

THE PARISH OF BELTINGHAM WITH HENSHAW

Parish Newsletter July 2022



View from the Vicarage

The Diocese of Newcastle has recently upgraded the back part of our house, putting in double glazing where before it was single glazing – pictured here. The study and utility room are both now better insulated, which we are both very thankful for with the rising costs of fuel. After three months now, we are slowly beginning to feel we know our way around and are enjoying the blessings of the area. We've done a bit of Roman site visiting, a few of the Haltwhistle ring walks too. And it's quite nice to see that our kettle has naturally descaled itself after a few months boiling the water up here.

It's the summer, Trinity season in church, during which our bible readings follow on from each other week by week from Trinity Sunday through to All Saint's Sunday with the aim of covering all the main points of bible teaching over three years. You don't have to wait that long though – you could dust off your copy of the bible (making sure it's in a translation you find readable) and have it as your summer plan to read some books from it over the coming months. Genesis, Ruth, Song of Solomon, Job, Daniel, Matthew/Mark/Luke or John, Romans, Hebrews, Revelation. And there's more! It will be easier to read in the warm weather perhaps, and you can raise any questions you have with your pew neighbours 😊. I'm glad my study's a bit warmer now to read in – I wouldn't like to be a fair-weather reader only after all.



Steve

A new role for Rev'd Gill Alexander, our Associate Priest

We have been fortunate in our parish over the last few years to enjoy the commitment of Gill Alexander, first as our Curate and then latterly as our Associate Priest. This is now about to change, and copied below is the letter from the Archdeacon, setting out the plans for Gill and the way ahead for the various parishes along the wall.

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Re: Parishes along the Wall East and West

We have seen good progress since the Hexham Deanery began to think of the parishes along Hadrian's Wall as an entity with much to share and to learn from one another. 'Parishes by the Wall West' has taken great strides forwards with the appointment of the Rev'd Steve Wright to oversee Haltwhistle, Greenhead, Beltingham and Henshaw, with the support of an excellent team of churchwardens and of course the Rev'd Keith Teasdale.

We need now to give attention to the 'Parishes by the Wall East'. The proposal, after the retirement in coming years of Jeremy Thompson from St John Lee and Warden and Newbrough, is for a priest to be appointed to oversee these parishes and Haydon Bridge. This proposal leaves Haydon Bridge in a long time of vacancy, so we discerned some months ago that self-supporting interim ministry would be the solution, both to give leadership during what was

clearly going to be a long vacancy, and to support the work of helping the 'Parishes by the Wall East' to grow together and be better placed to appoint a new priest in due course.

The Rev'd Dr Gill Alexander has discerned a calling to this self-supporting interim ministry and the Bishop would like to confirm this sense of calling by commissioning her to Haydon Bridge. This has not been an easy decision for Gill as she has many other commitments, but felt drawn to offer what she is able at this time. I am in conversation with reps from the parish to discern the shape of this and how Gill can best use the limited time she is able to offer alongside her other commitments. Gill will discern, together with myself and the Bishop, what additional ministry she may continue to offer to the wider deanery.

We propose a commissioning service of Gill to her new role at the 10.30am service in St Cuthbert's Haydon Bridge, to which people from other Parishes Along the Wall are warmly invited. Now that we have better discerned the proposed shape of ministry for coming years, it is possible to begin the legal work to dissolve the benefice of Haydon Bridge and Beltingham and Henshaw and form a new Benefice of Halthwistle, Greenhead, Beltingham and Henshaw.

I look forward to working with you all on this. Please do get in touch if you would like to discuss any of this.

With every blessing, The Venerable Dr Catherine Sourbut Groves Archdeacon of Lindisfarne

Inevitably, this move means that Gill will no longer be taking regular services for us in Beltingham with Henshaw, but she hopes to maintain her contact with us through Lent groups and retreat days at Shepherds Dene. We wish Gill well in her new role, and record our thanks for her ministry with our parish – and incidentally, if you wish to attend her commissioning service in Haydon Bridge, it is actually on 10 July.

Church Service Times for All Hallows', Henshaw July 2022

	Time	Service	Service Leader
3rd July - 3rd Sunday after Trinity			
Beltingham w Henshaw	11am	Holy Communion	Rev'd Keith Teasdale
10th July - 4th Sunday after Trinity			
Beltingham w Henshaw	11am	Holy Communion	Rev'd Steve Wright
17th July - 5th Sunday after Trinity			
Beltingham w Henshaw	11am	Holy Communion	Rev'd Keith Teasdale
24th July - 6th Sunday after Trinity			
Beltingham w Henshaw	11am	Morning Prayer	Anne Galbraith and Carol Adams
31st July - 7th Sunday after Trinity			
Joint service at Holy Cross Haltwhistle at 10am – Holy Communion – Rev'd Steve Wright – please note earlier time			
Please note that there is a service of Holy Communion every Thursday at Holy Cross Haltwhistle at 10 am.			

