

PARISH NEWS



DECEMBER 2020



**CHURCH OF THE HOLY SAVIOUR,
TYNEMOUTH**

www.holysaviours.org.uk

December at Holy Saviours

[correct at the time of going to press – November 30th, 2020]

WORSHIP: **Holy Communion each Sunday in church, 1000 and 1130**
 BCP Holy Communion each Wednesday in church, 1000

Under Tier Three restrictions

- you must not attend with or socialise with people outside your household or support bubble
- you should return home immediately the service ends

Please note that

- Sunday services are recorded and are available online on Youtube and the church website as before
- you can hear recorded services by calling 0191 412 3777 [charged at local rates]; services will be updated each Sunday

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

CHRISTMAS EVE: **a service of Midnight Communion will be held in Church starting at 2330**

CHRISTMAS DAY: **Parish Communion will be held in Church at 1000**

NB: please email vicar@holysaviours.org.uk or telephone **0191 697 4562** if you are planning to attend either or both of these services – this is so we can have an idea of numbers who are likely to attend.

CAROL SERVICE: **an online carol service will be available all day on Christmas Eve – please sing along at home**

Remember also

Advent Study Sessions: Light in the Darkness

Tuesdays at 1330

Wednesdays at 1930

***For Zoom url links, Meeting ID and Passcode details,
Please see Steve Dixon's weekly Parish Updates***



THE VICAR WRITES.....

It feels very strange to be coming to the end of a very different year. Last December we were only just hearing about the strange virus affecting the Chinese city of Wuhan. We could never have predicted how this virus would impact our lives since March. So much has been lost, so many plans interrupted and we mourn the thousands who have lost their lives, either directly or indirectly.

This season of Advent draws us to look back and ahead. It is a time for lamenting all that we have lost, laying down before God our past and its sorrows. It is also a time of giving thanks for all we have received from God and all he has promised us for the future.

This Advent, I feel we can reflect on our response as a church to the events of the last nine months with a sense of accomplishment through our determination to hold on to community when we were forced apart. Many of our number have sacrificially given of their energy and time to phone people, look after practical needs, and keep our church safe for worship. It has also been a time of great challenge and change for the whole church. We have learned to adapt in ways which otherwise might have taken years. When I speak to colleagues across the Diocese and denominations, I hear repeated stories of experiments with technology in worship and new ways of reaching out into our digital age; all lessons which will benefit the way we share our faith with new generations.

Advent is a time of waiting and expectation. We wait in hope for the coming of a vaccine which will help us to regain some normality. We look forward to a new year where we may regain the opportunities to meet and eat together, embrace loved ones, holiday, and step beyond the anxiety of sanitising and mask wearing. This reminds me of the anticipation of the Jews who looked for the Messiah to come and transform the world, ushering in a kingdom of justice, peace and security.

I hope that our current yearning for 'normality' might be filled with a Godly desire to assimilate the learning of this year into the dream we hold for a time when covid restrictions cease. Through this season of Advent, is God calling us to be renewed, not as we were, but as people who are changed for the better by our past experiences and filled with God's hope, joy and light for the world?

Steve

EDITORIAL

John Pearce writes: The pandemic, we are told, has wrecked our economy, as a result of which, chancellor Rishi Sunak – among others – tells us that “difficult decisions need to be made”. Whatever these decisions may consist of, we may be sure of one thing: that those most disadvantaged by that decision will be those who are least able to hit back. This fact is hard to stomach. It is made even less palatable by recent revelations that jaw-dropping amounts of public money have, during the pandemic, been paid to consultants, out-sourced service providers and opportunist entrepreneurs. What finally turns the stomach, however, is the news that much of the return on this huge investment – advice, support, service and goods – was often barely adequate and sometimes worthless. What follows arises purely from this unpromising context: who runs may read.

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. Living in Lahore, Pakistan, **Humza Iqbal** is twelve years old, one of eight children in a family of eleven, living in a one-room dwelling with a tarpaulin roof. His father sells fruit in street markets, making about £1 a day. Humza attends school – the only member of his family to do so: *“I like school more than selling fruit. I like the teachers, and have fun playing cricket and on the swing with my friends. My favourite subject is English and I want to become a teacher. Before I started school I used to walk round the streets or sell apples and oranges for my father. I couldn’t read or write. Now I’m learning. In our last test I came first in our class and was awarded a prize. My mum was very happy.”* His parents, Barveen and Iqbal, see their son’s education as his only hope of changing the future, for both his family and Pakistani society. Humza is one of 4,000,000 Pakistani children to have educational opportunities afforded them by overseas aid from the UK. Apart from schooling, aid has trained the teachers, built the classrooms, and created 12,000 literacy centres to teach women to read and write. This last is a very significant achievement in a society still often receptive to notions of patriarchy.

I was a stranger and you welcomed me. *“I couldn’t bear for my children to hear the gunfire and I was worried that one day it would take our lives. It’s hard to start over again, but at least we are safe.”* **Qiam Rahmani** is a 27-year-old Afghan who, with his family, left his home when it became part of a war-zone. In a new town in the foothills of the Hindu Kush, Qiam, who is illiterate, took work as a daily labourer, earning just enough to support his family. The pandemic put an end to this work, so Qiam and his family were facing starvation until overseas aid from the UK enabled the recruitment of labourers to dig cultivation trenches, irrigation ditches and plant almond trees as part of a renewal programme. Qiam became

one of a hundred local workers hired to help turn 400 hectares of waste ground into productive farmland.

