a nature count

CHURCHES Count on Nature, running between **5-13 June** is an event covering churchyards across England and Wales.

It is a week-long 'nature count' occurring this summer, which will encourage people to visit churchyards and record what they see.

This is being jointly run by the conservation charities Caring for God's Acre and A Rocha UK with the Church of England and the Church in Wales.

The project will see communities and visitors making a note of the animals, birds, insects, or fungi in

their local churchyard. Their data will then be collated on the **National Biodiversity Network**.

Hundreds of churches across England and Wales have already signed up to host events in their churchyards. You may have heard of a similar national event **Love Your Burial Ground Week**, which this year will be combined with this project.

This is also a great opportunity to invite members of your local community to your church and link with local schools and wildlife groups. You could hold a wildlife spotting event in your churchyard, or a drop-by nature scavenger hunt

for families. This is a wonderful way to welcome people in your local community back to church, as churchyards can still be used even if social-distancing restrictions and limited numbers are in place.

Visitors are being encouraged to take part – whether they are nature experts or not. Various online guidance about getting to know fauna and flora are being shared with churches participating to make sure the event is as accessible as possible.

For more information about Churches Count on Nature and to register your church's interest **visit its website**.



CHURCHES COUNT ON NATURE WEBINARS

For those who would like to learn a little bit more about biodiversity and ecology Churches Count on Nature will also see a series of webinars from leading conservationists, scientists, and experts. Topics include outdoor worship, burial ground management, tree management and ecology. You can find all the details and booking links **here**.

ENERGY FOOTPRINT TOOL

THE Church of England's Energy Footprint Tool has opened on **Parish Returns Online** for churches to enter their 2020 utility bills data. The easy-to-use tool calculates your church's carbon footprint from the energy used for heating and lighting.

To effectively reduce your church's carbon emissions and energy usage, an important first step is to know how large your current carbon footprint is.

The EFT for 2020 will take into account periods of lockdown and lower utility bills due to Covid restrictions, **find out more here**.

PARISH BUYING: NET ZERO 2030

PARISH Buying has a **new Net Zero 2030 website category**, which aims to provide you with the tools you'll need to start your church's net zero carbon emissions journey.

The webpage is dedicated to making it easier for your church to find the best energy-saving products and tools to achieve the net zero carbon emissions 2030 target.

This includes approved suppliers and links to webinars on feasibility and installation of renewable options.

A pilot scheme for purchasing solar panels has recently been added to the website and a heat pump scheme will be launched later in the year.

LOW CARBON CHURCH WEBINARS

TRAINING webinars about reducing the carbon emissions of our church buildings are being run by the Church of England. These are free to attend, **register online**.

Church Heating – To Replace or Not to Replace?

Tuesday 25 May | 6-7pm

This webinar will tell you what you should think about when deciding to replace your heating. What are the implications for your carbon footprint and the historic context of your church?

Choosing the Best Heating Solution for your church

Tuesday 4 May | 4-5pm, Tuesday 18 May | 6-7pm

This webinar will include heat pumps, electric heating solutions, and more. What are the pros and cons, what is the carbon impact and what is the future of funding?

The Effective Management of Church Lighting Towards Net Zero

Tuesday 11 May | 6-7pm

This webinar will cover church lighting – in all forms. The focus will be on how changes in the use of lighting can impact positively on the goal of becoming net zero carbon.



