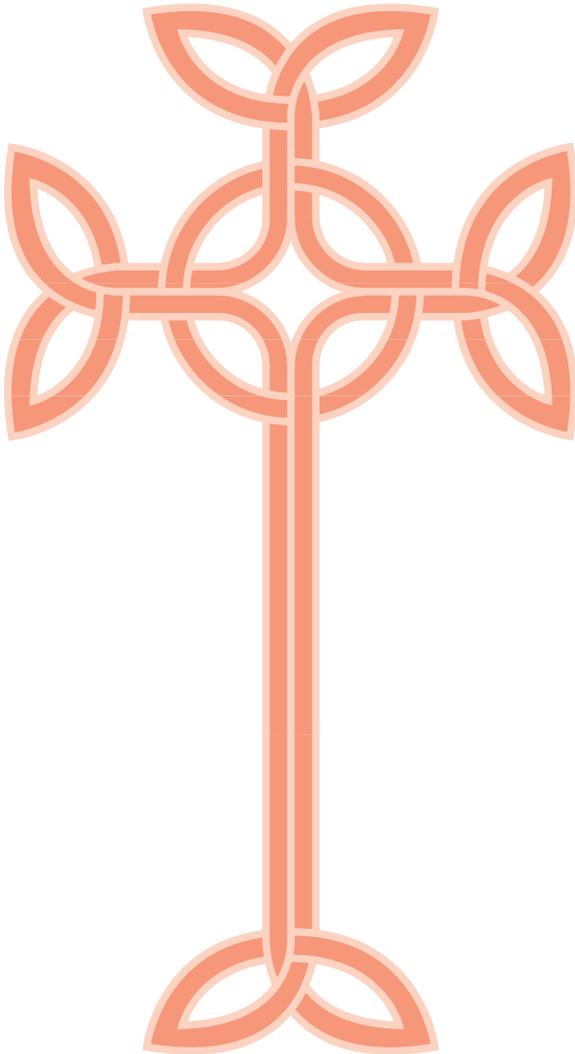


THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE
OF THE PARISH OF
HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING



St. Michael
AND ALL ANGELS

NOVEMBER 2020

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THE PARISH CHURCH OF HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING

MINISTRY TEAM

Rector

Rev'd John Barron,
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Tyne & Wear, DH5 5QA.
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Tel: 073096 69680

We enjoy and benefit from the ministry of a number of retired clergy at St Michael's.

Readers

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Tel: (0191) 584 1954

Assistant Church Warden

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Angela Slater (Secretary)
Tel: (0191) 584 2036

Mr. Alastair Bradley (Treasurer)
Tel: (0191) 584 1455

Organist & Director of Music

Mr. George Peebles
Tel: (0191) 584 1628

Verger

Mr. David Turnbull
Tel: (0191) 584 1954

Safeguarding

Mr. Kevin Bond (Safeguarding Officer)
Tel: 07931 937171

Mrs. Kathleen Close (DBS Officer)
Tel: (0191) 584 0353

Space4

76 Newbottle Street
Next to Houghton Library
Twitter @space4
Facebook houghtonspace4
Tel: (0191) 512 0676

Church Website

Our website contains information on most aspects of church life.
www.stmichaels-hls.org.uk

The Friends of Houghton Parish Church Trust

Contact: Mr. George Peebles, Membership Secretary on (0191) 584 1628 for information and application forms.

Toddler Group

Contact: Sheila Partridge
Tel: (0191) 584 7308

UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers

Contact: Sheila Wynne, Tel: (0191) 512 1331

Beavers, Cubs and Scouts

Contact: Steve Gibson, Tel: 07507 161366

Website: www.1sthoughtonscouts.org.uk

REGULAR SERVICES

Our pattern of Service for the coming weeks:

| | | |
|----------|-------|---|
| Sunday | 10 am | Service of Holy Communion (streamed live) from St Michael's |
| Sunday | 11am | Service of the Word via Zoom & Dial-in with Young Church |
| Sunday | 9pm | Reflection via Facebook |
| Tuesday | 7pm | Service of the Word with Reflection via Facebook |
| Thursday | 10am | Service of the Word via Zoom & Dail-in |

We have limited seating capacity in church and need details of people attending in advance. If you would like to be part of the congregation on future Sundays (ie. from the 16th Aug) and are able to attend then please book in for this by ringing the parish office on 0770 7043395 between 10 and 2 on a Tuesday or Thursday. We will be allocating seating on a first come first served basis. If there is no space on a particular week we will allocated seating for future weeks to people who have been unable to attend because of lack of availability. We will be live-streaming this service on Facebook to try to reach as wide a group in the community as possible. It is now strongly advised that anyone attending the service in Church should wear a face mask.

Contact Information

Our website and facebook page contain details of how to join others online for prayer, worship, study, and community life. We will send regular updates via our church distribution list – please call us or email us if you know someone who would like to receive our email updates.

Find us online at:

website:
www.stmichaels-hls.org.uk

facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelshls>

ABOUT SIGNPOST

Sign-Post is the magazine of the Parish Church of St. Michael & All Angels Houghton-le-Spring. In addition to providing information about the life of the church, it also aims to reflect the interests of the broader community and to provide a source of local news and a forum in which matters of common concern can be raised. The Editors welcome comments and suggestions, and invite contributions. Items to be included in Sign-Post should be submitted to the Editors by 10th of the month (end of 1st week of the month for memorials) to ensure inclusion in the next issue. It should be noted, however, that the Editors cannot guarantee to publish material and wish to point out that items included do not necessarily reflect their views nor those of the Parochial Church Council. Editors: Malcolm Foster, Tel: (0191) 584 2486. Distribution: Joan Bond, Tel: (0191) 584 1031.

Circulation: 300 copies per month.

You can contact us through our 'remote' church office on **0770 7043395** between 10am & 2pm on a Tuesday & Thursday or you can email us at stmichaels.hls@gmail.com. Please let us know if you would like us to be in touch with you by telephone. For urgent issues contact Rev'd John Barron on **0191 584 7657**.