Qiam's new work has provided him with something he's previously not had: job security. *"For as long as I can remember, I'd get up in the mornings, not knowing if I would come home at the end of the day with an income or not. Most days it worked out, but it was stressful all the same,"* he explained. His new job is providing weeks of work and a steady income, with the potential to expand.

I was naked and you clothed me. Syria's internal refugee problem is acute. Two-year old **Salem** lives in a refugee camp in northern Syria, where his family ended up having fled violence and warfare earlier this year. Like most of the other refugees, they left their homes empty-handed, dressed in the summer clothes they stood up in, and now the winter is hitting them very hard. The camp where they live was built for ten thousand and now houses fifty thousand, and offers only basic accommodation – Salem and his family live in a tent, at this time of year often sagging under the weight of snow. Health care is the most basic imaginable, and in the sub-zero temperatures the main pre-occupation is keeping warm – which Salim mainly does by shivering. Unless warm clothing and regular food reaches him soon, his chances of surviving the winter are, like him, small.

I was sick and you visited me. A recent World Health Organisation report tells us all we need to know about Ethiopia [although many would, quite possibly, prefer not to know]. *"Ranking 92nd out of 95 on the United Nations Development Programme Human Poverty Index, Ethiopia is one of Africa's poorest states, with 45 % of its 70 million people living below the poverty line. Three-quarters of the population lacks access to clean water, and four-fifths of them live without proper sanitation. In addition, Ethiopia hosts some 133,000 refugees from neighbouring countries. In the last two decades, major crises combining droughts, epidemics, displacements and armed conflicts, have repeatedly affected the country."*

Many Ethiopian women die in childbirth along with their babies. Survivors risk malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, compounded by acute malnutrition and poisoning by foul water. There are few hospitals, medical supplies are distributed inefficiently, and a cumbersome financial infrastructure means that while cities may thrive, villages decay. One simple fact sums up the situation: *forty million* Ethiopians live more than six miles from the nearest doctor, and public transport outside towns is non-existent. [Where I write this, there are three doctors' surgeries, a large hospital and four dental practices within walking distance].

I was in prison and you came to me. Amnesty International has its work cut out with the legal system of Nigeria, because what is seen in most democracies as robust criticism aimed at telling truth to power is often treated in Nigeria as

treason. For this reason, a significant portion of aid development money is dedicated to improving and safeguarding its electoral system as well as extending the franchise. As a result, five million more people have been able to vote in recent elections – although many more of them still need to. UK overseas aid has seen 500,000 people have their income increase by between 15% and 50%, although fewer than 100,000 of these are independent women. Professional midwifery services are available now to 500,000 women, and ten million malaria nets are slowly educating the public to the notion of prevention. Half a million more children – half of them girls – are now receiving full time education, and up to six million people – both men and women – now have access to clean water and sanitation. Poverty is a prison; but thanks to aid development money the prison door is open, and those peoples now have a glimpse of freedom.

I make no apology for the un-festive tone of these snapshots, which I bring to your notice for a particular reason. In normal times, a government's breaking of a manifesto promise is greeted with a cynical "what else is new?" response. But, even in these grotesquely abnormal times, the decision by our government to cut our overseas aid budget from 0.7% of our gross domestic product to 0.5% is a betrayal of simple, basic human decency that deserves to be greeted with an uproar of outrage. Even in a country whose economy has recently been damaged as much as ours, the standard of living for most of us remains at a level beyond the imaginings of the average Pakistani, Afghan, Syrian, Ethiopian or Nigerian. Those five nations are the main recipients of our overseas aid; and whereas for many of us an economic downturn means doing without things we don't really need anyway, for those countries it is, simply, a matter of life or death. Cutting our overseas aid budget will destroy the life-chances – possibly even the lives – of such as young Humza, Qiam Rahmani and their families as they learn, and strive, and little Salem as he shivers in a hopeless attempt to keep warm.

I have long thought that the very need for the existence of food banks in a country as wealthy as ours is an utter disgrace, pointing to serious flaws in the economic, moral and ethical bases of our society. Cutting overseas aid, however, takes national selfishness to an unacceptable level. Chancellor Rishi Sunak says that our economic plight involves his making difficult choices; but cutting overseas aid is a choice that I wish to God had proved to be impossible.

Notes and News

This month's cover: I couldn't find it in me to find a festive cover picture this year and, whilst looking for something else on the church website, came across this striking aerial view of the seaward side of our parish. Trees in full foliage and longish north-western lying shadows imply a mid-summer early-to-mid

morning, as does the suggestion of haze further out to sea. Either way it is a heartening reminder of the fact that our church is geographically at the centre of our parish on the roundabout, with the spokes of Broadway, Manor Road, Birtley Avenue and King Edward Road reaching out to its edges. Let us hope and pray that the next time those trees are fully in leaf we shall be working towards resuming that centrality in action as well as location.

The Malcolm Soulsby 365 Tune A Day Challenge: Update

Malcolm Soulsby writes: How can you support this challenge? As far as requests are concerned, these will be accommodated if I can play them. If you do have a request for a specific date, then please give me as much notice as possible. I am perfectly happy to re-post pieces I have already posted with any required dedication for birthdays etc. I will however still post a different piece that day as well, as part of the challenge is a different piece each day. The venture had raised over £600 including Gift Aid by the beginning of last month, and I hope that we may reach £1,000 in due course.

How do you contribute? Ideally, by bank transfer to the Holy Saviour's bank account using the reference *365 challenge*, however I am sure cheques and cash can be accepted but please give them to Karen Bilton, Steve, Malcolm Railton or one of the wardens.

How do you contact me to request? I work full time, so answering phone calls is difficult. Sending an email or a note left with Steve Dixon is easier for me. My email is malsoulsby63@hotmail.co.uk, and using that helps me to keep everything in one place.

