

Keeping in Touch

Summer 2025 Edition

Our Quarterly Magazine

From the Vicar

Accepting and Finding Peace

Summer arrived quite suddenly this year after a cold, dry spring - but when it came, it was hot. The days lengthened, and creation burst into full bloom. I write on a hot July day, and looking out on the vicarage garden, it seems that nature is inviting me to pause and simply *be*.

The rhythm of life often shifts during these summer months. The pace slows. Schools close, many go on holiday, and the church calendar pauses between major feasts. Looking at the roses in the garden, there's a certain poignancy in summer's fleeting beauty. The days are long, but not eternal. I'm already putting dates into next year's diary. The roses will fall. The birds will leave. The leaves will turn brown. And so, in high summer, we are gently reminded to live in the present moment - to hold lightly to the things we will eventually leave behind - and to live with gratitude.

I know many are having to live with loss - friends, close family, health restrictions, and new limitations. My mother's house has been sold, and I will no longer be able to return to my childhood home. Accepting change and finding peace, forgiving ourselves, letting go of missed opportunities, and coming to terms with unresolvable issues - these can be hard work, but they are essential to our well-being. I am reminded that while many things must change, *not all things do*.

"The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever." - Isaiah 40:8

Perhaps wisdom, as we look around the garden and the light begins to fade, is to pray: *"All things come from you, and of your own do we give you."*

We give thanks for the summer season, for its stillness, and for the quiet ways in which God continues to speak to us as we come to terms with change - for despite change, His mercy endures forever (Psalm 136).

Andrew

All Saints in Action



We captured this picture of All Saints Clergy, past and present, at a recent event at church.

Pictured are Andrew Shipton, Ruth Birnie, Richard Hill, and Genny Tunbridge.

Onward and Upward: Celebrating Miriam's Next Chapter

Sunday June 30 was a bittersweet day as we said goodbye to Miriam at her final services with us. We marked the end of her curacy and celebrated her next step: becoming an associate vicar in the Vale Benefice in the Diocese of Oxford! After the 9:30 service, we enjoyed a fantastic celebration complete with delicious food and great company. The choir sang a farewell song and Miriam was presented with some lovely gifts to send her off in style, and we have some wonderful photos to remember the day by. Miriam has invited all that are able to join her for the licensing service, which is planned for 7:30pm Thursday September 4th at St James the Great, West Hanney, OX12 0LP.

Thanks so much to everyone who contributed to the day in every way. We wish you well, Miriam!



Congratulations to our very own Lesley Atkinson on receiving an award from North East Action for Children Parents and Inclusion (NAPI)!

Thanks for all you do for Little Saints and the community.





All Saints welcomed Archbishop Runcie schoolchildren and their parents as they performed songs from *Joseph* accompanied by Diana Lavin.



More connections we've made this summer so far...

June and July have had many events and outreach opportunities for All Saints and the community.

- We honoured God's creation with Open Gardens (pictures above)
- Our eco group encouraged us to participate in plastic-free July
- Our choir sang at Newcastle Cathedral Evensong
- We hosted guitarists Giuoio Tampalini and Daniele Fabio
- We celebrated volunteers week with many drop-in events
- We met for an enjoyable social meal on the High Street
- Peter Brown met the King!

On that particular Wednesday in February, the post must have arrived very late in the day and it was only when I was locking up at night, I discovered an interesting looking envelope amongst the junk mail. The heavy weight stationery envelope was stamped Buckingham Palace. Opening the letter I discovered I was being invited to be a recipient of Maundy money from King Charles in Durham Cathedral. What a surprise and what an honour!

Recipients are chosen because of the Christian service they have given to the Church and community. The specially minted money is in two purses. The red purse contains £5.50 being an allowance of £3.00 for clothing, £1.50 in lieu of provisions and £1 for the 'redemption of the Sovereign's gown'. The White purse this year would contain silver pence coins to the face value of 76p being the King's age. The purses are made from kid leather from deer culled on the Great Park at Windsor. The giving of Maundy money is an act of humility on behalf of the King and is a personal gift from him to the recipients.



I had been nominated by the Diocese on account of being Deputy Chair of the Newcastle Diocesan Advisory Committee advising parishes on proposed repairs and improvements to

church buildings, and for very many years' service to Central Deanery and All Saints' PCC in administrative roles.