If you'd like your child to be a part of Young Church 'closed' zoom meeting contact Clare our Young Church leader at stmichaels.youngchurch@btinternet.com so she can let you know how to join in.

'Dial-in' Church!

Especially for those without internet access we hold a Service of the Word via a telephone conference. The way of accessing the service is to dial **020 3481 5240**, put in the meeting code **584 584 0191** followed by the # and if prompted for a further id just enter #. (The cost is that of a standard call from your phone provider).

Space4

Our Space4 Community Project continues their services 'remotely' through their Facebook page; <https://www.facebook.com/HoughtonSpace4/> with lots going on throughout the week and at these set times:

| | | |
|-----------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Monday | 2-3pm | Women's Group |
| Tuesday | 11-12noon | 'Crafty Chat' |
| Wednesday | 12:30-1:30pm | Parents Group 'Kiddy Chat' |
| Thursday | 11-12noon | Men's Hour |
| Friday | 2-3pm | 'Eat your Cake & Chat' |
| Saturday | 3-4pm | 'Saturday Chat' |

Our Foodbank is continuing on a Tuesday and Friday, supporting people who are socially isolated as well as those struggling with food poverty. Please message the Space4 Facebook page if you need a food parcel.

Rector's Letter

These last weeks in our church family, we have sadly said goodbye to a number of much-loved members of our church. This year, as a whole, has been one where many of us have experience the loss of loved ones either directly through the Covid virus or in other ways. As people of faith who believe in eternal life that God offers us through Christ, we can rejoice in that gift but also know sometimes very sharply the pain of loss and separation from loved ones.



This approaching time in the church calendar is traditionally a time of remembrance and is a fitting time to remember those we've loved and lost. In recent years in the Christian Calendar, we have described the days in November between All Saints, through All Souls & Remembrance as 'Kingdom Season'. This season culminates in the Feast of 'Christ the King' at the end of November which marks the end of the Christian Calendar.

All Saints' Day and the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed on All Souls' Day both celebrate our mutual belonging to God's Kingdom. All Saints' Day celebrates men and women in whose lives the grace of God is at work: that includes famous Saints from the past and saints in the present. St Paul, in addressing many of his letters to the 'saints', that is to members of the church, reminds us that we are all 'saints' through whom God's grace can work. It is therefore a time of year when it is appropriate to celebrate all who are part of the Body of Christ and the many gifts and talents that God gives us to forward the purposes of the church.

At 'All Souls' we remember with thanksgiving all those whose lives and love we've shared who have gone before us. We do that as Christians, believing that God's love extends beyond this mortal life but knowing the pain of loss at the death of a loved one. We therefore seek to offer comfort to those bereaved at this time. Remembrance Sunday goes on to explore the theme of memory, both corporate and individual, as we confront issues of war and peace, thanksgiving for self-giving in the service of others, loss, memory and forgetting. The annual cycle of the Church's year then ends with the Feast of Christ the King. The year that begins with the hope of the coming Messiah at Advent ends with the proclamation of his universal sovereignty.

This is a change in pace for us in the Church and my hope and prayer is that we are able to journey through this Kingdom Season with Christ and each other deepening our relationships so that at the end of this Christian year we're able to proclaim anew and together that Christ is OUR King.

With my continued prayers and good wishes.

Bible readings for November

This list of bible readings is to accompany your Daily Prayer worship
and the Sunday Eucharist

| NOVEMBER | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|
| Sunday | 1 | MATT 5. 1-12 | ALL SAINTS |
| Monday | 2 | LUKE 14. 12-14 | |
| Tuesday | 3 | LUKE 14. 15-24 | |
| Wednesday | 4 | LUKE 14. 25-33 | |
| Thursday | 5 | LUKE 15.1-10 | |
| Friday | 6 | LUKE 16. 1-8 | |
| Saturday | 7 | LUKE 16.9-15 | |
| Sunday | 8 | MATT 25.1-13 | REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY |
| Monday | 9 | LUKE 17. 1-6 | |
| Tuesday | 10 | LUKE 17. 7-10 | |
| Wednesday | 11 | LUKE 17. 11-19 | |
| Thursday | 12 | LUKE 17. 20-25 | |
| Friday | 13 | LUKE 17. 26-end | |
| Saturday | 14 | LUKE 18. 1-8 | |
| Sunday | 15 | MATT 25. 14-30 | |
| Monday | 16 | LUKE 18. 35-end | |
| Tuesday | 17 | LUKE 19.1-10 | |
| Wednesday | 18 | LUKE 19.11-28 | |
| Thursday | 19 | LUKE 19. 41-44 | |
| Friday | 20 | LUKE 19. 45-48 | |
| Saturday | 21 | LUKE 20. 27-40 | |
| Sunday | 22 | MATT 25.31-end | |
| Monday | 23 | LUKE 21. 1-4 | |
| Tuesday | 24 | LUKE 21. 5-11 | |
| Wednesday | 25 | LUKE 21. 12-19 | |
| Thursday | 26 | LUKE 21. 20-28 | |
| Friday | 27 | LUKE 21. 29-33 | |
| Saturday | 28 | LUKE 21. 34-36 | |
| Sunday | 29 | MARK 13. 24-end | ADVENT SUNDAY |
| Monday | 30 | MATT 4. 18-22 | ST ANDREW |
| DECEMBER | | | |
| Tuesday | 1 | LUKE 10. 21-24 | |
| Wednesday | 2 | MATT 15. 29-37 | |
| Thursday | 3 | MATT 7.21. 24-27 | |
| Friday | 4 | MATT 9. 27-31 | |

BOOK REVIEW:

THE GALILEAN WONDERWORKER

By I.G.Wallis

Pub. Cascade Books



Readers of *Signpost* would expect a book written by Ian Wallis to be thoroughly researched, based on meticulous scholarship and anchored in a profound knowledge of scripture. In *The Galilean Wonderworker* all these criteria are fulfilled.

