

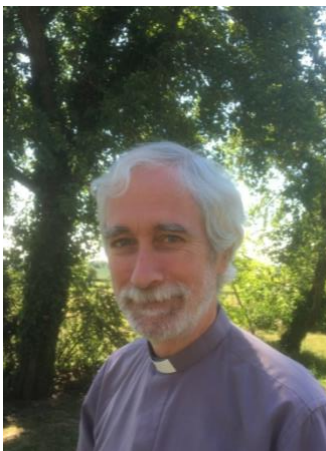


THE PARISH OF BELTINGHAM WITH HENSHAW

Parish Newsletter March 2022

Installation of our new Vicar

Rev'd Canon Steve Wright will be installed as our new Vicar on 31 March at 7 pm by the Bishop of Berwick in Holy Cross Church, Haltwhistle. If you would be interested to attend this ceremony, please contact Anne Galbraith, Churchwarden on 684302 or email galbraithanne55@gmail.com



A message from our New Vicar

View from the Vicarage.

The view from Haltwhistle Vicarage is SO urban! That is, if you choose to look at the petrol station and its lights. The view from the Vicarage is so rural! That is, if you choose to look at the wide open hills and the wide valley. We have just visited the Vicarage with someone from the Diocesan properties department to see what repairs need doing to it before we move in. We dropped off a load of our children's stuff (in London, Nottingham and Manchester) on the way up but our own stuff is moving at the end of February and we are looking forward to being there!

While we were up we talked with the church wardens about Sunday service times – I'm learning that what Lay Leader means here is different from Norwich diocese where we have been. Norfolk are more used to their parish priests spreading their time over other parishes (we have seven here) and may see them more at other events than Sundays – for example, I expect Haltwhistle may see me more at services in church, but I expect Greenhead and Henshaw/Bardon Mill will see me more in the schools and local cafes. I don't know yet, but will want to find ways to make the Good News audible to the 99 in each place and will have to work out how to do that. What's your view?

Steve

Timing of services

There are a number of matters that our new vicar, Steve, and the PCC will have to determine once he has taken up his role. One such matter is the timing of our services, given that Steve will be serving three parishes. To allow time for that to be decided, a decision has been taken that **during April, our services at All Hallows', Henshaw will be at 11 am.** We will confirm the on-going arrangements as soon as these are decided.

Services for March

Date	President	Church
March 6	Eucharist Rev Keith Teasdale	All Hallows, 10.30
March 13	Eucharist Rev Chris Simmons	All Hallows, 10.30
March 20	Eucharist Rev Rosalind Brown	St Cuthbert's, ** Beltingham 10.30
March 27	Eucharist Rev Gill Alexander Mothering Sunday	All Hallows, 10.30
April 3	Eucharist Rev Steve Wright	All Hallows, 11 am

**** Please note that building work is taking place at Beltingham House, so parking near the church may be very limited. Please use the grassed area just inside the cemetery for parking for this service. The area which has been planted with wild flowers is marked with bamboo canes. Please avoid straying on to this area.**

Evening Prayer during Lent

On Wednesdays during Lent (9, 16, 23, 30 March and 6 April) at 4 pm there will be a service of Evening Prayer at All Hallows', Henshaw. In Holy Week, on Wednesday 13 April, this will be at 7 pm with our Vicar Steve.

Being Father Christmas at Beamish – a reflection from Adrian Storrie

“Hello Archie” said Santa, “You’ve grown a lot since I saw you last!” “You saw me last week at the garden centre,” replies 12-year old Archie in a deadpan voice and expressionless face. Note to self: don’t try to be too clever, some of these children are a bit ‘wick’. Better rephrase that next time.