Mothers' Union

27 July, Garden Party and Members Meeting, Whitegates, Bardon Mill

28 September, The role of an Army Padre with the Rev'd Keith Teasdale

Beltingham Cemetery – on going development of the wildflower meadow

“No mow May” has been in the media lately to encourage us to allow flowers to develop in our lawns over the month to provide a source of pollen and nectar for insects, instead of a barren closely cut lawn which supplies nothing. We are doing this not just in May, but for the season.

Some of you will remember that last November a gang of 12 willing volunteers started the conversion of a large part of the empty half of the cemetery into a wildflower meadow.

Several reasons were put forward for doing this.

The environmental group within the Deanery suggested that each parish should be taking steps to improve their environmental credentials by mowing less, planting insect and bird friendly plants, and encouraging wildlife in general by considering *their* needs, not just our own desire for an over neat churchyard. As Richard Mabey put it in the forward to the book *God's Acre*: “In light of our growing understanding of the need to help wildlife in its huge variety of forms, a more hospitable attitude towards the rest of natural creation might perhaps be a more apt Christian response. Churchyards can and should serve the diverse needs of the whole community and that includes the needs of its wild creatures.” That book was written several decades ago so the need is even more pressing now.

Secondly, regular mowing costs money.

The first and probably most important key point in establishing a wild flower meadow is the need for soil poverty, so no fertiliser use either now or in the past, which only encourages grass growth at the expense of the flowering element. The original hay meadows would have manure from grazing stock and maybe a winter or early spring topping from the byre, to encourage the crop. We haven't the grazing stock to enrich the growth or remove it, but to maintain low fertility, we must cut once a year and remove the cuttings, otherwise they contribute to restoring fertility which encourages the grasses at the expense of the flowering herbs.

A key plant to help us is Yellow or Hay Rattle, which, when the seeds are dry in the pod, gives a rattling sound. It is a hemi parasite on grasses, and, although it is a green leaved plant, it supplements its diet by taking food from the roots of certain other plants, especially grasses. This in turn weakens the grass growth and hence allows the flowers to flourish with less competition. It is an annual, and although farmers don't like it too much as it reduces the hay crop, it is the perfect tool for us. We were kindly donated a sack of seed from Tony Harding's hayfield at Seatsides and sowed it last November by scarifying areas with a rake. It needs a spell of cold weather to germinate, and has already established really well. By the time you read this, it will be more or less finished flowering, but will already be doing a good job.

Certain plants were already “resident” in the ground. Plants which either could survive and flower under the mower blades or flower in between cuts e.g. Self-Heal, Clover, Daisy and several Speedwells, or survive without flowering, until conditions changed and they could finally grow and complete their life cycle. We are seeing this latter group flowering now e.g. Pignut, Meadow Buttercup, Stitchwort, Cuckoo flower or Lady's Smock, Sheep Sorrel, Cat's Ears and Hawkbits, Flowering Rush and Oxeye or Dog daisy. To this mix we added small plants of Wood Cranesbill, Bird's foot Trefoil, Greater Burnet, Betony, Red Campion and Ragged Robin. It might be a case of trial and error as to what survives and spreads, and what finds the conditions too dry or for some other reason, not quite to its liking.

The final phase in the annual cycle will be to cut the sward and remove it, as though we were taking a hay crop off it, any time from late August onwards. This timing will give most of the plants enough time to set seed. Anyone got a powerful mower to do the job? And some muscle to rake off the hay? We could have a bit of a party/picnic to help the work! Eric used to do it with tractor and cutter bar and the whole Scott family would fork it into the trailer and take it to Sowerby's at Partridge Nest for quality calf hay.

Take a look over and I think you will find that rather than being an untidy looking mess, it's really very attractive. The flowering species will increase each year if all goes to plan. I must admit that the flower meadow in my own garden is a real joy; each morning I count yet more Common Spotted Orchids in flower

(there were 60 spikes last year, all from 3 plants I put in originally some 6 years ago. Perhaps it would be good to scatter some of this year's seed in the cemetery when its ripe?)

St Swithin's Day

You probably know the "superstition", that if it rains on St Swithin's day, July 15, it will rain every day for the next forty days. But just in case you didn't know who St Swithin was, he was the Bishop of Winchester who died in 862. His relics were transferred to the cathedral in Winchester in 1093.

Bowes Lyon Trust

The Trust, created by the will of the Hon Francis Bowes Lyon in 1948, is administered by Trustees (currently the Vicar and Churchwardens). The Trust can make small grants to people in the Parish of Beltingham with Henshaw on grounds of hardship. If you know anyone who could benefit from such a grant, please speak to Nigel Collingwood, secretary to the Trust, on 344119. All applications are treated in confidence.