Dorothy Smith [1938 - 2020]

David Littlefield writes: I would like to salute the life of Dorothy Smith who sadly died last month. Dorothy was an exceptional person who gave so much to the community. She will be greatly missed. Dorothy had a large and loving family. Her long marriage to Kirton, who was himself such a likeable and popular person, was extremely happy, and they were both extremely proud of their three daughters Julia, Anthea and Kathryn. Dorothy took great pleasure from all their achievements as well as those of her sons-in-law and of all her grandchildren. The arrival of great-grandchildren gave her an especial joy.

For many years Dorothy ran the 11th Tynemouth {Holy Saviours} Guide Company. As Guide Captain she was held in very high regard and many Guides – now grown women with families of their own – well remember her weekly meetings with huge gratitude. Dorothy was always firm but fair.

Over several years there were joint summer camps with both the Guide Company and the Scout Troop. These were always very happy weeks [whatever the weather] and full of excellent activities as well as a great deal of laughter. Any success of these camps was due to careful planning in which Dorothy was a prime mover. Those of us lucky enough to be Leaders have such special memories of Dorothy; whether of her expertly organising the food in a marquee, singing around a glowing campfire at the end of a day's camping or driving Santa Claus on his sleigh through a crisp December evening. More recently we were all delighted to see Dorothy, together with Scout President Doug Brennan, officially open our newly renovated Priory Room at the rear of the Scout and Guide Headquarters.

In addition to running the Guides locally Dorothy held a number of appointments throughout the local Guide Division as well as the Guide County. She was greatly respected by her fellow Guiders and well known for her efficiency and commitment to a wide range of activities.



Dorothy Smith was a lady of many talents. She was an accomplished artist, gardener and a wonderful hostess - any party given by Dorothy was sure to include a great deal of delicious food. Dorothy will be hugely missed for the warmth of her personality, her quiet determination even in troubled times and her ready ability in caring for people other than herself. She faced her final illness with acceptance and dignity. Above all Dorothy was a wonderful mother, grandmother

and great-grandmother as well, of course, as being a committed Christian and a much respected member of our Church family. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

The Editor writes: I was privileged to play the organ at Dorothy's funeral and, like everyone who was there, was both touched and cheered by the warm and heartfelt tributes to her delivered by her grandchildren. For myself, if I had to choose a word to sum up Dorothy it would be, simply, generosity. She was generous: with time, energy, love, compassion, caring, with everything – all of which showed publicly in her life-long commitment to the Guiding movement.

Her generosity applied to everything that she did. Given that she and I were both strong-minded people unafraid to speak those minds, we butted heads sometimes during our long – fifty year – friendship. But once views had been exchanged and differences aired, the matter was forgotten, and things moved on in renewed comradeship. That was a gift of Dorothy's, and one from which I was privileged to learn. I remember too the first time we shared the Peace together after Kirton died, and both of us simultaneously deciding that a handshake wouldn't meet the case, and opting instead for the warm comfort of a hug. That's among my later memories of Dorothy, and it is one I will treasure. May she sleep sweetly at rest.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DEAR STEPHEN...

The Editor writes: Revd Canon Stephen Scott Huxley was Vicar of Holy Saviours from 1965 to 1974, and, now in retirement in Perthshire, he celebrates his 90th birthday on December 19th. I hope he will enjoy these reminiscences of his ministry, recalled as they are with love and gratitude.

David Littlefield writes: I well remember....I was a schoolboy at the time...the day Stephen arrived at our home to ask my mother to care for Andrew, aged five, as his lovely wife, Jean, was so very ill. Andrew became a happy member of our household for many weeks and my parents were very pleased to help. I know Stephen and Jean, who happily recovered from a subsequent operation, always remained extremely grateful for this gesture...other members of the family were similarly cared for by local parishioners. My mother was always delighted to receive visits in later life from Andrew who is now married with a family.

Stephen prepared several of us for Confirmation, including the much-loved but sadly late Elizabeth Brown [*nee* Bilton] among others and we were duly confirmed in 1966. I remember Stephen telling us he was a direct descendant of Sir Walter Scott...hence his initials...and I think he showed us a walking stick which had belonged to the great man.



L – R Timothy, Thomas, Stephen, Andrew, Rachel and Jean Huxley [circa 1967]
Stephen even attended a Scout camp at Nunnykirk and I have vivid memories of him reaching the site, which was over a wide stream, via a 'gamekeeper rope bridge'..ie hands on a rope above, feet nudging along a rope below. He entered into all the usual camp activities with gusto and even survived our Patrol cooking!

Stephen and Jean and their large and lovely family made a valued and memorable contribution to life at Holy Saviours and are remembered with gratitude and affection. I send Stephen my warmest Congratulations on his 90th Birthday.

David Bilton writes: I remember Revd Huxley with great affection. I attended his classes in 1971 in preparation for Confirmation. These were held alternately in the Vicarage (then a three-storey house on the corner of King Edward and Manor Road – it seemed vast to me at the time), and in the choir vestry. I well remember having to learn the Catechism from cover to cover and woe betide if you didn't get the answers and responses correct. I was petrified at the time but, looking back on it now, it was great experience and I learnt an enormous amount about the Christian faith.

It was also Stephen who persuaded me to become an Altar Server in November 1971. In those days we had servers at the 6.00 pm Sunday Evensong service and I used often to do that service as we had a cottage in the Cheviots and, because we went up there most weekends, this was the only Sunday service at home I could get to. I think one of my stand-out memories of this service was being asked by Mr Jackaman (the organist and choirmaster) if I could please stop singing so loudly at the service because my tuneless vocals were putting the choir off – my future singing career dashed before it could get established!

