

Keeping
in
Touch

All Saints
Gosforth



St. Hugh's Church, Gosforth

28th April 2024

From the Vicar

Dear All,

Many of us will remember our amazing production of *Jesus Christ Superstar* in 2022. One song, "I Don't Know How to Love Him," beautifully portrays Mary of Bethany's struggle to make sense of her feelings towards Jesus. She seems to have greater insight into him than the men around her, as she is completely swept up by him. Indeed, the four Gospels tell us that women appear to be ahead of the men in grasping who Jesus is. Luke tells us that Mary of Magdalene and several other women, who were well-off, helped finance the disciples and pay the bills. Jesus had touched their lives, and they never forgot. They loved him, and they understood his teachings better than his disciples did. Perhaps they were actually living out the love that he had taught them. They had heard him say, "Blessed are the poor and the poor in spirit;" "Blessed are the peacemakers." They had listened, and they had taken it to heart. They were heartbroken at his cruel end, the last ones to leave the place of his death, but what more could they do?

One of them did something. We are told that early in the morning, Mary Magdalene got up and went to the tomb while it was still dark. It was dangerous, as there were reports about soldiers being posted to guard the tomb to prevent anyone from stealing the body, but she still went. She knew that there was a stone rolled in front of the entrance to the tomb, and she was certain he was dead. Perhaps she didn't know why she went, but she went just to be there.

I wonder, did Jesus honour her love and devotion by selecting her to be the first person to whom He revealed Himself alive? Peter and John were the two key leaders, but it was not they who were chosen. When they leave the site, Mary is left by the empty tomb, all alone in her grief. And then she is greeted. In saying

her name, Jesus is reminding her how well he knows and loves her. One word, and her grief is turned into joy as she sees that it is He.

That change from mourning to joy is at the heart of our Easter celebration. What emotions there must have been! Everything is turned upside down. It was indeed a white-knuckle ride. Out of deepest darkness, bright light and hope shine. Her message echoes down through the centuries: "Christ is risen; He is risen indeed."

Andrew



On a rare sunny day, Joyce Jennings captured this beautiful picture of cherry blossom outside the Garden of Remembrance. *More garden pictures on the next page.*

How does your garden grow?

Joyce Jennings, one of our regular gardeners, has captured these beautiful pictures of our gardens springing to life after what seems to have been a particularly long, grey and damp winter.

The Gardening Group come together on the first Saturday of each month and carry out a variety of jobs to keep our gardens looking well cared for. A separate team regularly cuts the lawns throughout the growing season. A mammoth job!

We are always looking for more volunteers to help. If you are interested please contact Ann Cross at anncross060@gmail.com, or simply drop round on the first Saturday of the month at 10am. Tools can be provided. This is a good opportunity to meet other people and indulge in some gentle exercise!



More garden pictures



Photo: Keith Davies



Photo: Margaret Patterson



Congratulations, Enid

In February Enid Green celebrated her 101st birthday. As well as family Andrew visited her in the Abbeyfield Care Home on The Grove to pass on greetings from all at All Saints'.



Congratulations, Arlo

Proud member of our Beaver Scouts, Arlo Etchells, aged 7, won our Easter Card Competition and is pictured below with his winning design.



An interesting read

The Prisoners of Geography by Tim Marshall was introduced to me by Alex Armitage, and I found it compelling and fascinating. It is the first of three books, and was written before the war began in Ukraine. It was first published in 2015. The book is described as "Ten maps that tell you everything you need to know about global politics." It is how countries are bound by where they are in the world.

The second book is *The Power of Geography* (2021). This time it is the "Ten maps that reveal the future of our world": how countries are enacting to each other and planning ahead. The final book is *The Future of Geography: Space* (2023) — "How power and politics in space will change our world." The future is here now. I had no understanding how much "space" is being used now, or how advanced planning is for (for example) a base on the Moon.

Tim Marshall was diplomatic editor at Sky News. He also worked for the BBC and has reported from and covered conflicts in forty countries. He has written several other books.