Following on from *The Reluctant Patient* this book is a re-appraisal of Jesus' reputation for healing and exorcism. This reputation is located in the system of health care in 1st Century Palestine when Yahweh was seen as the final source of healing and suffering treated within a network of relationships and structures. To be cured meant re-establishing a right relationship with Yahweh. This argument is advanced by a detailed examination of Old Testament, Rabbinical, Apocryphal and Greek texts. A critical spotlight is shone on the accounts of Jesus' healing and casting out of spirits given to us in the Gospels. The author contends that the symptoms described could be seen as psychosomatic (or, as he prefers, biopsychosocial). The sufferers Jesus heals are cured of anxiety, shame and rejection. This capacity for healing, Wallis demonstrates reveals extraordinary yet natural abilities that are not yet fully understood. This can be considered similar to the well-attested placebo effect, which is real, yet not fully explicable. Advances in Western medicine and understanding enable us to see Jesus' healing abilities as wonders, not necessarily as miracles.

As Professor James Crossley says in his Foreword to the book Wallis has been able to deal with the complexity of the synoptic tradition and historical reconstruction while at the same time writing a very readable book. A significant achievement. Will the author be able to maintain these standards in *Monotheism and Faith in God*, to be published in December?

Read *Signpost* to find out.

Roger Elsey

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HOUGHTON RUGBY CLUB

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Contact **Kaye Louise Robson** (after 6.00pm)
Mobile: 07791 223 910 email: klglob7@aol.co.uk
Club: 0191 584 1460

OBITUARY – TONY COLLING

Tony Colling, who died recently, was well known to the congregation at Houghton Parish church, not only as the Echo photographer, but also as a fellow worshipper for a number of years. Alongside his wife, Linda, and usually dapper in a bow-tie, he enjoyed standing at the back of church after a service drinking coffee and chatting to friends.

I am lucky to be able to count myself as one of those friends, having known Tony for over thirty-six years. I got to know Tony when we formed two parts of a prayer triplet praying for the success of Mission England in 1984. I was struck by Tony's gentleness, good humour and profound faith, qualities which persisted over the years. Tony and Linda's three boys – Alistair, Charles and Thomas – were of the same age as our girls, and when they were young we enjoyed meeting up with them all on a holiday in the beautiful Leedons caravan park in the Cotswolds. We enjoyed generous hospitality at the Colling home in Herrington on many occasions but it was on the St. Cuthbert's Way walk to raise funds for the Next 900 that we got to know and admire him best. Again, his unfailing good humour, even in the remotest stretches of the Cheviots, was an inspiration. Even more impressive, perhaps, was his charitable good nature which meant he never used any profanity nor ever criticised his fellow humans. Tony was that rare creature – a good man, and I will miss him.

Tony's loss will be most keenly felt by Linda and the family, but his many friends will be supporting them in prayer – as Tony would wish.

Roger Elsey



Lockdown Bunnies

Hope you are all well and keeping safe in these challenging times. I just wanted to share with you what has kept me busy over the past months. I've been knitting these bunnies and selling them for £10 each. Friends have named them lockdown bunnies which seems appropriate. All money raised goes to much needed Church funds.

I have a variety of boy and girl bunnies in different colours available if anyone is interested. They make great gifts for babies and children of all ages and will help raise more funds.

Contact Sheila Gamble if you would like to purchase one.

Tel: 0191 584 1677



Fly-tipping

...The king sent them after the Aramean army. He commanded the drivers, 'Go and find out what has happened.' They followed them as far as the Jordan, and they found the whole road strewn with the clothing and equipment the Arameans had thrown away in their headlong flight. So the messengers returned and reported to the king.' (2 Kings 7:14-16)

One good thing about coronavirus has been the reduction of litter on the roads. When the burger shops were shut, people did not buy a snack, eat it on the way home and then throw the plastic container and the milkshake mug and straw out the car window.

What possesses people to do this? For another type of anti-social behaviour has increased: fly-tipping. Council tips have been closed, so irresponsible people have decided to turn a field entrance or a pathway into another tip. Fly-tipping costs money to deal with and it is also dangerous to people and wildlife.

The government is tackling this problem and there are heavy fines and even imprisonment for the offenders. Quite right, but it is not only the tipper who is responsible. You have an old settee and some bags of rubbish and need someone to dump it. A man with a van offers to do it for £20 in cash.

A week later you get an email from the council to say that you are going to be investigated for fly-tipping as the man simply dumped your stuff on a roadside, and someone recognised the sofa and there were letters to your home address in the bags.

Or here is another scenario: you are going on holiday and decide to leave some rubbish at the back of your house. You phone a mate to come and collect it, but they forget. Both of these scenarios could result in a heavy fine.

In the 2018/19 year, local authorities in England dealt with over one million fly-tipping incidents, nearly two thirds of which involved household waste. But fly-tipping is a criminal offence punishable by a fine of up to £50,000, or 12 months imprisonment if convicted in a Magistrates' Court. The offence can attract an unlimited fine and up to five years imprisonment if convicted in a Crown Court.

What can we do as responsible people? We can report fly-tipping to the local authority and if there is a serious problem, we can ask our local and parish councillors what is being done about it.

When you go for a walk, you might sometimes take a rubbish bag with you, to collect stray litter. Just make sure you protect yourself with rubber gloves, and take care on the roads. You could even suggest that your church should organise a litter pick one Saturday!

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

| | | |
|--------|---|---------|
| 7 Oct | Edith Wake Houghton-le-Spring | Aged 86 |
| 12 Oct | Elsie (blossom) Curry Waterston Houghton-le-Spring | Aged 92 |
| 15 Oct | George William Mellors Houghton-le-Spring | Aged 63 |
| 22 Oct | Audrey Lumley Houghton-le-Spring | Aged 93 |
| 23 Oct | Margaret Hughes Houghton-le-Spring | Aged 87 |

~Sheila Bescoby~

It is with much sadness and regret we must let our church family know that Sheila Bescoby passed away peacefully on the 24th September. A very special person who will be greatly missed by both her family and many friends. Her friendship kindness and sense of humour was inspirational to all who knew her.

Thank you.

Regards

Janette & George

MRS. AUDREY LUMLEY

~2013 – 2020~

Every Church should have an Audrey. Full of character, energy, efficiency, warmth, and disapproval, all in equal measure.