Now we all know, of course, that there is only one Father Christmas. And it’s only magic that helps him visit all the children in the world and leave presents in just one evening. And it’s that same magic that allows him to sit simultaneously in thousands of grottos around the world in the weeks before Christmas to meet the children and hear what they want for Christmas. Santa has a grotto at Beamish, well three actually, and his magic means he moves at the speed of light between the three, that’s how the queue to see him moves so fast. There is one side effect of this rapid movement; it can change his appearance, making him taller, or shorter, fatter or thinner, and it can even change his voice and his accent. So were you to see Santa more than once you might almost believe you’d seen two different people. It can be confusing, especially for some parents seeing families coming out of a different building to the one they’ve been in. “What’s in there?” they ask, pointing across the yard. “Nothing to see there,” replies Santa’s helper. “Well we want to see in,” comes the reply from the awkward parent who thinks they’re missing something. “No you don’t,” replies the helper, “it would spoil the magic.” This is usually enough for the penny to drop, but not always and then the parent has to be drawn aside so the magic of Christmas can be explained in words of one syllable.

And talking of parents, Santa can never assume that the adults with the child are its parents. One family group appeared to be grandmother, mother and child. In fact the ‘grandmother’ turned out to be the mother in a new relationship and the assumed mother was a half-sister to the child.

The children generally fall into three categories, the screamers, the silent, and the talkers. The screamers are what you would expect; one sight of Santa sets them off, and they don’t stop until they go out of the grotto. There’s no chance of any conversation with a screaming child who is fighting desperately to get as far away from Santa as they can. Somehow Santa has to enable the parents or grandparents to get a photo in which the child and Santa can be seen together.

The silent type say nothing. They may be shy and hide behind parents and avoid looking at Santa, the parents do all the talking, although sometimes the children never get chance to say anything because parents or grandparents never stop talking. One family with three children, the oldest being a girl of about 13 with a remarkable resemblance to Wednesday of the spooky Addams Family, sat expressionless, motionless and wordless throughout the entire meeting, “What’s your name? How old are you? What do you want for Christmas? Nothing, just a blank face. Try the next child: just the same, and so on. The parents were no help. What a strange family.

The talkers cannot be stopped. Santa only has a limited time per child, he doesn't really want a life history, he has a quota and a queue outside. One Canadian teenager, very well spoken and precise, and quickly identified as autistic, had a never ending list of 'wants', which seemed to comprise every toy character from every cartoon series on television in Canada, including their wives and mothers! Poor Santa couldn't get a word in to stop the flow.

Santa has to be a good listener: he has to be able to hear whispered names and incomprehensible toy requests above the noise of the children outside in the queue, and above the noise of the Christmas music playing so that the family can't hear the conversation being simultaneously conducted with another family in the next-door grotto!

It's amazing how many children completely forget what's on their Christmas list when they get in front of Santa, so he has to guess for them, "Is it something from Paw Patrol?, LOL, Frozen?" he says, noticing the branded clothing they wear. Wow" says mum, "How did Santa know you like Paw Patrol?" Santa just smiles.

Santa keeps a list of unusual names he encounters, Arlo Blossom, Nevaeh (heaven spelt backwards!), and this year a real rarity, Jane. When was the last time you heard a child called that? But he does get caught out, chatting to a long blonde haired girl who turns out to be a boy with a name that would be described as 'gender-neutral'. Or the young couple who have brought baby to see Santa for the first time. Looking round the grotto for the pushchair Santa says, "Where's the baby?" "Oh it's not due till March," says the proud mother-to-be, pointing to her stomach. Really?? It's a photo with the bump then! Or the couple who brought their dog to see Santa: photo with dog. Or the large family group who come in right at the end of the day. Eight men, teenagers to grandads who have clearly spent the afternoon in the Sun Inn and they stand in the corner conversing loudly and show no interest in proceedings. Eight children of various ages and probably a dozen women, again of various ages, with the young children with snotty noses running riot picking up candles, handling presents, pulling at the tree lights and Santa has to try and converse with them all in the chaos and then, of course, the obligatory photos; singles, family groups, everyone together etc etc.