I still remain an Altar Server at Holy Saviour's and my faith has been enriched and enhanced by this experience, for which I am indebted to Stephen. I have never looked upon it as a chore to serve at the Altar, but more as a rare privilege to be able to do so. Thank you Stephen, and many happy returns for your 90th birthday.

John Pearce writes: When I spoke with Stephen in September he mentioned that his ninetieth birthday was due this month, and so it is very good to have this chance to congratulate him on behalf of us all. Like both Davids, I remember Stephen and Jean with great endearment; he was the vicar when I started attending Holy Saviours in 1968 – at that stage being a lapsed Methodist with what I had gradually begun to realise was a God-shaped hole in my life. Holy Saviours quickly became my spiritual home, and I well recall Stephen's tact and compassion during a violent convulsion in my private life some years later. I remember also Jean's indefatigable support of Stephen and the family. One evening, calling in to see Stephen on some church matter and instead having tea and a gossip with Jean in the kitchen, I counted twenty-seven washed cups and saucers on the draining board. I asked her if she had been having a tea-party and in reply got a slightly wry smile and "No – this is just an average day at the vicarage". It is this generosity – with time, patience, charity and ministry, let alone with tea and cakes – for which I remember both of them. Along with that, it was

Stephen's personal example of spirituality that drew me inexorably into his adult preparation class in 1972 and forward to confirmation by Bishop Ronald Bowlby a year later. Thanks to David Littlefield for the photograph of Stephen and the family, which I lifted from a Stewardship Campaign leaflet [dating, I think, from about 1967]. And for those who remember Stephen but who have perhaps forgotten what a long and varied ministry he sustained, I append below an article by Linda Mowbray from the Newcastle *Evening Chronicle* of October 23rd 2007, which commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of Stephen's ordination:

Some 300 people gathered in the Parish Church of St. Michael and All Angels, Ford, to celebrate, at their Patronal Festival, a Michaelmas Holy Eucharist to mark the 50th anniversary of the ordination to the Priesthood of the Reverend Canon Stephen Huxley. The congregation had come to celebrate, with Stephen, his wife Jean and his family, this momentous occasion.

At Michaelmas in 1957, Stephen was ordained Priest at St. Nicholas Cathedral. From 1956 - 1959 he served as assistant curate at St. George's Church, Cullercoats and from 1959 - 1960 as assistant curate at St. Maurice, Eglington. During 1960 - 1963 Stephen was curate in North Gosforth, in charge of St. Chad's Church, Woodlands Park. Then in 1963 the family moved to Hartburn with Meldon and Netherwitton where Stephen was vicar. In 1965 he began his ministry as vicar at the Church of the Holy Saviour, Tynemouth, and stayed there until 1974 when he became vicar of Warkworth and Acklington. In 1978, Stephen began his ministry at the church of St. John, Percy Main. He stayed there until 1987 when he and Jean moved to Wylam, where his work at the church of St. Oswin continued until his retirement in 1992. Throughout the 50 years of his ministry, Stephen has touched the hearts of many, and it was a privilege to be part of the congregation. Well done, Stephen and Jean, and thank you for the commitment and love you have shown.

Correspondence

Julia Dyer and David Littlefield write: The people of Holy Saviours Church have as always been amazing in supporting David Littlefield and myself in collecting sweets, chocolates, toys, and toiletries to help the Salvation Army and The Cedarwood centre. Your kind donations will give local children a Christmas surprise and put a smile of lots of faces on Christmas morning. Linskill Community Choir joined with the Salvation army to set the ball rolling for *Kindness at Christmas* and the support we have had is wonderful. The folk of Tynemouth are always there when needed , even in such difficult times as these are for everyone.

Julia, Anthea and Kathryn write: Thank you so much to everyone from Holy Saviours and the wider family of Tynemouth for all their caring messages, lovely flowers and their prayers for Mum. We knew she had many friends in our community but we were so amazed and proud of her when we read all of the cards and letters.

It goes without saying that as a family we will miss her very much but it is wonderful to know so many people have so many memories of her and our Dad. We hope to have a Thanksgiving service when allowed and the family would love for you all to join us.

With love, Julia, Anthea & Kathryn (known as the Smith sisters and Dorothy's daughters)

A Journey [part ii]

Editor's note: *We follow up Malcolm Railton's account of his journey towards ordination, printed last month, with some extracts from the sermon preached at his Ordination by the Area Dean for Norham and Vicar of St Mary's, Holy Island. My thanks are due to Revd Canon Dr Sarah Hills for sending me her manuscript and generously giving me permission to extract from it for the Parish News.*

"So, Ben and Malcolm, you've got here! You will have been preparing for this day for a long time. From the first stirrings of your calling, through the whole process of discernment, the Bishop's Advisory Panel, ordination training, ordination as deacon, first year of curacy...not to mention all the other changes that you have had to negotiate over the last few years. On your ordination retreat last week we thought together about priests as reconciled reconcilers, and what that might mean for you. So we talked about your calling to priesthood and reconciliation. About who you are called to be and what you are called to...as priests. About the changes which are necessary in the journey towards being reconciled reconcilers. About what you will need as a priest. About the importance of taking time to pray, to rest, and to have fun. GK Chesterton wrote - 'Angels can fly because they take themselves lightly'.