Many have known Audrey as a dear friend for over fifty years and some not so long but all have loved and been loved by her despite times of frustration, intimidation and dare we say 'bossiness' but we always went back for more.

Her first taste of St. Michael's, her beloved Church, was helping at what was then called the Playgroup where close friendships were formed which would endure all her life. Taking her four small boys with her, she was Auntie Audrey to those who held her with affection from those early years to this day. Helping neighbours and close friends all with small children as she had, during good times and not so good, when life was difficult, was part of her caring, kind nature.

This was the beginning of her huge involvement with St. Michael & All Angels, as she became a committee member of Toddlers, her first 'official' role which evolved over the years into an impressive list of senior positions that would define Audrey as a 'pillar of the Church'.

While bringing up her young family, she was a founder member of Young Wives that later became Ladies Fellowship and joined the Mothers Union with her close friends. Audrey, realising her organisational qualities, soon became involved in various senior roles in Mothers Union, being Enrolling Member at St. Michael's and held positions at Deanery and Diocesan level taking on the role of the Indoor Members Prayer Circle. Mother's Union remained dear to her heart for the rest of her life.

During this time, the boys were enrolled in the Scout movement and their mum became Chair and Secretary to the local Scout group, with husband Jack being treasurer. They held these positions for many years.

In Rector Peter Fisher's time, Audrey took on the unenviable task of becoming P.C.C. Secretary. This role she performed with aplomb for nineteen years. Her secretarial and administration skills were second to none, being an invaluable friend and helper to any new Churchwarden or member of the P.C.C. If there was a doubt about anything that took place at a meeting, no matter how far back, Audrey would be able to find the notebook relating to the incident and settle the matter. Her filing system in her little office upstairs in her home in the Market Place, complete with computer, was legendary, far superior to many of us who worked closely with her. Her Christmas cards were always addressed with labels printed off the computer, most of us wouldn't know where to start with that skill. This she did until the last two years when Audrey lost interest in her little office, but did manage to clear out dozens and dozens of spiral notepads, all with meticulous notes relating to every meeting she attended either with Scouts, P.C.C.s, Mothers Union, Events Committee, Houghton Feast, the list goes on.

Audrey was a wonderful 'meet and greeter' in all circumstances, for example, as sides person at regular services. At Houghton Feast when Civic Dignitaries, the Lord Lieutenant and the Bishop were present, always presenting herself immaculately and efficiently. The Feast preparations for the Church were enormous and Audrey headed the team responsible for the catering, right up until the Next Nine Hundred took over. The legendary Parish Parties organised by the Events team with the games usually organised by Audrey were great fun and

woe betide anyone who didn't join in the games or the dancing afterwards when Audrey glided across the floor looking like a million dollars. One memorable occasion, when Rector Ian Wallis arranged a Passover meal with a local Rabbi conducting the proceedings, a full hall was eager to join in the strange rituals associated with the food and wine (in abundance). Audrey who was not a drinker and heavily criticised those who drank 'one too many' ended up, as most of us did, rather the worse for wear and teetered home with her granddaughter Charlotte who was invited to the event. We 'dined' out on the gossip for weeks after.

All the years of dedicated service to our Church and the Community was recognised by an invitation to the Queen's Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. Accompanied by her eldest son John, this was one of the proudest moments of her Church life. It was, without doubt, very well deserved.

As numerous health problems over the last ten years took their toll, having had several major operations and developing C.O.P.D. life became very difficult for her. However, she was determined to stay in her beloved home of over sixty years of which she was fiercely proud, keeping it immaculate until a few years ago when she was forced to accept help with cleaning and gardening. Despite the agonies she faced daily with severe pain, in her spine particularly, she still managed to vacuum her carpet almost daily. If a crumb was dropped it had to be dealt with and woe betide if the carers who came in latterly didn't leave the bathroom or the kitchen spotless after they had attended to Audrey's needs.

It was with great sadness as her friends and family looked on as she deteriorated physically but not mentally. After a particular bout of illness, Audrey agreed to go into

the Pavilion Care Home for two weeks respite care just to give her a complete rest. However, a few days before she was due to go in, she was taken into hospital with a severe chest infection and was taken to the Pavilion from there. Whilst there, lock down came in March and Audrey never returned home. Her dear friends could no longer visit her, but kept in regular touch by letter and 'phone calls as Audrey was very proficient on her smart 'phone receiving daily updates from her family, particularly lovely pictures and messages from her adored grandchildren and great grandchildren of whom she was extremely proud.

The care she received from The Pavilion was wonderful, but Audrey always thought it was a temporary situation, longing to return to her beloved home. However, this had not to be and thankfully she passed away pain free and peacefully after many years of struggle with her health problems.

Under normal circumstances, the Church would have been out in force at Audrey's funeral and those not present would have been frowned upon!!

Sadly because of Covid restrictions this was not possible, only three Church members could be present. Audrey would have been thrilled with the presence of twenty-five members of her Church family who lined the Broadway as she was driven to the Crematorium. (Socially distancing of course)

Her faith remained strong throughout all the ups and downs encountered on life's journey and she loved to share prayers and hymns with anyone who would give her the time. This gave her peace and reassurance towards the end.

God Bless you Audrey – an end of an era.

Close Friends

What is the origin of evil spirits?

Halloween is the month of ghosts and witches and evil spirits. Have you ever wondered where evil spirits come from, and how we are to view the unseen world of evil and occultism?

The Bible tells us that evil spirits come from the created angelic order. They were not created as evil beings, for all of God's creation was good (Genesis 3:1). The Bible tells us that a number of angels, headed by Satan, or Lucifer, rebelled against God's authority and fell (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:11-19).

The serpent, Satan, is leader of the fallen angels, and opposes himself to God. But evil and good are not co-equal. 'Dualism' (belief in the equal and permanent existence of evil alongside the good) has no place in the Bible. Unlike goodness, evil has a beginning and will have an end. Satan's final destruction is already assured. (Revelation 12:12; 20:10).

The world of the occult (from the Latin: *occultus*, 'secret', 'hidden') is the intrusion into the forbidden territory of superstition, fortune telling, magic and spiritism. Its downfall is finally assured through Jesus. His early ministry established a bridgehead against the evil unseen world; hence the hostile, and sometimes violent, reaction of the demons. (Mark 1:23-27; 32-34).