But every now and then a child will come in and Santa would gladly spend the rest of the day talking to that child. An angel of a child who is fully immersed in the magic of Christmas and just loves Santa. There's an instant connection and the innocent intimacy of the conversation brings tears of joy to the eyes of the proud parents. This is the magic of Christmas for Santa, and it makes all the hard work, (and trust me it is hard work), worthwhile.

Eco fair - save energy, save money and save the planet

Community hub, 1st floor, **Haltwhistle Library**

Drop in from **10am to 2pm on Sat 19th March** - everyone welcome!

Free expert advice and energy saving tips

Energy efficient goodies to take home

Book a free home energy audit

Hot drinks and soup

Organised by South Tyne Sustainability & Haltwhistle Partnership

Don't forget – Summer time begins weekend of 26/27 March

Sunday School – a memory from Philippa Collingwood

Every summer my sister and I were lucky enough to so go to Middleton-on-Sea, W. Sussex, to stay with my widowed Granny and Aunty Lily. Aunty Lily was the unlucky 12th child of the family, her mother dying in childbirth the next year, leaving the oldest girl to cope. At some point Aunty was dropped as a baby leading to undiagnosed deafness, which led to her going to the back of the class and being labelled 'dim'. One of her batchelor brothers fought in the Boer War and stayed on, sending for Aunty to be his cook and housekeeper. On the boat she had the temerity to fall in love (nothing more) with a divorced man, and was sent home a few months later in disgrace. She kept corresponding with the gentleman until he died when they were in their eighties. Different times.

The church in Middleton was too 'high' for my Granny's liking, so they attended nearby ancient and picturesque Climping. We squashed into the back of her little Austen 7 and enjoyed escaping the boring bits of the service by going to Sunday School, through an arched wooden door in the brick and flint wall. I was always *slightly* disappointed not to find the Secret Garden on the other side, merely a rather neglected Vicarage one instead. But inside we had comfy chairs, a glass of orange squash, and a lovely teacher (the vicar's wife, maybe?) and a pale blue book each, in which we stuck the very large pictorial stamp, four to a page, of that day's lesson. I particularly remember the Good

Samaritan one, and Zaccheus up his tree. Jill and I went on to conventional stamp-collecting right up until the time we joined the church youth club.

We have missed seeing our children in Henshaw church during the vacancy, and look forward to Messy Church's return soon.

Mother's Union

Lady Day Holy Communion and Members Meeting with Rev'd Dr John Harrison – 23 March 2.30 pm at All Hallows', Henshaw

26 March – Make Mothers' Day Coffee Morning in Haydon Bridge Community Centre.

Parishes by the Wall Lent Talks 2022

Would you like to join a series of streamed talks, where the focus this year is on the Beatitudes. These will take place on the Tuesdays in Lent, beginning on 8 March from 7.30pm to 8.30pm. Speakers will include the Bishop of Berwick and the Archdeacon of Lindisfarne.

If you want to join, please contact Rev Gill Alexander on g.alexander@btinternet.com

Writer's Block – a poem by Keith Brunton

I need some inspiration and I don't know where to get it.

I had a look in Google, but you might as well forget it.

At Amazon they're out of stock.

They don't sell help for writer's block.

I often feel like this these days, it's not a nice sensation.

Do you think these trendy iPads have an app for inspiration?

If you sit by a window, just staring into space,

You'd think some good ideas would come and hit you in the face.

Well, they don't.

So I sit here day by day awaiting something to excite me,

And hope a bright idea will soon jump off the screen and bite me.

Just sitting here and thinking is temptation to start drinking.

Maybe that's a good idea. I could have a glass of beer,

Or a nice cool German hock, it might unblock the block.

Yes away with negativity, let's drink to creativity.

No, I think I'll have a red, and then toddle off to bed.

Contact information

Anne Galbraith, Churchwarden Tel: 01434 684302, Email galbraithanne55@gmail.com

Adrian Storrie, Churchwarden Tel: 01434 344494, Email adetree@btinternet.com

Carol Adams, Deputy Warden Tel: 01434 344398, Email adamscarol@btinternet.com