

PARISH NEWS



SEPTEMBER 2021

Price £1.50



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CHURCH OF THE HOLY SAVIOUR, TYNEMOUTH

www.holysaviours.org.uk

Worship at Holy Saviours: September 2021

[correct at the time of going to press – Tuesday, August 31st, 2021]

The relaxation of Covid 19 rules in late July has allowed us to return to a measure of normality in church. For now, our worship patterns have changed as follows:

Worship: A single Sunday celebration of **Parish Communion** now takes place at 1000. We are no longer required to observe social distancing in church, so there is room for everyone at this service. For now there will be no 0800 Eucharist, but should there be demand for it, this may be reinstated later. Parish Communion will continue to be live-streamed on YouTube and our website. There is also a said **Book of Common Prayer Eucharist** each Wednesday morning at 1000. **Evening Prayer** is also at offered at 1800 each Sunday in church.

Face-masks and hand-sanitising: neither of these customs are now required, but worshippers may wear masks and use hand-sanitizer should they wish. Mask-wearing at Evening Prayer is optional, as the small attendance makes it easy to observe social distancing; hand-sanitising is still available to those who wish it.

Singing: For the moment we are singing two hymns at morning services, and the wearing of masks is encouraged while we are singing. Anyone preferring not to sing is invited to sit near the back of church.

Communion: although the use of a common cup is now permitted for communion under both kinds, we are taking a more cautious approach. Communicants will be given a wafer intincted by the celebrant from a chalice held by a server. Stewarding of communicants continues, as will our receiving communion standing up. Kneeling for communion and using the chalice may resume soon. As with many other aspects of our church life, we need to feel our way forward bearing in mind always the emotional comfort and physical protection of our worshippers.

Other features of our worship – altar servers, crucifers, Gospel and Offertory processions – will be re-introduced as time goes on, rotas are produced, and those involved helped to refresh their memories as to how to perform their duties. For the moment, retiring collections will continue rather than passing the plate, and we are also looking into the best solution for contactless payments in church.

Dioceses and arch-dioceses continue to recommend our best practice, but we all need to remember that responsibility for managing the later stages of the pandemic has now been placed entirely on individual parish priests by the senior officials of the church. It is our Christian duty [as well as common sense] for us to do our utmost to make sure that Revd. Steve is supported in this intricate and difficult duty. Since March 2020 he, Joan and Malcolm have bravely shouldered an enormous workload, and served us nobly and without stint during these atrociously difficult times: our task now is to return this support to them all.



THE VICAR WRITES.....

The last few weeks have provided a strange mixture of emotional response, when I have attended several events which would not have been possible during the past eighteen months. It was a very peculiar feeling indeed to be in a thronged Parish Hall, with everyone enjoying afternoon tea accompanied by the hum of chatter and laughter while a choir sang. It was wonderful to be reminded of a time – which seemed so distant – when such gatherings were possible and everyday. Simultaneously, it was anxiety-inducing to be

in such a large gathering again. Thus, I can certainly appreciate why so many people are still reluctant to return to Sunday morning worship, although I hope many of you will soon feel able to join us once more – you are very much missed.

Each Saturday morning since the beginning of July, a small group of us has gathered for half an hour at 9:30 to pray and listen in church. The intention is to seek God's guidance as we gradually move out of lockdown and recognise that things cannot be quite the same as they were before. I am very conscious that there are many in our Tynemouth community who find church either irrelevant or inconvenient in terms of lifestyle. We need to find ways to connect with people at the same time as recognising that God goes ahead of us in mission and is already at work in people's lives.

One of the exercises we considered in our *Leading Your Church into Growth* programme helped us to assess our 'presence' in the Parish. By this we meant the number of people who have regular contact with church members. We thought of all who attend groups in the Parish Hall and Centre, the uniformed organisations, Kings Priory School, etc. We were surprised that the estimate was somewhat in excess of the total population of the Parish! So we are good at being there. However, this does not necessarily translate to meaningful engagement with people. Mission happens in relationships and as a consequence of them; and the deeper the relationship, the more meaningful the mission.

This brings me back to the Parish Hall. Last month we had a consultation about the future redevelopment of the Hall. Like our church, the Parish Hall is a wonderful asset which we hold in trust for the benefit of the whole community. It is in need of repair and refreshing and I see this as an opportunity to make the Hall a flexible space where we can accommodate more groups simultaneously. If you would like to see the current outline plans, please see the ['News and Events'](#) tab on the church website. These proposed plans would provide us with many more

possibilities for interacting with the wider community and building meaningful relationships with others. This refurbishment will take considerable effort in fundraising and organising, but I feel will put us in a much better place to move forward in mission, using the Hall as a blessing to many. If you have any questions or suggestions about the proposed plans, please do contact me.