Judith Robinson

Holy Week through medieval eyes

In the week leading up to Easter, I offered a series of short reflections on “Holy Week through medieval eyes”. The aim was to explore how the literature and practice of the medieval church might offer us fresh perspectives on the familiar narratives of this week. For medieval Christians, Holy Week was the high point of the liturgical year, and its services were designed to bring the Easter story to life, engaging all the senses and encouraging worshipers to enter imaginatively into the narrative and experience its highs and lows. Our own liturgical observance of Holy Week is a direct descendant of those medieval rituals, using art, music, silence, and dramatic action alongside the spoken word.

My reflections drew primarily on early medieval poetry in Germanic vernaculars: the Old Saxon *Heliand*, and the Old English poems *The Dream of the Rood* and *The Descent into Hell*. This genre of poetry translated the Christian faith into the common language of the people, but more than that, it bridged the cultural gap between the world of the text and the world of the audience. These texts present Jesus in the heroic tradition as a brave warrior fighting evil, a loyal follower of God his Father, and a faithful Lord to his own disciples. By showing that Jesus possessed the virtues of strength, courage and loyalty, these early medieval poets connected with the values of their culture.

However, they also presented an unexpected side to Jesus: the side of self-sacrifice, humility, and victimhood. In a culture that prized heroism, the *Heliand* poet challenged prevailing ideas about what that meant: a hero is not someone who is never afraid, but someone who perseveres through pain and fear; not someone who knows no weakness, but who turns in their weakness to their Heavenly Father for strength. Likewise, the poet of *The Dream of the Rood* used vivid imagery to convey how, in Christ’s death on the cross, victory and defeat, triumph and suffering, strength and weakness, are held together. And, in *The Descent into Hell*, Christ wins this battle against evil not by use of force but by the sheer power of his presence, reaching out in love to rescue the lost, even beyond the grave.

Although they were composed more than a millennium ago, these texts can still resonate

with us today thanks to their vivid imagery, poetic language, and creative engagement with the great mysteries at the heart of the Christian faith. Listening to these voices from across time can, I hope, continue to inspire us today.

Since talks don’t have footnotes, I am pleased here to acknowledge my debt to the following authors:

Grace Hamman, *Jesus Through Medieval Eyes: Beholding Christ with the Artists, Mystics, and Theologians of the Middle Ages* (Zondervan Reflective, 2023), from whom I borrowed my title.

Eleanor Parker, *Winters in the World: A Journey Through the Anglo-Saxon Year* (Reaktion, 2023), whose beautiful reflections offered many insights into the liturgical year.

Nicholas Orme, *Going to Church in Medieval England* (Yale, 2021), from whom I learned about the medieval Good Friday liturgy.

A recording of the talks is available on our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@allsaintsgosforth6306/streams>

Look for 25th, 26th and 27th March 2024, 7.30 Compline & Address.

Miriam Jones

International Organ Day:

Saturday 20th April

12 noon

Organ recital at All Saints’

Myles Hartley, PhD, FRCO

will play music by

**J. S. Bach, Charles Avison,
Arvo Pärt, Jehain Alain, Judith Weir,
Jean Sibelius, Florence Price and
Charles-Marie Widor**

Admission free

Peter Brown wins Model Railway Award in Glasgow

ModelRail Scotland is one of the biggest annual model railway exhibitions in the UK. It is a three-day show at the Scottish Exhibition Centre in Glasgow, and usually has over 15,000 visitors. Organisation of the exhibition is a combined effort of most of the model railway clubs in Scotland, with a rota of 45 people needed for stewarding. It is quite prestigious to be invited to exhibit, and I was delighted to be awarded an engraved glass trophy for being judged third best railway in show for my model of Alston, which is just 5' x 1'6" and one of the smallest there. By comparison, the largest exhibit was 70' x 40' and would take up most of the nave in church!

Model railways have always been an interest and hobby, and I am Chairman of the Newcastle and District Model Railway Society. My particular interest is in landscaping and architectural modelmaking, and writing articles for the likes of *Railway Modeller*, *British Railway Modelling* and *Hornby Magazine*, with forthcoming articles in all three magazines in the next few months.

Peter Brown

Congratulations, Peter! Many will remember Peter exhibiting his Alston model in church at a recent Christmas Fair.