HAVE YOUR SAY

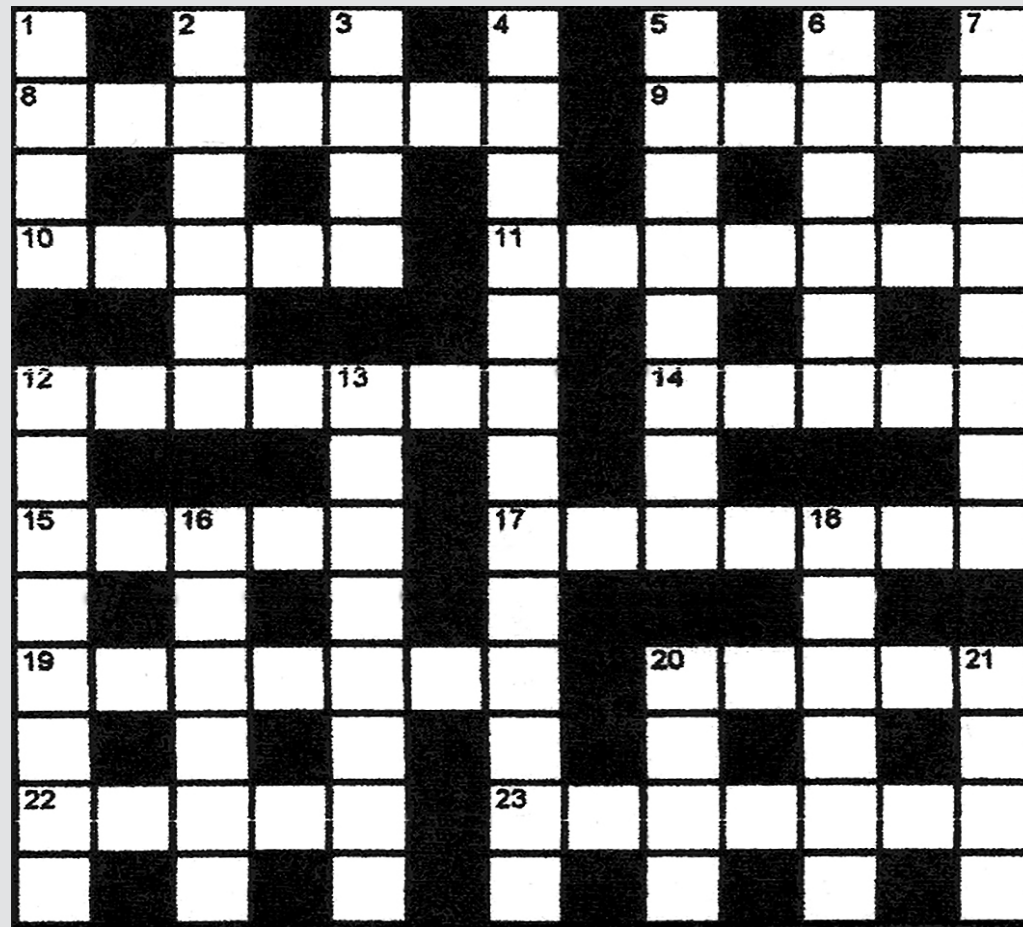
Anything catch your eye in this month's LINK? Something on your mind? Or in your prayers? Send an e-mail, message or letter to LINK and we'll publish the best of them:

Have your say. LINK, Church House, St John's Terrace, North Shields NE29 6HS. Email us: link@newcastle.anglican.org



Link Crossword 172 *Compiled by Mary Sutton*

This month we are including the crossword for anyone looking for something to keep them occupied during lockdown but just for fun (sorry, no prize this month). Please DO NOT submit crosswords to Church House.



ACROSS

8. House found by small woman using exclamation of praise (7)
9. Previous superior of religious house (5)
10. Some lifelong criminal (50)
11. Priest initially interrupting wrong verses in service (7)
12. Aloof woman with stoneworker (7)
14. Thickness needed for hen (5)
15. Desire of company animal expert (5)
17. First to offer bachelor second remedy not easily understood (7)
19. Cheese for new actor – it crumbled (7)
20. Mother left with volunteers from Mediterranean republic (5)
22. Famous public school rejected by Democrat (5)
23. Remarkable occurrence involving a class covered with mud (7)

DOWN

1. In panic, he fired cook (4)
2. Quiet girl with manuscript of sacred songs (6)
3. Italian one hides in a short time (4)
4. A mail van story confusing Christian organization (9,4)
5. Awful pest's lie involving letters (8)
6. Great unhappiness for skinflint before the end of January (6)
7. Quiet substitute wanting jam (8)
12. Dogma Ron cited unexpectedly (8)
13. A teetotal duet I upset with pose (8)
16. Virginia with feline, Eastern, is to quit (6)
18. Open a French canal section (6)
20. Saint with scar (4)
21. Final word of prayer for a male in French (4)

BOOK REVIEW: MONK IN THE MARKET PLACE

Autobiography of Ray Simpson

By Richard Giles

RAY Simpson's story is an exhilarating account of a warrior of the Spirit who has never rested in his search for God.