Praise God that we are now able to meet with people more freely, and let us pray for God's guidance and courage that these interactions might be filled with God's love and draw people closer to him.

Steve

Praying and Listening for Mission Prayer Meeting
9:30 - 10:00 every Saturday:
THIS MONTH: SEPTEMBER 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th



Picture credit: unsplash.com

If you would like to contribute to this prayer group but cannot attend on Saturdays, why not set aside the time at home? either on Saturdays or another regular time during your week?

EDITORIAL

John Pearce writes: Had I the power to enforce one reform on our political process, I would require all Parliamentary votes in both Houses to be carried out by secret ballot, with the act of voting itself being both electronic and completely private. This reform would abolish the power of the Party Whips, a power used perniciously as often as not. Currently, Members of Parliament vote by walking into one of two Division Lobbies – *Aye* or *No* in the Commons, *Content* or *Not Content* in the Lords – where their names are recorded by clerks. Back-bench MPs voting against their Party's line will find that the Whips make their displeasure at this unmistakeably clear in various ways, ranging from a discreet private word, *via* rebukes [sometimes not far short of personal threat], to expulsion from both the Parliamentary and national Parties. This last sanction amounts to a sacking – adrift from parliamentary and constituency support, only exceptionally gifted [or dangerously populist] politicians can find the resources to stand as Independents. For all practical purposes, therefore, an MP's conscience is a redundant organ – those unsure of the right course of action will be told what it is by their Chief Whip. Thus W. S. Gilbert had it in *Iolanthe*: "*When, in the House MPs divide,/if they've a brain and cerebellum too,/They'll have to leave that brain outside/and vote just as their leaders tell 'em to.*" Whips' instructions come in three varieties according to how many times a Whip notice is underlined. A three-line Whip is the strictest possible instruction both to attend and vote in the designated lobby. Ignoring it is a serious political crime. Three-line Whips amount, in plain words, to institutionalised bullying; and bullying only possible because of the public, name-naming Division Lobby system; which is why we need a secret ballot for MPs.

A three-line whip is most often used when a government with a small majority is facing a vote of confidence, or when it needs to ensure the passage of the Second Reading of a major bill. It is also used on less savoury occasions, such as when a Prime Minister needs to bully into acquiescence a group of MPs who intend to vote against a piece of legislation with which they disagree on conscientious grounds. Such an occasion arose recently when Boris Johnson's Chief Whip, Mark Spencer, issued a three-line whip to ensure the passage of a Bill which, for the foreseeable future has, disgracefully, reduced Britain's commitment to foreign aid.

For the past fifty years, Conservative and Labour governments have set aside 0.7% [a figure recommended by the United Nations] of our Gross National Income for foreign aid. Teresa May's 2015 Conservative government enshrined this commitment into law, and Boris Johnson's 2019 manifesto promised to maintain it. Despite this, on July 10th 2021, by a majority of 333 – 298 obtained by using a Conservative Party Three-line whip, our foreign aid commitment was cut from

0.7% to 0.5% of Gross National Income. There are 363 Tory MPs, and the opposition parties combine to hold 272 seats, so these figures imply a major defiance of the Whip, forty Tories either voted in the No lobby or abstained.

One notable rebel was Teresa May, Mr Johnson's predecessor. In a pointed reference to media myth-making by mischievous journalists [Mr Johnson in the past notably among them], she said *"This isn't about palaces for dictators and vanity projects. It's about what cuts to funding mean: that fewer girls will be educated, more girls and boys will become slaves, more children will go hungry and more of the poorest people in the world will die."* Andrew Mitchell, another rebel [ironically once himself Mr Johnson's Chief Whip] referenced the betrayal of the Conservative Party's 2019 General Election pledge to keep the 0.7% allocation when he told BBC Radio that *"We said that whatever the crisis we wouldn't balance the books on the backs of the poorest people in the world."*

The reality of balancing the books on the backs of the poorest people in the world becomes apparent when you look a little more closely at the arithmetic involved. In 2019, 0.7% of our Gross National Income was £14.5 billion a year. As there are 37 million tax-paying citizens in the UK, each of them therefore contributed to the foreign aid budget £392.00 per year: £33.00 per month: £8.25 per week: £1.17 per day. It is worth noting that, in order to pay £392.00 in income tax at the standard rate, a taxpayer would need to be earning, at the very least, £14,500 per year; and it stands to reason that, by the law of averages, half of us must do a great deal better than that. And surely even the most financially strapped would not grudge giving the price of three cups of Starbucks' coffee to foreign aid each week?