On the morning of Maundy Thursday, the sun was shining as we strolled up across the bridge to Sadler Street where huge crowds were already being marshalled by the police. After going through security Jane and I were escorted to the Great Hall in the Castle where all the recipients were gathering and tea and coffee were served. We were treated as VIPs, and it became clear that recipients were considered central to the Service, and it was 'about us' far more than I had previously imagined. The Cathedral Dean was there to greet us with Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich, in his pivotal role on the day as Lord High Almoner.

We were escorted by an Air Cadet to the Cathedral, watched closely by the waiting and expectant crowds on Palace Green, were given name badges and taken to our allocated seats in the north aisle. The King and Queen were due to arrive at 11.00 but proceedings began at 10.20 with an address from the Lord High Almoner explaining the significance of Maundy Thursday and the history and theology of what was to happen. He also told us that King Charles will have read each of the citations that nominated us for the award. The next half hour was filled with liturgical processions into the Cathedral, by the University, Representatives of World Faiths, the Ecumenical Procession, the College of Canons with Area Deans and Lay Chairs, the Civic Procession and finally the Cathedral Procession which included both the Cathedral Choir and the uniformed Children and Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal. At exactly 11.00 there was a trumpet fanfare, and we all stood for the first hymn, Praise to the Holiest, and the King's Procession started, followed by the Royal Almonry Procession with Yeomen of the Guard bearing huge medieval brass plates with the Maundy purses.

The Service consisted of hymns, psalms, readings and prayers all in traditional form. The music was uplifting and there is something special about singing hymns in a packed Cathedral with everyone giving full voice. After each of the two readings, King Charles distributed the Maundy purses stopping to speak directly to every recipient. He read my name badge and looked me directly in the eye and said he knew I had been doing things for many years but just how many years was it. I replied over forty and he laughed, said 'Well done' and thanked me for my efforts, clasping my hands as he gave me the purses. Although King Charles has the ability to make his interactions meaningful and personal, the exchange could not have been more than a few seconds as he met 76 of us in less than 10 minutes as the choirs sang psalms and anthems.

And then in no time at all it seemed, the Service was over and after a rousing National Anthem the King's Procession left the Cathedral followed by all the recessional liturgical processions in reverse order.

The experience for me was spiritual, emotional and uplifting. The sheer splendour of the occasion was breathtaking, with all the pageantry and tradition and the wonderful music, all in the setting of one of my favourite buildings. It was an immense privilege to be a small part of the service and it is a memory I will never forget.

 Royal Maundy Service 2025 at Durham Cathedral



A Church Near You

We have been working hard to let people know about All Saints and all we're doing in church and in your community. Check out our profile on A Church Near You, and spread the word: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8605/>

Gardening Group Update

Our church is most grateful to a few enthusiastic volunteers who have successfully made our gardens much more attractive and colourful over recent weeks. Beds have been weeded, plants pruned back, footpaths edged and moss scraped from paving.

However, more help is needed. Some volunteers undertake gardening whenever they have some free time while others meet on a Thursday morning between 10am and 12 noon.

If you'd like to volunteer to help please contact All Saints Office post@allsaints-gosforth.org.uk or 0191 2130450. Gardeners also have a Whatsapp Group where information about gardening tasks is shared. If you want to join this group please text Felicity on 07783131518.



Upcoming Events

Please join us for a Nature/Prayer Walk, **Sunday 3rd August at 2:00pm**. The walk will start and finish at All Saints. This is a local walk suitable for all ages and those with limited mobility. All are welcome!

They're back: Handlebards are coming to perform on **Saturday 16th August!**



We are hosting a family board game night **Saturday 27 September, 5.30 - 7:30pm**. Watch our website and weekly newsletters for more information.

There will be a Harvest Brunch on **Sunday 5th October** following the 9:30 service. Details to follow.

All Saints will be celebrating a Confirmation service on **Sunday 16th November** at the 9:30 service with the Bishop of Berwick officiating. Ready to deepen your faith? Let Andrew or Ruth know.

Easy Fundraising

Don't forget to sign up to support All Saints through Easy Fundraising! You can help us out through your regular online shopping. It's so seamless once set up, and really can make a difference! Sign up here: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/all-saints-church-gosforth>

Eco Group Update

The Eco Group recently created a mission statement to assist us in our progress and future. Thanks to all who gave us feedback. The following statement was agreed:

The focus of the Eco Group is to bring our vision statement to life by identifying and developing actions that will improve our environment. We will do this by:

- Raising awareness in our worship and through our communications channels
- Sharing ideas and working collaboratively with the congregation and wider community.