None of us know how your ministry as a priest will be exactly. But we do know that serving as a priest is about change. And that reconciliation is about change. If we want to reconcile we can't stay the same, nor can those around us...those who are friends and those who are enemies. As priests, we need to be able to help, to enable people to realise that living in Christ means that change is necessary and to embrace it. And we have all experienced - some would say - unprecedented magnitudes of change over the last months in these covid times. William Temple,

Archbishop of Canterbury during World War Two said, 'Change is never without inconvenience, even when for the better.'

How then, do we, do you, as priests help others experience change that can lead them to healing, to restoration, to freedom, and therefore to reconciliation? What is that journey like? Loving our friends, those who are like us, those we are comfortable with, is usually, relatively easy. But living with, relating to those who are different from us, those we may not like, those we feel uncomfortable with, how do we do that? How do we journey with those with whom we fundamentally disagree? We are in a time of political, national and international uncertainty, even crisis: and what I am interested in is the effect of the growing divisions, animosities, "us or them" language and behaviours that we are seeing in our political and communal lives together. How can you, called to priesthood, 'speak the truth in love', as Paul exhorts us? the truth that is often not easy to speak or to hear, but the truth that builds love, that builds justice, that builds peace, that builds hope. There is a poem by the Northern Irish poet, Seamus Heaney, a part of which I want to share with you.... It's called *Doubletake*:

*Human beings suffer.
They torture one another.
They get hurt and get hard.
No poem or play or song
can fully right a wrong
Inflicted and endured.*

*History says, Don't hope
On this side of the grave
But then, once in a lifetime
The longed for tidal wave
Of justice can rise up
And hope and history rhyme.*

'Justice can rise up and hope and history rhyme': the reality of the history of the 20th and now the 21st century does not seem at first sight to be hopeful. Conflicts abound, covid is here, and new political eras here in Europe, and in America, the middle east and the global south are being levied.

Seamus Heaney acknowledges the pain of our world, and as priests, we need to help people to lament. The point of lamenting though is not to stay in the place of woundedness: it is to acknowledge it, rail against it, and even against the God who has let it happen. In lamenting, we move towards justice. We move towards healing. We move towards better understanding of ourselves and the other.

So: can hope and history rhyme? Is this indeed your calling as reconciled reconcilers, as priests in the world we live in today? I wonder whether now is the Kairos moment, the time for that great tidal wave of justice to rise up. I have great hope in you, and all our new priests. Maybe Kairos also means looking with fresh eyes. Can you help us as the church, as communities, to decide whether hope and history can rhyme? Do we stick with the world's answers, or do we believe that the God who is always with us, who makes his covenant with us, who calls us to be reconcilers, who gives us grace, changes everything? As we know, this is not an easy calling. It involves lament, justice, truth as well as love, grace and hope. It involves speaking the truth in love. Or, put another way, speaking truth to power.

This calling must be at the heart of our relationships. This calling is something we may hear differently. *Whom shall I send, says the Lord? And who will go for us? Here am I, send me!* How I hear this calling is not necessarily how you hear it. That is not the point. The point is, do we hear this calling, this invitation? Well, you have heard this calling. And you have answered: *here I am, send me*. And then - and here's the rub - how do you, do we, respond as priests, as reconciled reconcilers? And as our listening, our hearing, our understanding of this invitation from God will not be exactly the same, nor will our response be. Can we as the Church of God provide a different response to the current worldview of the binary treatment of difference?

But you may be pleased to know that you don't have to solve all this at once, or even today. And crucially, you don't have to solve this by yourself. Paul tells us that we are together the Body of Christ, and are given the gifts we need to build up the body in love. And that is where your families and friends, colleagues and parishioners, the body of Christ, the whole people of God, come in - because these new priests will need your help, especially when some of their priestly ministry will be pretty taxing.

During the retreat, I gave Ben and Malcolm a list of things they should be and do as priests. As well as not upsetting the Bishop, Archdeacon, Director of Initial Ministerial Education, Churchwardens or their training incumbent too much, and staying awake at meetings, preaching without notes while doing a pirouette in the pulpit, they will need to be able to colour in God and explain miracles...which, as they now know, is a bit like teaching a millipede to sing, only harder.

You have heard God's call. You have responded. As a reconciled reconciler, as a priest, you will have the great privilege of ministering the sacraments. I pray that as you journey with those around you through God's history and His hope, you will feel and experience your priestly ministry as a beautiful and holy freedom - in the service of the one who has indeed called you by your name. Amen."

BIBLICAL WORDS [VII]: How can these things be?

Clive Harper writes: These words were spoken by Nicodemus to Jesus (see John, Chapter 3). At that time Nicodemus was a member of the ruling Council of the Jews and would have been a highly intelligent man. Yet, faced with the evidence of his own eyes, the signs he had witnessed, the teaching he had heard, he was out of his depth. He had seen Jesus heal people with a word; transform them with a touch; confound political opponents with His wisdom.

So, one night (for it would not have been politic for him to be seen talking with Jesus), he came to Jesus to have a conversation; how very sensible. And as they talk, we note how graciously Jesus receives people who come to Him with honest enquiries. As He says at another time, *if anyone comes to me I will in no wise turn them away*. Jesus tells Nicodemus, as He tells us, *if you want to see the Kingdom of God you must be born again, born from above!* These were matters beyond his human understanding. So, Nicodemus asks: *How can these things be?*

And Jesus responds to Nicodemus: *if you do not believe me when I tell you about earthly things how will you believe if I speak of Heavenly things?* Jesus was operating in the realm of Earth; but there was another sphere, another realm of which Nicodemus knew nothing, and which Jesus comes to make known.

