



THE PARISH OF BELTINGHAM WITH HENSHAW

Parish Newsletter June 2022

From our Vicar, Steve

Anyone in the public eye needs to watch what they say for it may come back to haunt them. The Queen is not a stranger to that and there are plenty of memes and posters using her quote from a 1945 edition of Life magazine saying, "I should like to be a horse." Little did she know then that in a few years she would become the 'Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England'. On the advice of the Prime Minister the Queen appoints the Bishops of the Church of England, who then swear an oath of allegiance and pay homage to her. Deacons and priests also swear an oath of allegiance when they are licenced in a new parish as I did here a few months ago – how time flies!



As I have looked up quotes to go on our posters in church over the Jubilee weekend I have enjoyed the funny ones, like the horse quote above, or 'If I wore beige, nobody would know who I am', and 'I have to be seen to be believed', but I have also been reminded of how often she refers boldly to what her faith in God means to her. Leaders of religious countries have enormous respect for Queen Elizabeth partly because of this living faith that she has - they understand the importance of it and find it hard to imagine how people can believe that God does not exist when all creation speaks as his handiwork.

Whether you are a royal supporter or a republican, I hope you will feel that she has been good for our country in a very profound way and would ask your prayers for her and for her family at this time when she is not well. Her faith gives her strength yet, and if you know nothing of walking with God then I would encourage you to trust him and be open with him, asking his Spirit to guide you. She said last year, 'None of us can slow the passage of time; and while we often focus on all that has changed in the intervening years, much remains unchanged, including the Gospel of Christ and his teachings.'

Services for June 2022

Date and time	President	Church
June 5 11am	Rev'd Canon Stephen Wright Holy Communion	All Hallows', Henshaw
June 12, 11am	Rev'd Canon Stephen Wright Holy Communion	All Hallows', Henshaw
June 19, 11am	Rev'd Keith Teasdale, Holy Communion	All Hallows', Henshaw
June 26, 11am	Rev'd Gill Alexander Holy Communion	All Hallows', Henshaw
July 3, 11 am	Rev'd Canon Stephen Wright Holy Communion	All Hallows', Henshaw

From the Registers

May 6, Graveside burial of Edwin James at Beltingham

Mothers' Union

June 22 "My favourite psalms" with the Very Reverend Michael Sadgrove

July 27, Garden Party and Members Meeting, Whitegates

August 4, Mary Sumner Day, Newcastle Cathedral – details from Anne Brunton or Sheila Walker.

Long Lost Family – a happy reunion

You may have watched episodes of the TV programme, Long Lost Family. If so, you may know that on one occasion, the reunion of a brother and sister, both in their fifties, took place in the garden at the Vicarage in Beltingham. The background to that programme was that the little girl was born while the family had been taken in by Rev'd Linton and his wife Patsy, following the tragic death of their father. The little girl was put up for adoption and it was over half a century before brother and sister met. (I do have a dvd of this programme if anyone would be interested to borrow it.)

This was not the only occasion on which Joe Linton and Patsy had fostered or cared for families or children. Recently as churchwarden, I was contacted by a lady who wrote that she was trying to trace her early childhood. She had been fostered for a short period in 1967 by the Lintons and was wondering whether there was anyone in our congregation who could shed some light or who may have known her as a tiny baby. She was aware that both Rev'd and Mrs Linton had died, but wondered if other Linton family members might remember her.

I made contact with the Linton family and I am pleased to report that Frances Linton has now met with the lady for a coffee. She wasn't able to tell her much about herself, but could tell her about vicarage life, and she showed her photographs of the Linton family. The lady's adopted life had worked well, and she is married with children and grandchildren. She was able to share with Frances how much it helped her to fill in some of the gaps in her early life.

Pentecost - some thoughts from Anne Galbraith, Churchwarden

One of my secret terrors in life is that out of the blue, someone may ask me to explain about the Holy Spirit. I think I would say that after Jesus died, rose again and ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit came down and filled up every disciple and apostle of Christ to spread the Gospel to the world, so that now, whenever anyone puts their faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit immediately lives within them.