Have you seen any wildlife?

The Eco group have commissioned a wildlife survey from a member of our congregation. This includes flowers, bugs and butterflies, birds and mammals.

We know we used to have hedgehogs and bats, but no idea if they are still there. If you see any interesting wildlife please can you add to our record by emailing Ann

Cross anncross060@gmail.com Or Christine Willoughby cbwillas@gmail.com

Our next meeting is Sunday 3rd August after the 9:30 service. See also two Eco book reviews from Ros in this newsletter.

Parish Giving Transition Continues

All Saints Church is continuing our transition away from standing order to Parish Giving, a much more efficient way to support our ministry. This will help ensure a thriving future for our Church.

Why Switch from Standard Order?

- **Convenience:** Automatically make regular gifts easily online.
- **Efficiency:** Reduce our costs for the church, allowing more funds to directly support our mission and ministry.
- **Tax Benefits:** Gift Aid is automatically reclaimed, maximising the impact of your donation.

Need Help? Contact Nick Glover for more information or to schedule assistance, ngloveras@gmail.com, or 0191 285 6594.

Want to sign up yourself? Visit parishgiving.org.uk and search for All Saints Gosforth. Not comfortable online? You can call 0333 002 1271, Monday to Friday during normal business hours. Our parish code is 250625092. Thank you for your support!

In Memoriam

Marjorie Forster

Marjorie was born in the Gosforth Garden Village, near Salters Bridge, and grew up alongside her sister Dorothy. Her mother died while Marjorie and Dorothy were still young. But even in those early years, seeds of resilience were planted—seeds that would grow and define her life.

Marjorie joined the Wrens—a decision not everyone in the family was sure about at the time. Yet, true to her spirit, Marjorie stepped forward with quiet determination. It was there, serving at sea, that she met Jim—together, they returned to Newcastle, married, and welcomed their children, Julie and James.

The loss of Julie was one of the most profound sorrows of Marjorie's life. In that heartache, the support she received from the All Saints church community became a source of immense comfort and strength. Her connection with All Saints grew stronger, nurtured in part by James's involvement in the Scouts at the church. Through her faith and reflection, Marjorie developed a deep empathy—an ability to understand and feel for others in their pain and joy alike.

When Marjorie lost Jim in 2004, she was once again supported by James and her family and many friends. That was Marjorie—patient in suffering, quietly courageous, never letting hardship dull her spirit. She had what could only be described as an indomitable soul—abundant in spirit, generous in love, and sincere in every way. While she sometimes lacked confidence and could feel vulnerable, she never let that put her off being involved. As a young Curate she was incredibly supportive to me in all my struggles. I am sure that there are others of us among the clergy who could say the same. She was a committed Volunteer visiting patients at St Nicholas Hospital.

She once wrote about the long, difficult journey through suffering, likening it to being lost in a forest and walking uphill. But in time, she wrote, “you come out of the forest and for the first time, you can look down on all the upset and trauma you have been through—and be free.” That was her gift to us—her understanding of life's valleys, and her unwavering hope that we do not remain there forever. Her love was sincere, her generosity heartfelt, her faith unwavering. She didn't wear a mask. She didn't pretend. Marjorie lived with quiet authenticity.

So we give thanks for a life well-lived. For Marjorie's wisdom, her warmth, her steadfast love—for the way she brought people together, for the strength she showed in sorrow, and the faith she carried through all seasons of life. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

Andrew

Faith@4 is getting a relaunch!



Community Organising Initiative

Reflections on Community Organising

Over the past few months, I've been taking part in a course on community organising, working with churches and learning from a team based in London via Zoom.

Community organising is hard to summarise quickly, but I've learned something important: It's not about giving already overstretched churches like ours more to do. Instead, it offers us tools to recognise the gifts and energy that God has already placed among us. I've discovered that the harvest is more plentiful than we realise. There is so much experience, energy, and talent—both within our church and in those we're connected to—that has remained untapped until now.

To grow we must be a church culture that welcomes diversity, provides a safe and supportive space, and invites people to explore faith openly and honestly. A key part of this journey is building up our internal strength. At the heart of community organising are one-to-one conversations. These are intentional, friendly chats where we listen to each other's stories, values, and hopes. Through them, we build trust and discover fresh purpose for our life together and our mission in the wider community. This approach is especially important as we think about our work with children and young people. There is much listening and discerning to be done. Already, some parents have come forward with wonderful ideas and are ready to help.