Christmas is coming and we are awaiting the birth of a baby; not just any baby, but the Son of God; in the Manger will be laid the person of the Godhead; and we are asked to accept that God Himself has visited His people in the form of the Christ Child. Jesus, the Saviour, comes from the womb of a human mother but He is very much 'a man from outside'; born free of the taint of sin; born of the Spirit of God. He comes to save us, to heal us, to redeem us. He is different, different from any other human being ever born. And therefore, He is able to save us to the uttermost, and He grows up to call us to be born again, born of the Spirit of God.

And that is nub of the Christian message to this day, all over the world; wherever people hear the message and respond they join with Nicodemus in the worldwide body of disciples who seek to spread the truth of the Gospel in all its fullness and in all its simplicity: Jesus saves!

RABBI JONATHAN SACKS [1948 - 2020]

John Pearce writes: In a year replete with low moments, the death in November of Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks was particularly sad for Jew, Gentile, believer and sceptic alike. It meant that we have lost a voice in the public square which will be very difficult to replace. Rabbi Sacks was a man of powerful intellect with the rare knack of being able to wear his great learning lightly, who was thus

able to articulate complex ideas with sometimes eye-watering simplicity and directness. As a religious commentator he was driven by two convictions; one, that religious belief had a vital contribution to make to the way we live now; and two, that a pathway to God could be found in the practice of many different religions [which latter view caused him to be accused of heresy by some of his fellow Orthodox Rabbis]. He was, in fact, that rare phenomenon, a profoundly intellectual religious leader who was also up to his neck in contemporary life [he was also an Arsenal supporter, but then someone has to be]. And of all the contributors to the *Thought for the Day* slot in Radio Four's *Today* programme, Jonathan Sacks was one of very few who commanded the attention and respect of that tough-minded and cynical atheist, the journalist John Humphrys. The extract below is from Rabbi Sacks's *Thought for the Day* for November 10th, 2017. My personal literary and political hero is George Orwell, and Rabbi Sacks's words here show why that is, and why his message is so important for the times we live in.

"Coming in to Broadcasting House this morning I saw for the first time the statue, unveiled this week, of George Orwell, with its inscription on the wall behind, "If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear." How badly we need that truth today.

I've been deeply troubled by what seems to me to be the assault on free speech taking place in British universities in the name of "safe space," "trigger warnings," and "micro-aggressions," meaning any remark that someone might find offensive even if no offence is meant. So far has this gone that a month ago, students at an Oxford College banned the presence of a representative of the Christian Union on the grounds that some might find their presence alienating and offensive. Luckily the protest that followed led to the ban being swiftly overturned. But still ...

I'm sure this entire movement has been undertaken for the highest of motives, to protect the feelings of the vulnerable, which I applaud, but you don't achieve that by silencing dissenting views. A safe space is the exact opposite: a place where you give a respectful hearing to views opposed to your own, knowing that your views too will be listened to respectfully. That's academic freedom and it's essential to a free society.

And it's what I learned at university. My doctoral supervisor, the late Sir Bernard Williams, was an atheist. I was a passionate religious believer. But he always listened respectfully to my views, which gave me the confidence to face those who disagree with everything I stand for. That's safety in an unsafe world.

And it's at the very heart of my faith, because Judaism is a tradition all of whose canonical texts are anthologies of arguments. In the Bible, Abraham, Moses, Jeremiah and Job argue with God. The rabbinic literature is an almost endless

series of Rabbi X says this and Rabbi Y says that, and when one rabbi had the chance of asking God who was right, God replied, they're both right. "How can they both be right?" asked the rabbi, to which God's apocryphal reply was: "You're also right." The rabbis called this, "argument for the sake of heaven." Why does it matter? Because truth emerges from disagreement and debate. Because tolerance means making space for difference. Because justice involves audi alteram partem, listening to the other side. And because, in Orwell's words, liberty means "the right to tell people what they do not want to hear."

Rabbi Sacks was not perfect, nor did he profess to be. But his disavowal of holiness had no self-regard in it, as such disavowals sometimes can [never ask me who I have in mind]. At the same time, his refusal to attend the funeral of the Reform Rabbi and Auschwitz survivor Rabbi Hugo Gryn was seen as an act that lacked charity – a mis-step for which he later expressed regret, although his description in a letter to an Orthodox colleague of Reform Jewry as a "movement destructive of faith" raised questions as to how sincere that regret may have been. His personal respect for Hugo Gryn led him later to attend a memorial meeting for him – an act for which he was promptly censured by some of his ultra-Orthodox colleagues. But what is interesting [and wholly characteristic of the man] was Sacks's response to this dispute, which led many Jews from both Orthodox and Reform congregations to ask whether he was in fact a Chief Rabbi of all British Jewry. A lesser man would have ducked the question, or soldiered on in the hope that it would go away. Jonathan Sacks instead thought, prayed and thought again; and eventually wrote this in an article published not long before his retirement.

"You try and make things better in the future. As a result of the turbulence at that time, I was forced to think this whole issue through and I came up with these two principles; on all matters that affect us as Jews regardless of our religious differences we must work together regardless of our religious differences, and on all things that touch our religious differences we can agree to differ, but with respect. As a result of those principles, relations between Reform and Orthodox have got much better and are a model for the rest of the Jewish world. Progressive rabbis sit with me on the top table of the Council of Christians and Jews, we stand together for Israel. All of this flowed from those two principles. Until then there had been a view never to do anything with the non-Orthodox movements but once you thought it through you saw that there were all sorts of opportunities".

These are the words of a man unafraid to change his mind, but also unafraid to tell both Reform and Orthodox Jews what many of them did not wish to hear – that the setting of an example to unbelievers of division, difference and enmity amongst believers simply will not work, either morally or practically. They are also the words of a man for whom a belief in God was central to his life in a way to

which many people can only aspire. This is so because his faith embodied both heart and mind, emotional commitment and intellect.