Jesus had no fear of demons, and nor need the believer. It is important that Christians avoid becoming obsessed by the unseen world – to the extent that we become either intimidated, or fascinated. After the showing in London of a film featuring the occult, a number of cinema viewers went for counselling. They were under the impression that they had been 'taken over' by evil spirits. They had not. All 20 recovered after a course of prescribed tablets. They had only been victims of suggestion.

We are wise, then, not to imagine, as some do, that every sin, habit, illness or misfortune is due directly to the activity of the Devil and must therefore be 'exorcised'. Terrible damage has been done in this respect by well-meaning but uninformed Christian leaders.

Faced by Christ's authority, the kingdom of spirits has no option but to shrink and retreat. Magic spells and charms have no power over the true Christian (provided we do not open ourselves to their influence), for 'the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world' (1 John 4:4). If we resist the devil, he will flee from us (James 4:7). All occultism is to be ruthlessly shunned (Leviticus 19:31; 1 Samuel 28; Isaiah 8:19, 20; Acts 19:18-20).

The Bible is quite clear that the demonic world is already doomed and defeated (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14,15). It is the death of Jesus that has achieved this victory. We are to be confident, but not complacent – for Satan's kingdom has yet to concede its defeat at the Cross. Its final destruction will be at the return of Christ.



HOUGHTON FEAST AT HOME

Congratulations to Mr. Paul Lanagan and his 'right hand lady' Mrs. Joan Lambton in conjunction with Houghton Heritage Society for bringing Houghton Feast into our homes during this difficult time.

The theme of the brochure and its contents was inspirational with wonderful artwork by Ami Stoker and digital work by Peter Corfield.

Thanks must also go to the generosity of the advertisers who helped in no small measure to finance the production of the brochure.

Paul, you certainly kept the tradition alive under such difficult circumstances.

THANK YOU

Houghton Feast 2020 will certainly go down in history

BONUS BALL

I have recently received several enquiries about whether or not the church Bonus Ball scheme is still running.

The fact is that with the Lockdown starting in March this year it became impossible to collect subscriptions and pay-out winnings.

A record has been made of the winning numbers every Saturday so that if or when we could start up again winners would receive their prize, however Covid 19 is going on much longer than expected and the lack of subscriptions coming in means there is nothing in the kitty to pay-out and most importantly the church is not receiving the funds from the scheme for which it was set up.

Currently the majority of people are between £25 and £36 in arrears up to 17th October 2020. To find out how much your arrears are please contact me on 07778577898 or 01915841608 and we can arrange for me to come to you to collect it. If you can only leave a message, please leave your name and telephone number so I can get back to you.

However, when the scheme is back up and running during Covid restrictions it will not be practical for me to collect subscriptions every week and I would ask if subs could be paid in advance in £5 or £10 amounts so that notes can be used rather than coins.

Thank you.

Brian Scott

REMEMBERING

November is the season for remembering, and we begin with All Souls and All Saints. It is a time to remember our loved ones who have gone to God before us, and those who we have recently lost from our congregation family.

For them all, I offer this prayer from the Iona Community.

Communion of Saints

God of grace,
We thank you for the saints whom we ourselves
have known and loved.

It does not come easy to us to call them saints:
it seems as if ordinary mortals
are not good or great enough.

But you have given your people this name
and invited us into your company,
and you know how much we loved them.

So for these good companions,
whom we name before you for their love,
and for our love of them,
we give you grateful thanks

David Lambert

Ian Fulton

Tony Collings

Blossom Waterston

Margaret Hughes

Audrey Lumley

Ron Henderson

In the mystery of your love,
in the power of your spirit,
we are one with them.

We give great thanks.

Amen

‘Renewal’ for Church is coming

The Church will emerge “renewed and changed” from the crisis of the global coronavirus pandemic, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have said.

In a recent joint address to members of the Church of England’s General Synod, Archbishops Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell said that amid a time of trauma, loss and struggle in this country and around the world, Christians have proved to be a “people of hope”.

The address came at the start of special, one-day sitting of Synod in London, with reduced numbers, to make a rule change to enable it to meet remotely during pandemic restrictions.

Archbishop Justin acknowledged the multiple challenges and crises we are facing including hunger, poverty, domestic violence and climate change.

He said churches have played a vital role serving their communities and bringing hope through the gospel. But the Church itself will, he said, emerge changed.

“We do not know what kind of Church of England will emerge from this time except that it will be different,” he said.

“It will be changed by the reality that for the first time all churches have closed – first time in 800 years. It will be changed because for the first time we have worshipped virtually.”

He continued: “Out of these times we will see renewal – not because we are clever but because God is faithful.

“We will see a renewed and changed Church emerging from the shocks of lockdown.

“It is a Church that at the most local has fed so many, been in touch with the isolated through the heroic efforts of all who take part in it, of clergy and laity and those who even weren’t near the church before these times.

“It is a Church which has continued to pray and to offer worship through our Lord Jesus Christ, even if in new and unusual ways.”

Archbishop Stephen spoke with emotion about the impact of pandemic. “I hate this Coronavirus,” he said.

“I hate it not only because so many people have died, but because so many people have died alone, unable to hold the hand of their beloved.

“I hate it because our health service has been stretched to the limit. I hate it because so many are bereaved and could not even sit next to a family member at a funeral.

“I hate it because weddings and baptisms and ordinations have been postponed or have gone ahead without the parties that were meant to be with them.

“I hate it because children’s schooling has been disrupted. I hate it because so many people are so ill, so many crying out in pain, so many isolated, lonely, fearful, depressed.

“I hate it because behind locked doors terrible things have happened. I hate it because the poor and the disadvantaged have been hit the hardest.

“I hate it because it has left so many people across the world feeling hopeless as if life itself has been taken from us.”

But he said he was also thankful for the faithfulness of all who have served others during the crisis and risen to the challenge.