Cafe Scientifique

5 July, Living with ghosts: smart homes and the Gothic imagination with Elaine Campbell, Criminologist. Smart technologies have become an everyday feature of 21st C living. But there is a downside to this revolution which is best told as a Gothic tale of ghostly others who hover ceaselessly in the shadows.

6 September, The Science of Happiness, with John Lamont. Tickets: www.ticketsource.co.uk/bardon-mill-henshaw-village-hall or from the Village shop.

Haltwhistle Garden Club

18 July, A trip to Allendale Community Gardens with a talk from Ginny Swale "Plugging the gap".

12 September A talk by Bill Devonshire on Gardens of the "Noble North".

Ring Godfrey Walker 322369 for more details.

News from our school's new Head Teacher

It has been wonderful to start my Headship at Henshaw and Greenhead Primary Schools. Being part of such a supportive and welcoming community has allowed both schools to flourish in the three months during which I have been Head Teacher. It has been great to make a start on 'flattening the walls' of our local schools to allow our community to venture back in - allowing parents and families to once again share in their children's learning journey.

In our Federation, we have really strived to rekindle our Christian ethos and values - so now we have a school promise which is known by our staff, children and governors. This is based on the good Christian values and beliefs that we hold dear. It has also been vital that we reconnect with our church and Steve has been instrumental in this; taking regular collective worship as well as visits to the church.

Going forward, we would love to start Messy Church again - in fact the parents and children have been asking for it! If you would be interested in helping to run this, please let the school know and we can arrange for this wonderful after-school club to commence after the summer holidays. We are also asking for volunteers for Reading Buddies. If you could give a regular commitment on a day for a couple of hours a week, to hear children read, we would love to hear from you and invite you into our lovely school.

Please feel free to check out our Facebook page and new-look school website to keep up to date with what is happening in your local school.

Best wishes, Mike Glenton

West Northumberland Councils Working Together for the Jubilee

In commemoration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, five councils have joined forces to purchase china commemoration mugs for the children in their local schools. Haltwhistle Town Council, Henshaw, Bardon Mill, Plennmeller with Whitfield Parish and Greenhead Parish councils chose a china mug depicting the Queen on her coronation. The mugs were delivered to the local schools of Haltwhistle Academy, Henshaw C of E Primary School, Greenhead C of E Primary School and Whitfield C of E Primary School.



Our Logo and Website

Did you notice the change to our logo at the top of the newsletter? We have now incorporated the names of the parishes which make up our new Benefice – thanks to Steve for the technical wizardry to achieve this. We have also been refreshing our website. This is a work in progress, and there is still some way to go, but we are indebted to Steve Gibbon for his continuing help and support, not only with this work of updating the site, but also for his on-going advice and input throughout the year. He has been patient and supportive in his training, but some of his “pupils” are more adept than others!!! Thank you, Steve G.

Recycling Mobile Phones

In September 2005 the following note appeared in the Parish Newsletter:

“Mobile Phones: there are an estimated 90 million handsets, plus their batteries, unaccounted for in the UK and even taking into account those which have already entered the waste stream there are tens of millions of phones available for recycling. Approximately 18 million handsets were issued in the UK alone in 2004. Waste from mobile phone products is a subject of rising concern around the world. While this is a small amount of the overall waste produced in industrialised countries, it is growing much faster than the waste stream as a whole. Moreover, phones contain many toxic substances, including arsenic, antimony, beryllium, cadmium, copper, lead, mercury, nickel, zinc and flame retardants, which can be released into the air and groundwater when burned in incinerators or disposed of in landfills, creating threats to human health and the environment.”

Given that this situation is likely to be very much worse now, in 2022, and given that 80% of a mobile phone can be recycled, here are some suggestions about what to do with unwanted mobile phones. You could try selling on line, on ebay or Gumtree, you could give your phone away, e.g. to Freecycle, you could pass your phone on to a charity – many accept them as they are a valuable way for the charity to raise money – or, if you take them to the recycling plant, put them in ‘small electrical’ where the recycling process should retrieve the useful and valuable parts of them. **Don't forget to remove your personal data before you do any of these things.**

New Residents in the Parish

If you are aware of new residents moving into the Parish, please let one of the Wardens know, as they would be pleased to send a welcome letter and leaflet about the parish.

CHURCH CONTACTS - Vicar: Rev'd Canon Steve Wright, 01434 320215, canonstevewright@gmail.com

Mrs Anne Galbraith, Telephone 684302 Email galbraithanne55@gmail.com

Mr Adrian Storrie, Telephone 344494 Email adetree@btinternet.com