One of his great talents was to clothe complex ideas in simple words, or to pose enormous questions in a few sentences. Consider these words which make clear why Rabbi Sacks saw religious faith as an absolute necessity to emotional survival in a complex and troubled world:

I believe faith is part of what makes us human. It is a basic attitude of trust that always goes beyond the available evidence, but without which we would do nothing great. Without faith in one another we could not risk the vulnerability of love. Without faith in the future we would not choose to have a child. Without faith in the intelligibility of the universe we would not do science. Without faith in our fellow citizens we would not have a free society.

For myself, the value of Sacks's ministry was the small epigram below, which embedded itself in my mind the first time I read it. Like any honest believer, I own to being assailed by doubts which from time to time threaten to overwhelm me. And when that happens, these words never fail to help me find solid ground in the troubled sea of my faith and find a way forward again. Let these words of his stand as a fitting end to this little tribute to a very big man: *Religion survives because it answers three questions which every reflective person must ask: Who am I? Why am I here? How, then, should I live?*

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, old friend whom I never knew, *shalom Aleichem*.

And finally, something for all the family - selections from a Christmas Quiz posted each year by a online correspondent of the Editor's. Answers in January.

Round One: supply the punchlines to these Christmas Cracker riddles.

1. Why does Santa choose to live at the North Pole?
2. What will you get from eating Christmas decorations?
3. What did the salt say to the pepper?
4. On which side do turkeys have the most feathers?
5. Why is it getting harder to buy Advent calendars?
6. What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck?
7. How did Darth Vader know what Luke was getting for Christmas?
8. Why was the snowman sorting through the carrots?
9. What did Adam say the day before Christmas?
10. Where do snowmen dance?

Round Two: Christmas and Boxing Day Trivia

1. Which company first used Santa Claus in its advertising in 1931?
2. Which Christmas song became the first broadcast from Space in 1965?
3. In which Christmas movie does Donald Trump make an appearance?
4. In the movie *Elf* what is the first rule of the 'Code of Elves'?
5. What did my true love give to me on the 9th day of Christmas?
6. Which Christian saint is celebrated on 26th December?
7. Which American President died on Boxing Day 2006?
8. If Boxing Day falls on a Sunday which day is used as a Bank holiday?
9. In which country is Boxing Day known as 'The day of goodwill'?
10. Beatles songs '*I wanna hold your hand*' and '*I saw her standing there*' were released in the United States on Boxing Day in which year?

Round Three: In which year did these things happen on Christmas Day?

1. William of Normandy was crowned King of England
2. George Washington crossed the Delaware River
3. Charlemagne was crowned Holy Roman Emperor.
4. Christopher Columbus' ship Santa Maria sank.
5. Apollo 8 astronauts read Genesis Chapter 1 in orbit round the moon.
6. Humphrey Bogart was born.
7. The film of *To Kill a Mockingbird* was released.
8. Paul McCartney and Jane Asher get engaged
9. King George V's chair collapsed during his Christmas dinner speech.
10. Mikhail Gorbachev stepped down as President of the USSR.

Choose from A: 1776 B: 1932 C: 1899 D: 1962 E: 1968
 F: 1967 G: 1492 H: 1066 I: 1991 J: 800

All you need to do to give God a laugh these days is to make a plan; however that may be, below are the provisional dates for the January *Parish News*.

ALL COPY TO THE EDITOR BY 1900 THURSDAY DECEMBER 31st

Copy please to me by post, email or the News Mailbox in the Parish Centre

Completed artwork to go to YPD Creative overnight on Sunday January 3rd

Printed copies to be collected from the printers on Wednesday, January 6th

THE PARISH NEWS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN CHURCH ON

SUNDAY JANUARY 10th

The co-operative

funeralcare

Our caring staff are here to listen and advise you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- Full range of monumental masonry

Forest Hall Station Road
0191 259 9964

North Shields Billy Mill Avenue
0191 258 0025

Whitley Bay Algernon Place
0191 252 5151

Wallsend 105-109 High Street West
0191 262 5100

www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE



Info.@rjohnsonfunerals.co.uk

0191-2574627

Anderson & Garland

'Local Sale.....



London Prices'

Our Specialist knew that this Imperial Chinese Water Pot was special, we sold it for a record £270,000, after worldwide interest

If you are thinking of selling any Fine Art or Antiques contact the professionals to see what we can do for you.

You might get a pleasant surprise too!

'For expertise on your doorstep

choose Anderson & Garland.

Anderson House, Crispin Court

Newbiggin Lane, Westerhope

Newcastle upon Tyne NE5 1BF

R. JOHNSON
FUNERAL DIRECTOR
[formerly of Cleveland Road]
PRIVATE CHAPELS OF REST
24hr SERVICE
64 HOWARD STREET,
NORTH SHIELDS
SIMPLE CREMATIONS
FROM £2768.50

Tel - 0191 4303000

Email - info@andersonandgarland.com

Stagg & Son - General Builders North Shields

Over 35 years experience in the
building trade

HOME SERVICES NE LTD

High Quality Domestic and
Home Support Service.

Janet Lee,

Managing Director

Gillian Gracen,

Office Manager

0191 296 8638

07890690202

[Home ServicesNELTD.com](http://HomeServicesNELTD.com)

E TURNBULL & SON LTD

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

EST 1832

Independent Family Funeral Directors
Serving the community for over 200
years

- Reliable Service
- Quality Assured
- Free Estimates



A huge range of services at
competitive prices. These include
brickwork, fencing, decking, garden
walls, flooring, paving, lock fitting,
plastering, kitchen fitting, pointing,
drainage and hanging doors.