He added: “I am thankful that despite all the horrors of a Covid world we are learning a new commitment to Christ and how to be a humbler, simpler, church and we are putting Christ at the centre of our lives and learning very, very, very painfully what it really means to be a church that is dependent on Christ alone.

“And I am filled for longing: I long for us to be a more Christ-centred and Jesus-shaped church witnessing to Christ and bringing the healing balm of the Gospel to our nation for this is our vocation.”



*Each month, from now on, as long as the Pandemic lasts.
I will bring some prayers or a short service based on the theme
of the month. Judith*

November payers - Theme Remembrance

If you are able light a candle at beginning of quiet time.

Opening prayer

I have lit a candle, Lord,
and in the stillness, within its flame I glimpse your light.
I have lit a candle, Lord, and in the stillness
within its warmth I sense your love.
I have lit a candle, Lord, and in the stillness
of this moment I bring my prayer

Praise

Creator God,
you made us all in your image:
may we discern you in all that we see,
and serve you in all that we do;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Bible reading of the day

Prayers

- We give thanks for the blessings we've received
- We bring to God our concerns for today
- *for yourself and any concern you wish to pray about*
- *for family and friends*
- *for sick, bereaved*
- *for departed*

Daytime prayer

This day and every Day
I arise today in your
strength to uplift me,
in your power to direct
me, in your love to
enfold me, in your
wisdom to guide me, in
your way to lead me this
day and every day.

Anytime prayer

God the Father,
enfold us with your love;
God the Son, surround us
with your presence;
God the Spirit,
revitalise us with your
power. Surround, enfold,
revitalise us each day,
each night.

Evening Prayer

Into your hands, I
commit myself this night.
May the hours of
darkness hold no harm
for me.
Keep me as the apple
of your eye and cover
me with your protecting
wings.

The Lord's Prayer

Blessing

In darkness and in light, in trouble and in joy,
 Help us, heavenly Father, to trust your love,
 To serve your purpose, and to praise your name;
 And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with me and all I love now and for ever. Amen

Additional prayers for set days

All Saints' Day I

(November 1st)

God of holiness,
 your glory is proclaimed in every age:
 as we rejoice in the faith of your
 saints,
 inspire us to follow their example
 with boldness and joy;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord

All Souls

(November 2nd)

Almighty and eternal God,
 from whose love in Christ we cannot
 be parted, either by death or life:
 hear our prayers and thanksgivings
 for all whom we remember this day;
 fulfil in them the purpose of your love;
 and bring us all, with them, to your
 eternal joy;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Amen.

Remembrance Sunday

(November 11th)

Let us remember before God the men
 and women of all nations who have
 died as a result of war. Those whom
 we have known and whose memory
 we treasure; those we never knew; and
 those who died unknown. They shall
 not grow old as we that are left grow
 old: age shall not weary them nor the
 years condemn. At the going down
 of the sun and in the morning we will
 remember them.

Those affected by Corona Virus

Keep us, good Lord,
 under the shadow of your mercy.
 Sustain and support the anxious,
 be with those who care for the sick,
 and lift up all who are brought low;
 that we may find comfort
 knowing that nothing can separate us
 from your love
 in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 Amen.

DONATIONS TO GENERAL FUNDS

In loving memory of William Donald Findlay. Gone are the days we used
 to share, but in our hearts you'll always be there.

From Gwen Findlay

Sunderland *Echoes*

Snippets from the Sunderland Echo which you may have missed.

This is how many people were caught speeding on the A690 at Houghton-le-Spring

THE number of motorists caught by a speed camera on the A690 has been revealed - and it caught more people last year, than any other year before.

The camera, which is described as being on the Houghton Cut, has been operational for the past several years.

It has become a common sight on the stretch of road, between the A19 near Sunderland and Houghton-le-Spring.

But latest available information from the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative has revealed the number of speeding motorists caught by the camera has increased since 2016.

Last year, 2,843 speeding motorists were caught - the highest recorded by the speed camera so far.

This is up by almost 400 on the previous year, when 2,475 speeding motorists were caught by the mobile speed camera in 2018.

According to the data, the camera site was first operational in February 2013 and has so far caught almost 13,400 motorists for speeding.

Here's how many people were caught each year.

2013 - 2,311

2014 - 1,291

2015 - 1,175

2016 - 899

2017 - 2,389

2018 - 2,475

2019 - 2,843

What happens if you get caught speeding?

According to Northumbria Police, illegal or inappropriate speeding is the single biggest factor in fatal road collisions.

It has urged motorists to remember that the speed limit is a limit and not a target and consider the consequences of causing an accident due to driving at excessive speed.

Speeding fines are split into three bands based on factors including personal income and the speed of the road.

Anyone speeding at 51mph or above in a 30mph limit - for example - faces a fine equivalent to 150 per cent of their weekly income, and 6 penalty points on their driving licence, or disqualification from driving for up to 56 days.

If you're disqualified for 56 days or more, you must apply for a new licence before you're able to start driving again.

Plans submitted for £15m retail scheme on former Houghton Colliery site

PLANS have been submitted to redevelop the site of a former colliery, which has stood empty for 40 years, into a retail park.

Sunderland City Council's Cabinet approved the sale of the former Houghton Colliery site to Washington based Hellens Group last year for the development of a £15m retail scheme.

Now proposals submitted for planning approval reveal the company's ambition to bring a number of major new retailers to Houghton-le-Spring town centre to enhance the choice for local residents and draw people back into the area to support existing shops and businesses.

The development – which will transform the site which has not been active since the early eighties - could create a significant number of new retail jobs, as well as opportunities for local people and businesses during the construction phase.

The planning application submitted by Hellens Group outlines plans for a new retail offer, with a range of units that are expected to become home to well-known brands as well as independent retailers.

Councillor Graeme Miller, leader of Sunderland City Council, said: "This is a significant investment that will be transformational for the Houghton area, bringing with it jobs for local people and an enhanced retail offer for the town.

"Importantly, it will complement the existing offer in the area, creating a more compelling reason for people to shop locally in Houghton, which is vital to support the businesses that are already operating in the area."

The site will see the development of 3,600 sq m of new retail space. If plans are approved it is expected that work on the scheme could begin by Spring 2021.

