



THE PARISH OF BELTINGHAM WITH HENSHAW

Parish Newsletter May 2021

Update about Benjamin

Benjamin conducted his final service with us on April 12th. Not only did he manage to reflect on his time in our parish, but also he skilfully incorporated a tribute to the Duke of Edinburgh, who had died two days before. The church was as full as Covid regulations allow, so it was a very good send off from the parish. We were able to present him with a case of wine, some gift vouchers for Waitrose and a cheque for £1500. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this generous gift.

Benjamin's children have now started at their new school in Lanercost, and his pictures posted on Facebook show them in the new uniforms. We also saw a picture of Benjamin's pizza oven installed and in operation, and scenes from his various new running routes.

Thank you message from Benjamin

I wanted to thank you all for the hugely generous leaving gifts we received as we left after the wonderful six and half years we had with you to move to my new post at Carlisle Cathedral. We hope to use the money to buy a lasting memento from the Parish which we will be able to use to remember you all by. We hope that you will not be strangers at the far end of Hadrian's Wall. We are so looking forward to being with you for the Cuthbert-tide evensong in September. With love and many thanks, Benjamin, Steph, Elizabeth and Matilda.

Benjamin's Installation at Carlisle

His installation service took place on Sunday 25th April at 3 pm in Carlisle Cathedral, when many of our parishioners were able to attend. It was a choral evensong, with their girls' choir and lay clerks singing in a socially distanced way, and making a most exquisite contribution to the service. In the service, the Bishop asks Benjamin to renew his dedication to Christ as a priest in the Church of God, and then reads to Benjamin the various duties and responsibilities he has as a Canon. Then the Dean of the Cathedral took over, and asked Benjamin to make the oath prescribed in the Statutes of the Cathedral, before leading him around to church to install him in his canonical stall – a very touching part of the service, when the organ played a rousing fanfare and the congregation greeted Benjamin with applause. At the end of the service, gifts were brought for Steph and for Elizabeth and Matilda. Outside the Cathedral, we were all able to congratulate Benjamin again in glorious sunshine, when the whole setting was looking magnificent.



Services during May

2 May at 10.30 am at All Hallows' Henshaw, **Morning Prayer with reflection**

9 May at 10.30 am at All Hallows' Henshaw, **Morning Prayer with reflection**

16 May at 10.30 am at All Hallows' Henshaw, Eucharist presided over by Bishop Christine

23 May at 10.30 am at All Hallows' Henshaw, **Eucharist** conducted by Revd
Gill Alexander

30 May at 10.30 am **Morning Prayer** at All Hallows' Henshaw, with a
Celebration Service at 10.30 am at St Cuthbert's, Haydon Bridge

Every Tuesday and Thursday at 9 am there will be a service of Morning Prayer
streamed via [facebook.com/parishesbythewall](https://www.facebook.com/parishesbythewall) Every Wednesday St Cuthbert's Haydon
Bridge is open for private prayer 2pm and 3pm

Beltingham with Henshaw PCC

We were delighted to welcome the new Archdeacon of Lindisfarne, Rev Catherine Sourbut Groves, together with Rev Jeremy Thompson, our Area Dean and David Ratcliff, lay chair of the Deanery Synod, to our PCC meeting in April. They set out some proposals for ways in which parishes might be re-aligned for the future, bearing in mind the discussions which have been taking place over a lengthy period with all parishes in the Deanery. After they left the meeting, the normal business of the PCC took place, including endorsing the pattern of services currently set until the end of July; a report about forthcoming changes from the beginning of May relating to the registration of marriages,

setting in train some work to establish whether we can improve our environmental footprint; and a review of our current financial situation. There are some large items of expenditure in prospect, including improving the heating in All Hallows' church, carrying out the arboriculturalist's recommendations on the preservation of the yew tree, and work needed on windows in Beltingham at some future time. The next meeting of the PCC will be on Tuesday 18 May at 4.30 pm.



A member of the Mothers' Union, who volunteers at the prison in Acklington was concerned because some prisoners have no one to meet them on their release. They leave the prison, and get on a bus carrying a polythene bag with their few possessions and go to sleep on a friend's sofa (if they are lucky!) She suggested we give these men a back pack containing essential toiletries, a towel, spare underwear, T Shirt, socks and jogging pants. This is an on-going project for the Mothers' Union in the Diocese and has been very well received and copied in other Dioceses.

During lock-down many of the MU projects have continued, even "Away From it All" Holidays (AFIA). Last summer, some disadvantaged families had a caravan holiday on the Northumberland Coast. Members in the Diocese also support Domestic Abuse refugees with shopping vouchers, gifts and treats at Christmas. Support was also given to the Fishermen's Mission with a grant to purchase new equipment and even providing a Christmas Dinner for two Ghanaian fishermen as they couldn't go home.