I think we can all agree that there are bits of the Bible where sometimes the language is not clear to us. However, the description of the day of Pentecost in the Act of the Apostles speaks to us in clear and very forceful language – "they were all together in one place. Suddenly there came from the sky what sounded like a strong driving wind, a noise which filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them flames like tongues of fire distributed among them and coming to rest on each one. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other tongues."

The language in this passage may be clear, but its meaning may be quite difficult to understand. I can always remember as a youngster in church being quite nervous that this same phenomenon might happen to me! But I do remember how Pentecost and the Holy Spirit was explained – that Jesus was preparing to go to Heaven and he made a promise to his Disciples that even though he was leaving them, he would send a helper, and that helper was the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit lives in all of us and gives us power to live for Jesus.

We should remember the impact of Pentecost on the Apostles. The change that happened to them with the coming of the Holy Spirit helped them to overcome their fear and feelings of failure and inadequacy. They knew that they were being trusted with a great task but feared that they lacked the strength to begin. But on the day of Pentecost, Jesus was faithful to his promise. Filled with the Holy Spirit, they were able to go out into the world and preach the Gospel.

Women's Institute – Party in the Park

The WI are holding a party in the park on Sunday 5 June between 3 pm and 5 pm – see the notices displayed around the village for details. The event is free, but you should collect a ticket from Bardon Mill Village Shop so that the WI know how many to cater for. **Bring your own chair!!!** Other events – children's games, a fancy dress competition, will be taking place at the same time.

Local Research project – Beltingham and Bardon Mill

Hazel Barron-Cooper is a researcher at Newcastle University and her work is about sense of place and local distinctiveness. Her project is focused on Beltingham and also the wider Bardon Mill area. She is particularly interested in the ancient yew in St Cuthbert's churchyard. Some of you may have met her when she held an exhibition at the Village Hall in Bardon Mill.

She would like to have your help in gathering local stories, history, folklore, customs, family history, ghost stories. She is also interested in local words for places, weather, animals, plants and in fact anything interesting about the area! Her research area is Fine Art and as a result of the research she will be making artworks and booklets. The booklets will be free of charge.

Send any information to H.Barron-Cooper2@newcastle.ac.uk, or ask her for a copy of a questionnaire that you could complete.

Deanery Pilgrimage

A final reminder that the closing date to register for our Deanery Pilgrimage on Saturday 18 June is this **Wednesday, 1st June**. Anyone taking part in what should be a lovely afternoon's 7-mile ramble from Allendale to Ninebanks needs to register with David Ratcliff at either r.david.ratcliff@gmail.com or **07866 600904**. This is so that the good people of Ninebanks, who are providing refreshments at the Songs of Praise event at the end of the walk, have an idea of the numbers to cater for.

Reflection for the Platinum Jubilee – Anne Galbraith

In February, we marked the anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne and spent some time reflecting on monarchy and the service of our Queen. Even before she became queen, she had pledged herself to a life of service when she was just 21 – she said “I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service. But I shall not have the strength to carry out this resolution alone unless you join in it with me as I now invite you to do. God help me to make good my vow and God bless all of you who are willing to share in it”.

Of course, that Sunday in February would be in many ways a rather sad day for the Queen – staying alone at Sandringham without the support of Prince Philip, and no doubt looking back at the 70 years of her reign. She should certainly look back with pride at how steadfastly she has carried out the vow she made in 1947. However, all that we know of her rather suggests that pride will not be uppermost – the Archbishop of Canterbury recently commented “She takes her duties seriously, but she doesn't take herself very seriously. She laughs in private, she has an absolutely superb sense of humour,”

I think it is fair to say that she has served our country diligently, with humility and great dignity, supported throughout by her steadfast Christian faith. Of course, as monarch she has a formal role as Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England, but much more than that, she clearly has a strong personal faith. In her first ever Christmas broadcast in 1952, before the Coronation the following June, she made the following prayer request: “Pray for me that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making, and that I may faithfully serve Him and you all the days of my life”.