Alston in the exhibition before the show opened



Award presentation to Peter Brown by Ian Porteous, exhibition manager, with one of the sponsors

Tales from the Tower

In the last edition of Keeping In Touch I wrote about the fact that the clapper on our fifth bell had sheared off.

On the 29th of January it was sent down to Taylor's Bell Foundry in Loughborough, where after inspection we were told that a reweld was not possible due to the amount of damage and the poor state of the remaining metal. We would therefore require a new clapper and a new crown staple (the bit from which the clapper is suspended).

The new clapper arrived back on the 21st of February. Taylor's had fixed it to a piece of wood to give the package rigidity, and this time I was unable to lift it (you may remember how heavy it was when I attempted to package it for its journey down).

Howard Smith, the Diocesan Bell Advisor, said that he could fit it back in place the following evening provided he had someone to help. So I rang my grandson Joel who immediately offered to do this. Joel in fact carried the clapper up the 65 stone steps to the ringing room and then up another flight of stairs to the bell chamber. He also climbed under the bell, which was down, of course, to hold the clapper in place while Howard fitted the castellated nut to the top of the bell.

So our thanks must go to Howard and Joel for stepping up so promptly and enabling us to once again ring all ten bells.

**Yvonne Cairns
Tower Captain**

Thank you to all involved — it is good to hear the bells ringing out again and our ringers work hard but unseen to “make a joyful sound” at so many of our services. Thank you all.

Reflections of an (outgoing) churchwarden

Phew! When I became churchwarden in October 2020 we were taking the first tentative steps in reopening the church after “lock-down”. My induction focussed almost wholly on risk assessments, ensuring social distancing and keeping people safe. Who will forget having no hymns, cordoned off pews, sign-in sheets, one-way systems for communion, dispensed with tongs? And then of course there was that first Christmas, celebrated on the green in the snow, but in distanced pods with pre-booking only. Somehow it seemed particularly joyous to see people still coming together to celebrate.

Gradually things developed into a new “normal”, but not as they were before. Sadly, many of our old friends have departed, although we have also welcomed treasured newcomers. The army of volunteers keeping the church running has reduced significantly, and some things just can’t happen any more, or not in the way they used to.

It has been a challenging time, but also an exciting one. Live-streaming is now a regular part of worship, and much appreciated by those who cannot attend church for whatever reason. We have a new website which hopefully enables prospective visitors to get a taste of who we are. Activities such as the Farmers’ Market and concerts have done much to demonstrate All Saints’ as the centre of the Gosforth community.

We were shocked to lose the Calvary Cross, but were also able to rejoice with the Bishop and many generous donors to mark its reinstatement. At the same time the East Window was also in need of repair work, but emerged from its scaffolding brighter than at any time since it was installed. Just as we drew breath, the Ringing Chamber flooded, and damaged the Baptistry walls and carpet. It is wonderful to see the replacement carpet adding further beauty to the church (see next page). Then the flagpole broke — and with it our lightning conductor! In the Centre, we have a new dishwasher, and redecoration has enhanced its appearance. And of course our green has been drained, though it has hardly stopped raining since!

I have learnt a whole new vocabulary (who knew about Terriers, Inventories, Faculties and Quinquennial Inspections?), and found

out a lot about church buildings and services. I look forward to enhancing my knowledge further during the Quinquennial Inspection in June, which looks at the fabric of our church and any remedial works required.

In all this I have been touched by the generosity of so many, both financially and through their support and kindness. Sometimes it has been difficult juggling so many jobs at once, and a friendly encouragement has meant such a lot. I have been very privileged to get to know some wonderful people whom I had only seen at a distance before. Most of all, thank you to Nick who has been a wonderful colleague, and to Andrew, Paul and Ros who have travelled much of the road together. You have been a joy to work with.

We are in difficult times. Our finances are a worry moving forward, and we are still reflecting how we can encourage more to our services. I wish Nick and my successor well, and hope you enjoy your role as much as I have enjoyed mine. Best wishes and many thanks to all of you for the most wonderful three and a half years.