Ray is honest, direct and endearing in telling his story. He has never settled for simply doing what others have always done, and his fresh take on almost everything is invigorating and challenging. Both as a parish priest and as a Religious he has laboured to re-imagine those roles in today's Church and it makes for fascinating reading. Like Jacob wrestling with God, Ray seems to have fought on relentlessly, without pausing for breath. A restless soul, but then most prophets are.

The North East plays a large part in the story because it was to Lindisfarne that Ray came at the age of 56, after a distinguished pioneer ministry in Norwich, where he moulded a worshipping community on a new housing estate into a Village of God. On Holy Island he drove forward his vision for a religious community of a new kind, to be known as the Community of Aidan and Hilda, a dispersed and ecumenical community in the Celtic tradition, now with groups around the world.

It is an inspiring tale, yet some questions remain unanswered.

Following talks with the Northumbria Community, a religious association with remarkably similar ethos and aims, "we decided not to merge", a puzzling conclusion to the outsider. Likewise, Ray's decision in 2017 to leave Holy Island after 21 years is not convincingly explained.

The book loses pace in the chapters listing his writings and his travels, and once or twice lapses into weirdness, as in his bizarre story of his possible decent from Edward VII, or his assertion that Jesus was baptised in order "to become one with creation", but these are minor deviations.

In the final chapter he gives voice to his conviction that the Community of Aidan and Hilda is a model that will last for a thousand years, but this seems like the triumph of hope over experience. History tells us that our best efforts are but transitory, and that religious communities ebb and flow like the seas that lap the shores of the island Ray loved so well.

Monk in the Market Place is published by Darton, Longman & Todd. Copies of the book are available to purchase [here](#).

■ A virtual book launch will take place on Thursday 29 April, 7.30pm. Register [here](#).



ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD 171

- ACROSS: 1. Hebrew 5. Traits 8. Shrove Tuesday 9. Trio 10. Vocation 11. Parson 13. Easter 15. Brethren 17. Lent 19. Trinity Sunday 21. Swords 22. Dressy
- DOWN: 2. Ether 3. Riotous 4. Woe 5. Truncheon 6. Asset 7. Tea rose 10. Venerates 12. Aircrew 14. Silence 16. Tenor 18. Nears 20. Sad

Our Generous God!



> The knitted crosses, Easter Service CD and Palm Crosses

By Revd Jeremy Cooper, Lead Chaplain for the Morpeth Anna Chaplaincy Team

DURING the past few months, our Anna Chaplaincy Team, an ecumenical team made up of members of all the churches in Morpeth, has found it difficult to maintain contact with the residents of care homes and those living in sheltered accommodation.

During a national Anna Chaplaincy Zoom meeting one of the Anna chaplains, Babs Lowes, who ministers in Barrow, Cumbria told us of a campaign to knit holding crosses for all those in Barrow care homes, assisted living and sheltered accommodation.

Our team in Morpeth thought we might be able to involve the knitters of Morpeth in knitting some crosses for our elderly residents.

The Holy Spirit challenged me to ask God to be generous and to pray that we would have enough to give one to each resident of Renwick House, Northlands, St Christopher's, Hepscott Care Centre, Foxton Court, East Riding, Riverside,

Silvas Court and William Turner Court with some left over for the housebound that the churches were in contact with. This would have been a total of about 200 knitted crosses.

Members of all the churches contacted me for the pattern and I was inundated with beautiful hand knitted crosses.

Yes, God has been generous. It soon became abundantly clear that God had been faithful and we did have some spares, which we would not only be able to give to a wide variety of housebound and isolated people with whom the churches in the town are in contact, but that also we would be able to give some to the Northumbria Health Care Trust Chaplaincy Team.

God has been so generous. It reminded me of the miracle of the five loaves and two fishes and the jar of flour and the jug of oil of the widow, which God kept replenishing for her herself, her family and Elijah.

We asked for 200 crosses but our faithful God has enabled us to deliver approximately 400. He has provided abundantly, through the kindness of our knitters, sufficient

crosses to include those we had hoped to give them to and many more besides. A huge 'Thank You' to all who have been involved in knitting and distributing. Thank You!