This year, "Story Bags" are being donated to Bishop's Primary School, there are five campuses within the Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust in the Ashington, Newbiggin area. The content of these bags will help with language and communication skills through books, board games and puzzles.

The Mothers' Union activities are many and varied, one of our aims is to support those whose family life has met with adversity and I think we fulfill that commitment very well.

Sheila Walker
Mothers' Union Vice President, Newcastle Diocese

Reviewing your planned giving

First, our grateful thanks to our planned givers for your support for the Church. Early in each new financial year, we try to draw to the attention of our congregation how helpful it would be if they would review their planned giving, and where possible, increase it. Even small increases, when spread across the congregation as a whole, make impact over the year, and are greatly appreciated.

Tynedale Talking Newspaper – helping you to stay connected

Are you living with sight difficulties and finding it hard to read the local newspaper? Perhaps you know a relative or friend who is visually impaired who might enjoy listening to local news? The Tynedale Talking Newspaper (TTN) sends out a free audio recording of local news each week, courtesy of the Hexham Courant.

Every month there is also a new recording of The Tynedale Talking Magazine or The Northumbrian. If you wish you can be sent the Northumbrian magazine only four times a year. Recordings arrive by

post on a USB memory stick which can be listened to on a computer or Smart TV. No computer? No problem. TTN also has easy-to-use audio players to loan out to people who are not on the internet.

To find out more please contact Ed, the Registrar, on 07400 096937 or www.ttnweb.uk or check out Facebook. TTN is a charity (1034087) run entirely by local volunteers, helping people to stay connected and feel part of the community. (As a post-script to the above information, Anne Galbraith is a regular reader for TTN)

A Reflection from our service of Morning Prayer on 18 April

When I was very much younger, I really loved shoes, a passion that I discover I have passed on to my daughter. Despite having very broad feet, which made fitting into very fashionable shoes a painful business, my love of footwear made me very well acquainted with all the shoe shops in Newcastle. And in the 1960's, there were many – some now just names from the past, Dolcis, Stead and Simpson, Amos Atkinson – very upmarket! – and of course at the other end, there was Timpsons. Now, you probably know about Timpsons because in many high streets or car parks of Tesco, there is a Timpsons, dedicated to shoe repairs and key cutting among their range of services.

Timpsons was therefore very fondly remembered as I listened to one of the Lent talks on Radio 4, featuring the head of the organisation, Sir John Timpson. If you can catch up with his talk on BBC Sounds, I would really recommend it as a very good listen. His theme for the talk was faith in lost causes, and Hope. Well through his talk, he draws on the scene of Jesus and the two criminals either side of him at the crucifixion. One says to Jesus, Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us. The other rebuked the first, and acknowledges that they have done wrong. He says to Jesus, “remember me when you come to your throne”. The reply Jesus makes to him, Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise” shows there is always hope.

Sir John's talk is so fascinating because he draws on his experience in two ways – first the experience of his business employing ex prisoners, and second, the experience of his family in fostering children – almost 100 over them over a long period. He gives every credit to his son James for the prisoner employment and to his wife for their fostering activity, but his talk is so beautifully illustrated by examples drawn from both situations. Today I am concentrating on what he has to say about the ex prisoners. I should warn you that if you do go to listen to his talk, you should have a hankie at the ready. I was listening in the car, and was reduced to tears several times.

The story of the prisoners began when his son James went to a business seminar that was being held in Thorncross open prison in 2001. As part of the day, delegates were shown over the prison by one of the inmates – in James' case, his escort was Matt. In discussion during the tour, James was so impressed by Matt that he said to him, phone me when you out and I will help to find you a job. Matt has now been employed by Timpsons for 19 years, and is one of the people who helps to run their recruitment from prisons.

One thing that really impressed itself on Sir John was hearing Rabbi Jonathan Sachs speaking, when he distinguished between optimism – a passive virtue – meaning the expectation or belief that things will get better, and hope – an active virtue – meaning making things get better. When James brought his idea of recruiting ex prisoners for their business, here was a way in which their firm could make things get better. However, Sir John admits that he was initially very sceptical – what would customers think? What would be the reaction of fellow employees?? All was going well, and the programme was run in a discreet and quiet way until a tabloid newspaper got hold of the story and ran a headline “Convicts taught to cut keys”. From then on, the firm has not sought to hide its prison recruitment activity, and indeed have expanded how they operate, holding workshops in both male and female prisons.

Prisoners are recruited and remunerated in exactly the same way as other employees, although they may need some special help when they first leave prison – when they are given the princely sum of £46, and may have no-where to go. What they lack at that moment is trust, friendship and practical support. Sir John illustrates how their firm shows their trust in ex prisoners by making one of their first jobs the task of banking the shop's takings for the day. They show their friendship through the relationship that ex prisoners forge with their colleagues, and their practical support by helping to find suitable housing and offering ongoing mentorship.