Our **one-to-one team** includes:

Andrew Cole, Felicity Shoesmith, Dana Corso, Claudia Newbegin, Luke Williams, Diane Henderson, and myself.

If you're invited to a one-to-one, I warmly encourage you to say yes. These conversations help us understand the real issues affecting us and our community and how we can respond with care, faith, and shared action, and so grow in numbers.

Andrew

Enriching the green

At a recent PCC meeting it was agreed that the Fabric Committee should progress proposals to plant additional trees on the green, in conjunction with the DEFRA funded NE Community Forest.

We are pleased to announce that additional trees will be planted at the west end of the green, including 3m high standard trees and smaller whips. The focus will be on native species, chosen to provide a variety of colour, texture and blossom throughout the year and to encourage greater biodiversity for wildlife. It is hoped that we may also be able to extend the beech hedge and plant a couple of additional trees at the east end of the church.

The next step is for NECA to draw up final proposals and ensure grant funding is in place for us. They will then work with us and a contractor to arrange planting in the late autumn. We hope this will be a community event, involving uniformed organisations and others. Not only will NECA fund the initial planting, they will also include a maintenance element for the first 10 years. How lucky are we?

Working with the Eco Group and building on previous initiatives such as draining the green and layering the beech hedge, this is an exciting opportunity to enhance our green for wildlife and make it more attractive to the local community.

Christine Willoughby

Social and Events group

Anyone for brunch?

Given the popularity of our recent Sunday morning brunches, it might be worth looking at how this meal came about, and a visit to Wikipedia reveals the following:

The term 'brunch' was coined in Britain in 1895 to describe a Sunday meal 'for Saturday-night carousers' and originated amongst huntsmen and women. It was said to be 'cheerful, sociable and exciting', and 'talk-compelling. It puts you in a good temper, it makes you satisfied with yourself and your fellow beings, it sweeps away the worries and cobwebs of the week' (Guy Beringer, *Hunter's Weekly*, 1896). The fact that brunches became popular in the United States in the 1930s bears this out.

To date there have been three brunches after the 9.30 service, and all have been well-attended. The last of these was a 'bring and share' event, and future brunches—the next is planned for our Harvest celebrations—will probably follow a similar pattern. Beringer also claimed that brunch eliminated the need to get up early on Sunday, but perhaps it would be better to overlook that rather dubious benefit!

Your Next Great Read

In Lent I read two books on regenerative farming, both accounts of strategies being devised to right ecological wrongs of farmers and government policies.

James Rebanks' *English Pastoral: An Inheritance* (Sunday Times Nature Book of the Year 2020) recounts changing practices from a traditional, ancient farming world on his father's (rented) and grandfather's (owned) fell farm in the Lake District. He outlines reasons and ways to restore decades of exhausted soil and lost wildlife. Rebanks runs a mixed, rotational farm in Matterdale where his family have farmed for over 600 years. He writes with immense experience and knowledge of wildlife, fauna and livestock from his grandfather's time to the present.

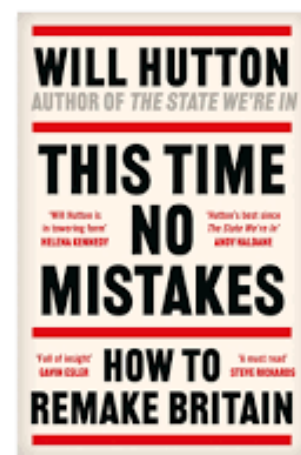
Barrister Sarah Langford accidentally became a farmer on parental leave when her husband lost his Conservative seat and became unemployed. They moved to a small country (mixed) farm in Suffolk owned by her in-laws, the Gummer family. (Her father-in-law has long been highly informed and active on environmental and climate matters). Her book *Rooted: How Regenerative Farming Can Change the World* also described huge changes in agricultural practices over two generations. On noticing the unintended consequences of intensive farming for which farmers were seen as villains by the public for having destroyed soils and decimated wildlife and insect populations, Langford also investigated and applied new methods and thinking about food production.

I found *Rooted* a lighter read of the two and *English Pastoral* full of detailed memories of stock and wildlife which reminded me of my own youth.

Rosamund Place for the Eco Group

This book is a worthy sequel to *The State We're In* which had a great impact in 1995.