Cllr Miller added: "This site used to provide the economic heartbeat of Houghton, supplying livelihoods for most of the families in the town – it is only fitting that once again it will be a source of hundreds of jobs and help drive prosperity in the town.

"This application is an important step forward in delivering a development that will bring investment, jobs and prosperity to the area."

Bible Reading at St Michaels

Bible Study: The Old Testament and our Uncertainty

Beginning on the 11th of November at 7.30 we will be starting a Bible study. We will be holding this on zoom which can be accessed using a computer or using a telephone. We will use the normal zoom login details. If you do not have these, please contact the parish office.

If you cannot attend but would still like to take part, the topics for the sessions in November are below. More will follow in December. We might change topics slightly depending on how each session goes.

In this Bible study we will look at the fall of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Each week you might like to ask yourself what explanation the writer gives for the disasters that befall the kingdoms.

If you have any questions please contact John D'Silva

November 11th: The Fall of the Northern Kingdom

Background: The most famous King of Israel was David who reigned over the twelve tribes. During the reign of his grandson, Rehoboam, the Kingdom split into two. There was the Northern Kingdom, confusingly also called Israel, and the Southern Kingdom, called Judah. In this first bible session we will fast forward to the fall of the Northern Kingdom to the Assyrian Empire.

Reading: 2 Kings 17:1-23

November 18th: Social Injustice in the Northern Kingdom

Background: Last we read about the fall of the Northern Kingdom. This week we will be reading a prophet who describes the situation in the Northern Kingdom. How do you think this compares with the explanation for disaster from last week?

Reading: Amos: 2:6-16, 5:18-27

November 25th November: Long Live Josiah!

Background: The Northern Kingdom has fallen and this week we fast forward just under a century to the Southern Kingdom to the reign of Josiah. Josiah is one of the most pious Kings in the Bible. Do you think he is treated fairly?

Reading: 2 Kings 22, 23:28-30

Rev John D'Silva

Saint for November

19TH NOVEMBER: HILDA – ABBESS OF WHITBY

Hilda played a key role in the early English Christian church, and she may even have been the first to encourage the writing of Christian poetry.

She was born a princess, into the Deiran (Northumbrian) dynasty, and her sister became Queen of the East Angles, with whom the Deiran had connections.

In those days East Anglia had close ties with the Gallic Church, and because of her sister, Hilda came under that influence. She was actually on her way to take her monastic vows near Paris when the Bishop of Lindisfarne, Aidan, called her back to Northumbria.

Back home, she went into seclusion for a time, before being sent to be abbess of a religious house in Hartlepool in 649.

Eight years later, Hilda felt moved to establish a religious community at Streasnaeshalch (later renamed Whitby). Her community was a royal establishment, a double monastery (both men and women) and became famous for its learning, with even five bishops trained there.

Whitby was also, of course, the venue for the famous Synod of Whitby in 664. With Hilda acting as hostess, the Synod met to decide upon the date of Easter. The issue at stake was greater than that, though, for the decision would sway the Church in Britain to adapt either the Celtic or Roman traditions. Although Hilda defended the Celtic church customs, she accepted with grace the decision of the Synod to accept the Roman date for Easter, and she then worked to unite the Church throughout the land.

Lord, prop us up!

There is a story of an old farmer who always prayed the same prayer at his church meeting. 'Lord, prop us up on our leanin' side'. After hearing this many times, his minister asked him one day quite what he meant.

The farmer replied: "Well, it's like this... I've got an old barn out in one of my fields. It's been there a long time, and gone through a lot of storms. One day a few years ago I noticed that it was leaning to one side a bit. So, I went and got some poles and propped

it up on its leaning side, so it wouldn't fall. Then I got to thinking about how much I was like that old barn. I've been around a long time, and seen plenty of storms in life. I was still standing, but I was also leaning a bit. So, I decided to ask the Lord to prop me up, too, on my leaning side.

Our 'leaning side' is where we are weakest in ourselves. Sometimes we get to leaning toward anger, bitterness, bleakness in life. Then we too need to pray for God to prop us up, especially on that leaning side. He wants us to stand tall and free, in Him.

A SPECIAL PLACE 6

South Side / Transept / Colliery

On the south wall of the transept can clearly be seen in a niche another piscine [not usable], there is a similar one in the north transept. There are lots of grave coverings and some are in their original position but some have been moved. The original ones are mostly with their feet facing east [Jerusalem]. Although not facing east, under the grave cover of Francis and Elizabeth Myddleton of Offerton, I can confirm there is a small vault with a number of complete remains inside.



There are two small stones about a metre in length, these were reported to have been in the Church burial ground and are known as the twins. It is thought these are the young girls depicted in the great East Window, bottom row, South East corner.

There are many memorials and inscriptions that link Houghton with the Parliament side in the English civil war. One in this transept is a grave cover to the Carr family of Cocken, it states Mrs Ann Carr is the daughter of Lord Fairfax of Denton, Yorkshire, a general in the Parliament army.

In this transept are a lot of wall plaques with interesting quotes, one I like is to Alfred Brewer, Assistant Curate, ordained 27th May 1923. It is a quote from the Bible, Wisdom IV.13 and the quote is "In a short time he fulfilled a long time".

There are a number of stained glass windows, mostly of Saints dedicated as memorials. I will pick one out depicting St James and St John. This is "In memory of William Standish Standish Esq. of Duxbury Park, Lancaster and Cocken Hall". There is the Cocken Hall reference again now in 1856 Victorian times. Cocken Hall was situated opposite the Driving Range and small Golf Course near Finchale Abbey. William was an interesting character, he was related to both the French and English Royal Families. He had to change his name and add a second Standish in order to inherit Cocken Hall. He is interred in the vault, in the old cemetery, that in the past was often vandalised. The story goes that he died on his horse which fell over the cliff while hunting and was buried at the spot where he fell. Unfortunately NOT true. For more information check out the Friends of Houghton Hillside Cemetery website.