From the first tentative steps that Timpsons took in employing ex prisoners, they now employ 520, which represents 10% of their workforce. Amongst that cohort, the reoffending rate is about 3% compared with figures like 50% in the general ex prison population. So here is a practical example of what offering hope and opportunity can achieve. Sir John muses on some of the cases he has known – visiting one of their shops, Russ, an ex drug offender who had served time in Wandsworth, asked Sir John if he could have a private word with him. This was to say how content he was in his new life, with far less money than he had when dealing in drugs but now settled with a partner to whom he was shortly to get married. Would Sir John come to the wedding? Well – I told you it was wet hankie stuff!

This is such an inspirational story – and remember, I have only told you half of it!! There is still the amazing bit about fostering so many children – if you google lent talk, Sir John Timpson, you should be able to find it. I heartily recommend it for a truly feel good illustration about Hope. And the story of what the Timpsons have done in a practical way really resonates with another great example – the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Following the death of the Duke, the tributes paid to him were very revealing of the wide range of his interests and the causes he supported, but for most of our young people, the Award scheme is very real to them, and has often been character building and life changing. In tribute to the Duke of Edinburgh, I will leave you with one short account of such a change – this is the story of Jon Watts, who was in prison, during a sentence for grievous bodily harm, when he started doing the Duke of Edinburgh award. He had been jailed at the age of 18 after becoming caught up in crime. Looking to pass the time, Watts, who is now 32, began the scheme and learned how to cook. After finishing his sentence, he went to work for Jamie Oliver. This month marks ten years since he left jail, and he is now a successful chef. He says the scheme gave his life a completely new direction. And his is only one story of very many whose lives have been touched in some way by the Duke of Edinburgh.

The Bluebell - Did you know?

The latin name of the Bluebell is *hyacinthoides non scripta* – it comes from a Greek myth, when Prince Hyacinthus died, the tears of the God Apollo spelled the word “alas” on the petals of the hyacinth flower that sprang up from his blood. *Non scripta* means unlettered, and distinguishes the Bluebell from the similar looking hyacinth. In fact, the bluebell has many names, including wild hyacinth, wood bell, Lady's Nightcap and Witches' Thimble.

It is against the law to intentionally pick, uproot or destroy bluebells, despite the fact that more than half the world's bluebells are found in the UK. They are usually in flower until late May, when their early flowering makes the most of the sunlight that reaches the woodland floor before the canopy of the trees casts its shade.

There are countless folklore tales surrounding bluebells, many of which involve dark fairy magic. Bluebell woods are believed to be intricately woven with fairy enchantments, used by these mischievous beings to trap humans. It is also said that if you hear a bluebell ring, you will be visited by a bad fairy, and will die not long after. If you are to pick a bluebell, many believe you will be led astray by fairies, wandering lost forevermore.

In the language of flowers, the bluebell is a symbol of humility, constancy, gratitude and everlasting love. It is said that if you turn a bluebell flower inside-out without tearing it, you will win the one you love, and if you wear a wreath of bluebells you will only be able to speak the truth.

A good place to see bluebells locally is at Allen Banks, the largest area of ancient woodland in Northumberland. The Woodland Trust say the hybrid or Spanish bluebell is overtaking the traditional, sweet-scented native plants. Here is how to tell the difference:

Native plants are deep violet-blue though a genetic mutation occasionally causes white flowers, the flower stem droops or nods distinctly to one side, almost all flowers are on one side of the stem, hanging down to one side. The flowers are a narrow, straight-sided bell with parallel sides, petal tips curl back and the flowers have a strong, sweet scent.

The Spanish bluebells are pale to mid-blue, and often also white or pink. The flower stem is stiff and upright, with flowers sticking out all the way round the stem. Flowers are a wide open, almost cone-shaped bell and the petal tips flare slightly outwards. They have little or no scent at all.

Venerable Bede

The life of the Venerable Bede is celebrated in the church calender on 27 May. Bede was a Benedictine monk at the monastery at Monkwearmouth. He was sent there at the age of seven and he later joined Abbot Ceolfrith at Jarrow. They both survived a plague that struck in 686, although the majority who lived there died in the outbreak. Bede is well known as an author. His most famous work, Ecclesiastical History of the English People, making him one of the greatest writers of the early Middle Ages. Bede was also fluent in Latin and Greek and renowned as a translator. He died in 735 on the Feast of the Ascension, and it is recorded that he was dictating to a scribe up to the end. Bede's remains were eventually brought to Durham Cathedral in the 11th century. His tomb there was looted in 1541 but he was re-interred in the Galilee chapel in the cathedral.

And here is a most beautiful picture of his tomb in the Galilee Chapel, taken from an unusual angle by Michael Sadgrove – thank you Michael for permission to reproduce this.