Tel 0800 644 2012 or 077944 02367

or via email:

staggandson@yahoo.com

R. J. RYLAND **FUNERAL SERVICES**

1 Farringdon Road, Cullercoats

Tel: 252 6500 or 257 0222

**Serving North Tyneside
and Newcastle Area**

- † *Personal 24-hour Service*
- † *Private Rest Facilities*
- † *Pre-arrangement Plans for
Peace of Mind*

R.J. Ryland
MBIE, DIP.FD, MBIFD

*Caring for your loved
ones with dignity and
understanding*

www.rylandfuneral.co.uk



**WANT TO FEEL GOOD ?
WE MAKE YOU FEEL GREAT !**
Book your Appointment Today

swissphysio 


Tynemouth Metro Station, NE30 4RE

Tel **0191 296 0567**

info@Swissphysio.co.uk www.swissphysio.co.uk

A complete Funeral Service
Offering Personal and
Professional Guidance throughout

**PRIVATE CHAPELS OF REST,
PRE PAID FUNERAL PLANS
24 HOUR SERVICE**

**LUXURY LIMOUSINES
SIMPLE FUNERAL SERVICE AND
CREMATION FROM £2960.50**

North Shields: Albion Road

0191 2571201

www.eturnbull.co.uk

e-mail: -info@eturnbull.co.uk

**Reliable & honest
References available**

Tel' Paul Preston on 2570574

Or 077482 35 867

NORTHEAST BOILER CARE

Gas safety, servicing and installation specialist!

Services we offer:

- Boiler Service/Installation/Repair
- Warm Air Service/Installation/Repair
- Gas Fire Service/Installation/Repair
- Cooker Service/ Installation
- Landlord CP12 Certificates
- Power Flushing

HOME MAINTENANCE

Electrician

General Plumbing

Garden Work

Flat-pack furniture

Fencing

Painting

Located 1.4 miles away
**ANYTHING YOU NEED
NO JOB TOO SMALL**

WWW.GRANDHOTELTYNEMOUTH.CO.UK

JONATHAN BENNETT - Gas Engineer

JNB@GRANDHOTELTYNEMOUTH.CO.UK

*Our local landmark to paint, hang or rent your church wedding. Once you've seen what
we offer, you'll want to spend your special day anywhere else...*

Email: neboilercare@btinternet.com

Website: www.neboilercare.co.uk



As this edition of the Parish News goes to the press, [November 30th] we plan to resume the celebration of Holy Communion in its amended format from Sunday, December 6th. Please keep an eye on the church website, the emails from Steve Dixon, and news in local media. The 1000 service will be repeated at 1130 if necessary, so that we can manage our numbers in view of the need to maintain social distancing for the time being. Attendance will be "first come, first served", so if you cannot be admitted at 1000, you will be admitted at 1130. Each service will last 40 minutes, with the interval between them being given over to cleaning the church in time for the second service. Parishioners who do not feel ready to join a large gathering for the moment will be able to join in the YouTube transmission on the church website at www.holysaviours.org.uk. It is currently intended that these transmissions will continue indefinitely.

Vicar Revd. Steve Dixon
Email vicar@holysaviours.org.uk
Telephone 07729 393 580
 0191 697 4562

Curate Revd. Malcolm Railton
Email curate@holysaviours.org.uk
Telephone 0191 262 3028

Parish Administrator Stuart Crozier
Church Office Tel. 0191 257 6250
Email office@holysaviours.org.uk
Church website: www.holysaviours.org.uk

Churchwardens:

Janice Torpy
 Tel: 07920 049 341

David Bilton,
 19 Ashleigh Grove
 Tel. 2580270

PCC Vice Chairman:
 Chris Benneworth

PCC Treasurer:
 Karen Bilton, 19 Ashleigh Grove
 Tel. 2580270

Church Flowers:
 Sheila Park, 15 Ashleigh Grove,
 Tel. 257 5481
 Barbara Walker, 2 Monkstone Crescent,
 Tel. 257 4159

ACTIVITIES

Mothers' Union

1st Monday 2.00pm Parish Centre
 3rd Thursday 2.00pm Parish Centre
 Cathy Duff Tel 0191 257 4811

W3 – Women's Group

1st Wednesday 7.30pm Parish Centre
 Debbie Baird Tel. 296 1663

Rainbows

Lucy Skillen Tel. 07891101262

Brownies

Pat Corbett Tel. 0191 2800510

Guides

Grace Paul Tel. 07803371929

Rangers

Grace Paul Tel. 07803 371929

Beavers

Gillian Smith Tel. 296 1426
tynemouthbeavers@gmail.com

Cub Scouts

Fiona Lydall Tel 257 3047

Scouts

David Littlefield Tel. 257 8740

Explorer Scouts

Lucy Mace Tel. 258 5948

Group Scout Leader

Michael Dyer Tel. 2596236

Asst. Group Leader

David Littlefield Tel. 257 8740

Scout Hut bookings:

Helen Preston Tel: 257 0574

Tynemouth Village Day Centre – Parish Hall

Tel. 259 5569

Mother & Toddler Group – Parish Hall

Friday 9.30am

ARTICLES FOR THE PARISH NEWS

These should be submitted to the editor, **John Pearce**, at JCPrintmail@gmx.co.uk - the deadline will be published each month. Post written contributions in the Parish News Mailbox outside the Parish Office or to 9 Selwyn Avenue, Monkseaton, NE25 9DH.

All queries to

0191 291 2742 or 07903 227 192.