Before moving down the south side of the Nave [main body of Church], just a mention of some moveable items at present in the Gilpin Transept. The votive candle stand, this is well used by people who want to remember in prayer a loved one, deceased or in need, a place or situation, whatever you wish to bring to God. There is a plaque inside saying it was donated by St. Michael and All Angels Variety Group farewell performance, June 1998 [fond memories of Christmas pantomimes]. The prayer tree is used to attach prayers written

on leaves, devised and constructed by the Heritage Interpreters at the time of the 2008 re-ordering. The Book of Remembrance was introduced in the 1990's and used as a memorial for the remembrance of loved ones.

On the south wall of the Nave there is a miner's lamp which was presented to the Church when the Colliery closed in 1981, it was opened in 1823. We have, in the Heritage Centre on the mezzanine floor in the north transept, a small engraved sherry glass. I saw one very similar on the Antiques Roadshow, where they said these were inscribed by local people and were sold to raise money for the widows and orphans of disaster victims. The inscription on ours reads "Houghton Pit exploded 11th Nov. 1850, 28 lives lost".

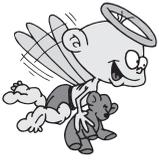
I will mention what is known about the disaster and links to St. Michael's. On the 11th November, 1850, between 5.00 and 6.00 a.m. there was an explosion in the mine. At the time there were 150 men and boys underground. At first all were believed to be killed. There was a rescue attempt at 11.00 a.m. when some brave men volunteered to go down and search. They heard voices and scraping noises, they cleared and climbed over two rock falls and rescued 124 men and boys. An inquest was held in The White Lion public house, the conclusion being that a faulty miners lamp [Davy Lamp] or misuse of a candle caused gas to explode. The youngest boy killed was 11 years old and the oldest was 43 years old. The average age of the miners was 18 years old. The Anderson family lost three sons, 11, 14 and 18 years of age.

The miners were buried in St. Michael's Churchyard and if you look at the Church wall from the Broadway near the Golden Lion, you will see that a gateway has been closed. It is believed that this entrance was sealed and the miners buried in the Churchyard behind on the 12th and 13th November, [more information can be found on the Durham Mining Museum website with links to a number of newspaper articles including The Times and The Newcastle Guardian and Tyne Mercury]. There was an earlier explosion in the Plain Pit of Rainton Colliery in the parish of Houghton-le-Spring in 1823 when 53 perished and 12 horses.

An inspection of the columns on the south side of the nave, moving towards the main door, reveal some of them appear to be leaning. This is historic and they are sound. The good news is there are no mine workings under the Church as the Church was here before the mines were sunk and the mine owners kept the area clear. There was a concern when the A690 was rerouted to where it is now. Large excavations took place near to the Church. Could this affect the water table around the Church and Kieper Hall? If you look carefully at the top of the arches between the pillars you can see pads/lumps of cement, some of which still have glass in between. These are called "telltales" and were installed by the Church Architect in the early 1970's [50 years ago]. If there was any movement of the pillars the glass would crack. This has never happened and in fact in some cases they can still be seen.

David Turnbull





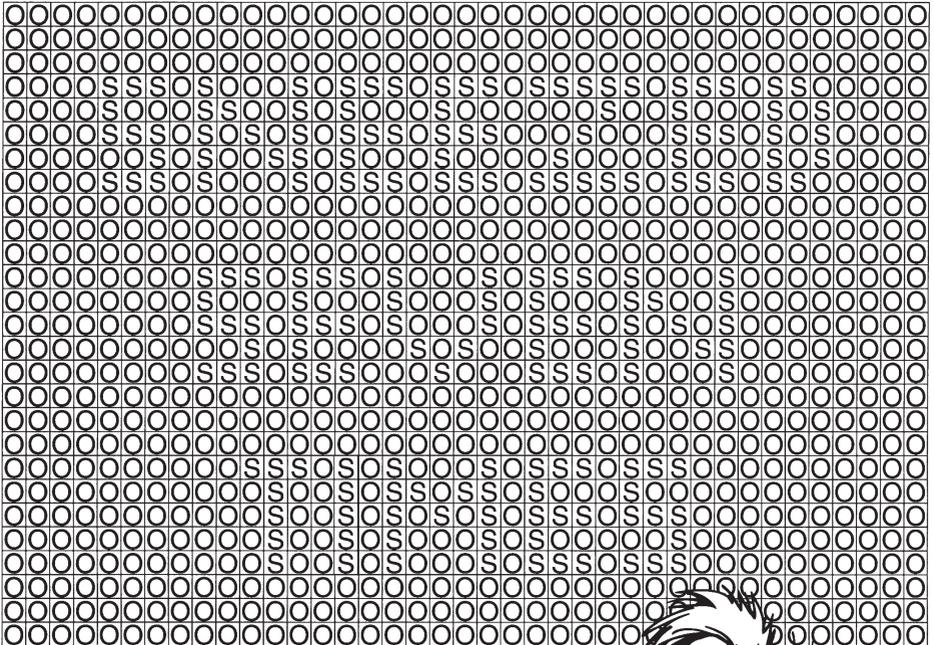
Michael's Angels

2 Kings 4

God Answers Elijah's Prayer

The Shunammite woman's son had died. Elisha went into the room where the boy was and prayed to the Lord. When God healed the boy, the boy did something.

Color in all the spaces that contain the letter S to find out what the boy did. Read 2 Kings 4:8-35 to find out more about this unusual event!



AND OPENED HIS EYES.



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MEMORIALS

We hope this system will help us to meet requests for memorials more efficiently. Should you wish for a loved one to be remembered on their anniversary in the weekly prayers read during the Sunday services, please complete the slip opposite.

Cut out the slip and place it in the intercessions box at least one week prior to the Sunday for remembrance. If you are unable to get to church, please post the slip to the Church Administrator: Mrs Philippa Elsey, Parish Church of St Michael and All Angels, The Broadway, Houghton-le-Spring.

MEMORIAL REQUEST

Name of person to be remembered:

.....

Request made by:

.....

.....

.....

Date for memorial:

Sunday,

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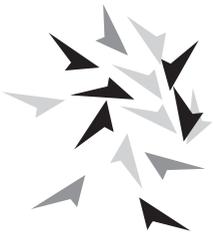
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