If you are a regular listener to the Queen's Christmas Day broadcasts, you may know that these are among the very few speeches that she writes herself. They often contain messages about her personal faith – on one occasion she told us “For me the teachings of Christ and my own personal accountability before God provide a framework in which I try to lead my life”.

No doubt this year we will see many reminders of the Queen's coronation service. It is a deeply symbolic service which was devised as long ago as AD973. Even though the Queen may be wearing the crown jewels, a Bible is presented during the service and is described as the most valuable thing that this world affords. The most sacred moment at the heart of the ceremony is the anointing, when the symbols of royal status are removed. The Queen, sitting under a canopy to hide the sacred moment from the cameras, was dressed in a simple white dress with no jewels or crown. As the Archbishop anointed her with oil, the prayers said over her invited God's Holy Spirit to set her apart as God's servant.

The theme of service runs throughout the coronation and, during the Queen's long reign, she has been inspired by the sacrificial life of Jesus Christ, who said of himself: he 'did not come to be served, but to serve'. In 2008 the Queen said: 'I hope that, like me, you will be comforted by the example of Jesus of Nazareth who, often in circumstances of great adversity, managed to live an outgoing, unselfish and sacrificial life ... He makes it clear that genuine human happiness and satisfaction lie more in giving than receiving; more in serving than in being served.'

And in a later broadcast she told us: "For me, the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate today, is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role model of reconciliation and forgiveness, He stretched out His hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ's example has taught me to seek to respect and value all people, of whatever faith or none." I particularly love the phrase "an inspiration and an anchor in my life" – and we can certainly understand how often the Queen must have needed such an anchor.

The Bible story the Queen refers to most often emphasises this theme of service. In four of her Christmas broadcasts she has talked about the parable Jesus told of a 'Good Samaritan'. Most recently, in her 2020 broadcast on Christmas Eve from Windsor Castle, where she had been isolating with Prince Philip due to the Covid-19 pandemic, she said: 'We continue to be inspired by the kindness of strangers and draw comfort that - even on the darkest nights - there is hope in the new dawn. Jesus touched on this with the parable of the Good Samaritan. The man who is robbed and left at the roadside is saved by someone who did not share his religion or culture. This wonderful story of kindness is still as relevant today. Good Samaritans have emerged across society showing care and respect for all, regardless of gender, race or background, reminding us that each one of us is special and equal in the eyes of God.'

For many people in this country, Queen Elizabeth is the only monarch they have ever known. It is a truly amazing achievement to have ruled so wisely and steadfastly for more than 70 years. For a long time, the Queen was not the longest serving monarch, as King Bhumibol of Thailand had ruled for just over 70 years when he died in 2016, but after his death, she was on course to win that title. So much has changed over the course of her reign, something that she commented on in her speech issued for the Jubilee – "As I look ahead with a sense of hope and optimism to the year of my Platinum Jubilee, I am reminded of how much we can be thankful for. These last seven decades have seen extraordinary progress socially, technologically and culturally that have benefitted us all; and I am confident that the future will offer similar opportunities to us and especially to the younger generations in the United Kingdom and throughout the Commonwealth."

She went on to pay tribute to the support she had enjoyed from Prince Philip, and then to thank all of us – "This anniversary also affords me a time to reflect on the goodwill shown to me by people of all nationalities, faiths and ages in this country and around the world over these years. I would like to express my thanks to you all for your support. I remain eternally grateful for, and humbled by, the loyalty and affection that you continue to give me." Typical of her low key and modest style, she ended her message with the words "Your Servant, Elizabeth R."

Throughout her long life, Christ's example and teaching have been seen acted out in the dutiful and faithful life of our servant-hearted Queen. I think we can safely say that her prayer from the start of her reign has been answered. Someone has estimated that this year, the Queen is likely to receive 100,000 cards and letters of good wishes – and I am sure she deserves them all. God save the Queen.



Church of England prayer for Queen's Platinum Jubilee Gracious God, we give you thanks for the reign of Your servant, Elizabeth our Queen, and for the example of loving and faithful service which she has shown among us. Help us to follow her example of dedication and to commit our lives to You and to one another, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.