Each cross had a label attached which read 'May the Hope of Jesus Christ be with you at Easter and always. Love from the Churches in Morpeth.' There was a sheet too, which explained how to use the holding cross.

In addition, the Anna Chaplaincy Team put together an Easter Service on CD that was sent to the residents of care homes, assisted living and sheltered accommodation and some folk who are housebound. Collingwood school generously offered to burn the service onto CDs.

Many of the residents fail to engage with online resources like YouTube and Facebook but the team thought that most would have access to a CD player.

The team and some volunteers also made Palm Crosses to go to the elderly in time for Palm Sunday.

We are looking forward to, and praying that we will soon be able to visit our friends again.

LIKE A METAPHOR

Tim Hardy (formerly of the Religious Resources Centre) writes at www.timbo-baggins.co.uk and spends the rest of his time raising a three year old and riding a bike around Leamington Spa.



EASTERTIDE ECHOES, A REFLECTION AND A TWIST

This afternoon I went to church for an afternoon Eucharist. It was the first time I'd been to that church building since just before Christmas when they set up their Nativity scene as part of their all-age crib service. Today, in the same spot the Nativity had been set, was the church's Easter Garden - with the same green background cloth hiding the construction materials for a recess to contain important elements of the story. And, for the first time, I appreciated the contrast between the Christmas story of God turning up where he wasn't expected and the Easter tale of God not being where he was expected - a neat, little inversion which I hadn't thought about before.

I'd always thought of the Gospel as the fairly linear story of Jesus: foretold, arrived, crucified, resurrected, ascended, and coming again but I'm wondering if there was more going on (if only from the perspective of literary choices made by the authors).

AN ECHO (REVERBERATING FROM EARTHLY START TO EARTHLY END):

Newly alive, beginning in and going forth from a borrowed room. Not that it began with inn-keepers and stables - more likely a lack of space in a family guest room - Jesus went through life having 'no place to lay his head', and was buried in a borrowed/donated tomb, from which he began his resurrected life, before eventually returning to the Right Hand of God. Jesus didn't have much in the way of earthly belongings and was content to rely on others as he went instead of being self-reliant (incidentally, a living refutation of the first temptation: 'Make these stones into bread.')

What does this say about our need

for safety and control, knowing where the next meal is coming from?

AN ECHO (THE RISING UP, NOT THE TRICKLING DOWN):

Angels first announced the good news of both the birth and resurrection to those considered least (shepherds and women) who then went on to share it with others, changing the world in their wake (a living repudiation of the second temptation: "Win the crowds over by impressive feats.")

What does this say about how we share the Gospel, who we concentrate our efforts on, and what our motivations are?

A REFLECTION (EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY POWER):

At a very young age, Jesus and his family went on the run - in fear of the authorities and only returned to a normal life following a change of regime. Easter tells us that, having gone through the worst the authorities (and the world) could throw at him, Jesus passed through the other side victorious, changing the rules, proving his authority and ending the regime of sin and death (the third temptation: no need to worship anyone but God, Jesus knew who had the power to grant and take away authority).

What does this say about our relationship with and desire for earthly power and influence?

THE TWIST:

Having spent his ministry proclaiming that the Kingdom of Heaven was near and what it was like, Jesus's death and resurrection bring the Kingdom into the here and now. Following in the footsteps of Mary ('Master!') and Thomas ('My lord and my God!') how can we respond to Jesus and work for his long-established and still in-progress kingdom?



> Around 400 crosses were knitted and distributed

WE are pleased to share the launch of Faith Pictures, the free resource from Church Army to help Christians of all traditions talk about their own story of faith with confidence, ready to run online or in person. Faith Pictures is six sessions long, each one building on the last to help Christians to see where God has been present in their lives, how they can talk about that confidently, and how God is active in the world around us and wants us to join in with Him. Download Faith Pictures for free at resources.churcharmy.org/resources/faith-pictures/

Christian Aid Week: Together we stop this climate crisis



> Rose

> Photo credits: Christian Aid/Tom Pilston

> Florence

IN Kenya, extreme weather is making it harder and harder to survive. For communities fighting the climate crisis, every last drop matters and every last one of us can help them thrive. The coronavirus pandemic has only increased the urgent need for families to access a reliable source of water.