Christine Willoughby



The crucifix above the choir screen in All Saints’ was installed in 1951 as a memorial to Rev. W. A. Studdart Kennedy, vicar from 1916 until his death in 1947.

The decision to install the crucifix was controversial, with little enthusiasm for the design. This is documented in Patricia Hilton’s book *Pennies from Heaven*, but I cannot find any reference to the artist.

Can anyone cast light on this piece of our history?

Christine Willoughby

New carpet takes shape

Many will remember that in July last year the Baptistry carpet was seriously damaged after a flood in the Ringing Chamber (see page 5). Following inspection by the insurance assessors, it was decided that a new carpet should be installed throughout the church as well as in the ringing chamber.

This has proved to be a mammoth job, characterised by a shortage of carpet fitters, the need to keep the church available for services and the sheer size of the task. However, leading up to Easter work was finally begun, replacing the biggest single stretch of carpet across the back of church. In the picture below, Tricia Maylia captured the old floor once the carpet was removed. The stray cable is the induction loop which goes round the church and connects directly to the sound system for people with hearing aids.

We look forward to the job being finished now that Easter is over.



School Report: Archbishop Runcie First School

This month, Year 4 have enjoyed learning all about the Amazon. This is a cross-curricular link which children have learnt about in English, Science and Geography.

Children have enjoyed locating the Amazon Rainforest on maps using an atlas, as well as researching and discovering some of the weird and wonderful species found in the largest rainforest in the world.

Year 4 have been impressing us all with some amazing facts! Did you know the

Amazon rainforest provides 20% of the world's oxygen? We have discussed the importance of the Amazon and the effects that deforestation can have.

Some Year 4 children were invited to attend a Ceilidh at Gosforth East Middle School. We enjoyed listening to a live band play traditional Scottish music whilst stepping, swinging and swapping dance partners. It was great fun!

Children across the school have also discussed ways they can be safe on the internet on Safer Internet Day. Children took part in workshops about online safety, including the age rating of different games, websites and social media networks. Children identified ways they can keep themselves safe and protect themselves whilst playing online, as well as learning how to share or report their concerns. We know we should treat people online as we do face to face — with love, compassion and care.

Simran Singh



Nursery have enjoyed learning all about the pathway to Easter.

At the beginning of Lent we made our Lenten promises, where we talked about what we could do to make someone smile during Lent. We made palm leaves to wave as we listened to the story of Palm Sunday. We listened to the Easter story and have enjoyed a week of Easter themed activities including a sensory Easter tray and Easter crafts.

At Forest School, we made an Easter garden, went on an Easter egg hunt and toasted hot cross buns on the fire.

Kathleen Francis

Trip to Egypt

I've just returned from a fascinating holiday in Egypt, where we spent a few days in Cairo, then the rest of the time sailing between Luxor and Aswan, with a trip to Abu Simbel. I had visited some of these places before when I lived in Beirut many years ago, but much more has been excavated since then, and I had never got to Abu Simbel, that miracle of engineering which involved the moving of huge statues to avoid their being covered by the water of the new High Dam in the 1960s and 70s.

I found it difficult to appreciate just how many centuries ago Egyptian culture began, and what struck me in revisiting the pyramids and the temples at Luxor, Karnak etc. was the realisation that they were all built for funeral rites and the transition to the next world, as kings and other important people prepared their tombs with what they considered they would need in the next world — including mummified animals! Apparently as soon as kings took power they set about creating their tombs, which could take as many as 20 years.

I was also struck by how much depends on the nature of the landscape, especially the river Nile which is crucial to the supply of water and has to be regulated to avoid flooding; hence the construction of the High Dam.

Egypt depends to a large extent on tourism, and there is the full range of shops ranging from the expensive and sophisticated to the local markets which require determined bargaining skills — and the buyer doesn't always win.

Since returning home I've been struck, obviously, by the change in temperature and



The Sphinx

miss the warmth, but also by how quiet it is here. In a climate where much of life takes place out of doors, things are always noisy, and I'm not sorry to have relief from that.

Ruth Birnie



Abu Simbel



The Nile at Aswan



A Pyramid

Photos: Ruth Birnie

Ethel Randall

Ethel was a longstanding and much-loved member of our congregation, and also a regular contributor to our newsletters. Here one of her daughters reflects on her life.