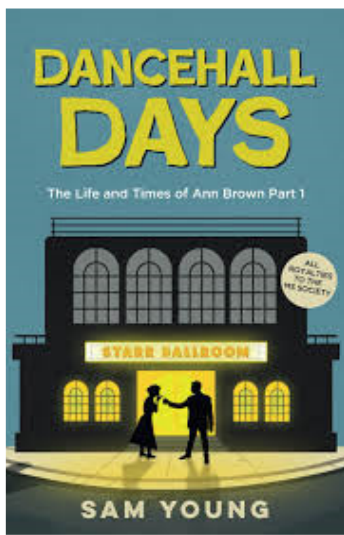
Hutton analyses in great detail what he sees as the major failings of the political and economic policies of government by all parties from the 19th century until now. He criticises in particular the absolute belief in the free market and argues for what he calls "the marriage of capitalist dynamism" with "social cohesion, freedom and tolerance." He points to Roosevelt's New Deal as a good example of setting a capitalist economy on a better course – a pattern which Britain failed to follow. He is also very critical of how our financial institutions operate and the inequalities that result, also of our first past the post electoral system which results in a distorted picture of the relative strengths of the political parties.



Much of what he writes finds its way into current political debate and is relatively familiar but two of his comments in particular were new to me.

- The result of the 1945 General Election was heavily influenced by the fact that when children were evacuated from cities with poor living conditions their hosts were appalled by what they learned of these conditions and were motivated to vote for a government which promised to improve things.
- The decline of the British economy over the last century has been relatively slower than that of other countries because it was protected for some time by wealth created by the exploitation of markets in the former Empire.

This is a fascinating and thought-provoking read though with a great deal of detailed economic analysis which is beyond the capacity of the non-expert but the arguments are clear and compelling.



I haven't read this book but I've just met the author on holiday. It's the first volume in a trilogy inspired by his mother's life in Northern Ireland. The second volume is now being edited.

All the proceeds of the book are being donated to research into MS which the author's wife suffers from. If the writing is as interesting as the author's conversation then these books promise to be a real treat.

Here's a synopsis:

It's 1946, and the Browns are getting on with life in the small market town of Omagh. Ma, left to bring up four children on her own, has had a lifetime of struggle. For her, life is not a fairy tale: it's a lot of hard work and sacrifice. But for Hilda, Muriel, Ann and Joe, now ready to fly the nest, the post-war world is their oyster.

Ann, a secretary by day, loves to dance at night and dreams of turing professional. When Walter becomes her dance partner and they slowly fall in love, she gets a glimpse of her happy ever after on the horizon.

But as the new decade approaches, fate intervenes and threatens to trap Ann in a life she never envisioned. She confronts an impossible situation with courage and resourcefulness, determined to carve her own path to happiness.

Ruth Birnie

From the Registers

Baptisms:

11 May 2025 Charlotte Gracelyn Dorothy Luccock

8 June 2025 Rowan Boadicea North Johnson & Poppy Artemis Frances Johnson

20 July 2025 Oakly James Scott & Harry Thomas Stephenson

Weddings:

19 April 2025 Mathew John Playforth & Jasmine Mary Lamb

17 July 2025 Joseph Thomas McCormack & Laura Rachel Day

Wedding Blessing:

19 July 2025 Thomas Etienne Arille Delor & Emily Anne Ritchey

Funerals:

7 May 2025 Edith Davison died 15 April aged 85

4 May 2025 June Davison died 7 April aged 82

8 May 2025 John Hedley died 18 April aged 86

30 June 2025 Carole Ann Reed died 10 June aged 86

2 July 2025 Elizabeth 'Ann' Craig died 10 June aged 83

Burial of Ashes:

13 May 2025 Muriel Dart

14 June 2025 James Hunter Scotland Suddick, Catherine 'Joyce' Suddick

We're still searching for a **Treasurer**! We've adjusted the role to be less time-consuming by reassigning some duties. If you have a recommendation, please reach out to Andrew.

Support our Mission and Ministry

Thank you! Your donations are no small thing and help support not just our congregation, clergy, and historical buildings, but our continued mission and ministry in your community.

Text giving is now available! Just text **SUPPORTASC** with your donation amount to **70580**.

**Join us in Church every Sunday at 8:00am, 9:30am, and 6:30pm
Tuesday at 10:15**

**Monday-Thursday 8:45am Morning Prayer, south porch entrance
or Messy Church (starting 28th September) in the Centre, adjacent to Church**

All are Welcome!