The devastating climate crisis robs people of the water and food they need to live.

Meet Rose: a loving, hard-working grandmother

In this desperate climate chaos, Rose battles to bring water home for her grandchildren. Every morning, after nothing to eat, she sets out on a long, dangerous journey, walking six hours to collect water. "We have to walk long distances. We are suffering," she says. She tries hard to give them the kind of life she remembers from when she was a girl: when the rivers flowed with water and the crops bore fruit.

Rose and her grandchildren shouldn't have to go hungry. A simple earth dam, built with the help of Christian Aid's partners and your donations, could completely change her life.

A song of hope and power: meet Florence

Florence is a soulful, joyful woman: full of life, love and laughter. The women in her farming group look up to her. She's courageous and kind - a survivor. A few years ago, her husband died, leaving her a widow. At that time, she had no water to grow crops. Her children were hungry. Like Rose does now, she had to walk for hours to collect water.

By Helen Cunningham, Church Engagement & Fundraising Officer (North East & Cumbria)

With help from Christian Aid's local partner, Florence and her community were able to build a dam together, just 30 minutes from her house. Using water from the dam, Florence grows tomatoes, onions and chillies on her farm. Her children can eat healthy, nutritious vegetables, and she has enough left to sell. It's her source of life and joy.

Blessings for all in need

Florence is a generous woman of faith. She knows others are struggling to cope without a reliable water source, and wishes the same blessings she has received will be granted to them: "There is a village nearby - they don't have an earth dam. They are suffering. I am thankful to people who have donated to build this earth dam. I am praying God will increase their giving."

This Christian Aid Week, will you stand with people like Rose and Florence?

Please donate this Christian Aid Week (10-16 May). Your gift could help a community build an earth dam, providing a regular and reliable source of water in affected areas of Kenya.

■ £4.40 could teach 10 farmers how to plant drought-tolerant crops that can survive the drought.

■ £10 could buy a pair of taps at a water point which will be installed at an earth dam, making it easier for people to fetch water.

■ £42 could buy 350kg of cement, which is needed to build an earth dam.

■ £545 could pay for a skilled labourer to work on the construction of an earth or sand dam.

Every pound raised, every prayer said and every action taken, are expressions of our Christian love and compassion, of our belief that all life is equal and precious in the sight of God. Together, we stop this climate crisis, and give brave, hard-working women like Rose the chance to thrive.

You can join us as we call on the UK Prime Minister to lead the world with ambitious climate action that will also address inequality.

Also, please pray with us for a radical change of heart for politicians, and that as a global community we will care for our common home and for people living in poverty.

We can all be part of the solution. All we need is courage and determination.

Stand together with us to fight this climate crisis.

Get in touch via hello@christian-aid.org or on 01925 573769

Join us this Christian Aid Week. Donate at caweek.org

Giving thanks for vaccine update

A BIG thank you to everyone who has donated to our joint Coronavirus Appeal with Christian Aid.

We have partnered with the charity to give people an opportunity to give thanks for their Covid vaccine and help others in crisis across the world.

Funds from the appeal are helping vulnerable communities around the world access soap, water, food and vital health information in the face of the pandemic.

We have now raised over £1,900 towards our £5,000 goal - thank you to the generosity of those who have kindly donated to the appeal.

If you would like to offer your thanksgiving for your vaccine and support the work of Christian Aid, you can donate to our appeal [here](#).

Give thanks for your vaccination!

Support our appeal for Christian Aid

Thy Kingdom Come

THE annual 10 days of prayer as part of Thy Kingdom Come happens this year from 13-23 May.

It's the time of year when we pray for our family and friends to know the love of God and embrace the Christian faith.

A range of resources are available to download, catering for ages from five to 105 including the flagship Cheeky Pandas video series for families, prayer journal, novena, prayer escape room, adventure map and more.

Thy Kingdom Come are giving away 100,000 copies of the Prayer Journal and Family Prayer Adventure Map to UK churches as long as posting and packaging is covered.

To order resources for your church, including free printed copies of the Prayer Journal and Prayer Adventure Map click [here](#).

For more resources and news visit the [Thy Kingdom Come website](#).