Proud Ethel meeting her great-grandson Fraser, in 2022

Ethel died very peacefully on 23rd December 2023, in Freeman Hospital, with her two daughters beside her.

She was born in Gateshead, the youngest of six children. Her father had been deafened in WW1, and sadly one of her brothers died on D Day in WW2. Her mother greatly enjoyed working during the war, and encouraged Ethel to have a career.

Ethel did well at school, and left at 16 to work as an industrial chemist. She married Bert, a geologist at Newcastle University, in 1950. She continued to work until she had her first daughter. The family lived for a year in Oslo, because Bert was mapping in Northern Norway, and she really enjoyed her time there, giving her a taste for travel.

When the second daughter started school, Ethel trained to become a music teacher in secondary schools, and worked for ten years in Elgin High School. She then achieved a Bachelor of Education degree at Newcastle University, and worked the rest of her career

teaching general studies in Newcastle College of Arts and Technology. She published a paper on career choices in 16- to 19-year-olds.

Ethel had a full retirement, travelling with Bert to every continent except Antarctica, and providing child care for her five grandchildren. She and Bert fundraised for the Council of the Disabled by giving talks on the countries they had visited. Ethel also took up golf, and joined poetry, book, coffee, and film clubs until they closed after Covid.

She was widowed in 2012, and despite some recent ill-health of her own she managed to live independently thereafter, due to her strong mind and determination. She was gregarious and enjoyed the company of some younger friends, going for meals, the theatre and mostly cinematic operas and ballets.

Ethel started attending All Saints' in 1965, and was a member of the PCC for some years. She read the prayers every Remembrance Sunday until 2023. She greatly appreciated those who gave her lifts to church and to the Mothers' Union after she had stopped driving,

She had a strong personality, enjoyed humour, and was quietly feminist. She was always elegant, being renowned formerly for her good taste in hats and latterly for her painted nails!

Valerie and I were delighted that so many came to her Service of Thanksgiving, and we enjoyed hearing your stories about her.

Elaine Carlyle

Remembering Ann Shaw

On March 16th a few of us attended the scattering of Ann Shaw's ashes at the West Road Crematorium, on a beautiful sunny day.



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The ashes were poured by Ann's son, with guidance from a Crematorium official. They were placed in the form of a cross, in the garden of remembrance at the north side of the Crematorium.

The family invited us back to Ann and Bill's house to look at photos of Ann's life, and to enjoy meeting them, as well as partaking of refreshments.

Thanks to Michael and Heidi for enabling some of us to say a long awaited goodbye to both Ann and Bill. A very rewarding occasion.

Valerie Farthing

From the Registers

All Saints'

Baptisms:

14th April 2024: Archibald William Smith

Funerals:

7th February 2024: Michelle Willox died 21st January 2024, aged 60

4th January 2024 : Elisabeth Margaret Scanlon, died 11th December 2023, aged 88

25th March 2024: Rosemary Bottomley, died 4th March 2024, aged 92

Memorial Service

12th April 2024: Nicola Anne Scholes, died 20th October 2023, aged 55

Burial of Ashes

24th March 2024: Anthony Victor Armitage

From the Editors

We hope you have enjoyed reading this edition of *Keeping in Touch*. It is only as good as its contributors, so please do let us know what you have been doing, review church events for us and send in future plans/news. It all helps us to connect with each other. As soon as we have enough to publish we will put out a further edition.

You can hand contributions to any of the editors, or email to:

allsaintsintouch@outlook.com

We look forward to hearing from you.

Lesley Atkinson, Ann Cross, Dermot

Looking online?

Keeping in Touch can also be viewed online at

<https://www.allsaints-gosforth.org.uk/category/church-news/>

Sunday services at All Saints'

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Evening Prayer

— all livestreamed on YouTube

Updates will be posted on our website:

<https://www.allsaints-gosforth.org.uk/>

Sunday services at St. Hugh's

11.00am

Updates will be posted on our website:

www.facebook.com/St-Hughs-Church-Gosforth

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