On July 10th 2021, Boris Johnson's government cut our foreign aid budget from 0.7% of GNI to 0.5%, and also broke a manifesto pledge. British taxpayers will, from July 2021, contribute only £280.00 per year: £23.50 per month: £5.90 per week: £0.84 per day. Mr Johnson will benefit by this broken promise, as do we all, by £0.33 a day. Should he save all of it, it will still take him seven years to buy another roll of the gold wallpaper hung in his Downing Street flat [a snip at £840].

That may seem an unfair thing to say, but if it is I make no apology for it. Britain's Gross National Income is £29,893.94 per person per year. In Niger, the world's poorest country, it is £655.38 [or about seven yards of Mr Johnson's wallpaper] per year. World poverty stems from complex causes requiring complex solutions. But when rich countries turn their backs on poor ones, the result is cruel, fiercely simple and wrong: people die who could, and should, have lived. Our government has passed a measure which is, in effect, a lethal betrayal of Christian charity. As Heinrich Heine said [more or less], *"God will forgive them; it's His job."* Others – myself among them – might well find such forgiveness well beyond them.

Notes and News

A DATE FOR THE DIARY: NOVEMBER 21st, 2021

Bishop Christine writes: Dear brothers and sisters, many of you will know that I reached my 70th birthday at the end of August, and will not be surprised to hear that my time as your Bishop is drawing to a close. Her Majesty the Queen has graciously accepted my resignation, and with the Archbishop of York's permission I will be stepping down as Bishop of Newcastle on 30th November, 2021.

When I came to our Diocese as Bishop we all knew that it would be for a limited time, and that time has passed all too quickly. I am profoundly grateful for the six years I have served this Diocese; the depth of welcome and relationships in this region has been inspirational and encouraging. We have all been called to minister together, lay and ordained, at a time of extraordinary challenge, and I am very proud of the way in which our clergy and laity have responded to this. I give thanks for all of you; it has been a privilege to be your Bishop.

I wish to invite all of you to join me with me at the Cathedral on the Feast of Christ the King, 21st November, at 4pm, to give thanks for our journey together in God's love for our churches and the communities they serve. It is not possible to know at this stage how any Coronavirus restrictions might limit numbers, so detailed arrangements will be made nearer to the day which will include livestreaming information, but please do save the date.



Picture credit: newcastle.anglican.org

Bishop Mark will lead the Diocese during the vacancy, and he will be very ably supported by the Dean, Diocesan Secretary, and Archdeacons, together with the rest of the Bishop's Staff team, and the excellent teams at Church House and Bishop's House. Please pray for them as they continue to work alongside all of you in God's service for the communities in which we live and minister, as I will be praying for the Diocese as you continue with the next steps of *growing church bringing hope* under Bishop Mark's leadership, and as the process begins to appoint the next Bishop of Newcastle.

Roger and I have been incredibly blessed by the generosity and support that has been shown to both of us in our time in Newcastle Diocese. Its people, history, and landscape have an enduring place in our hearts, and we will always treasure the years we have spent here. *Grace and peace, +Christine*

FREDRIK ALEXANDER BILTON



The Editor writes: Our love and many congratulations go to Jenny and Hayley Bilton on the birth of their son, Fredrik Alexander, on July 9th. I am reliably informed that he is the most beautiful grandchild ever, apart from David and Karen's other grandchildren, Freddie's new cousins, Lucy and Charlotte. Our congratulations and love go also to his Yorkshire grandparents, Niall and Val, and his uncles and aunts, Rob, Erin, Simon and Hester. On the photographs of Freddie that Hayley and Jenny sent me I noted a distinct look of his Grandpa David, although this is mostly down to their hair-styles. We wish much happiness and many blessings for the newest Bilton family.

THE MOTHERS UNION



Cathy Duff writes: We feel that the time is right to restart our meetings. We will begin with arranging a single monthly meeting until Christmas 2021. We will meet at 2.00 pm on the first Monday in the Parish Centre. Meetings during the remainder of Trinity and Advent will be held on 6th September, 4th October, 1st November and 6th December. The September meeting will be a general catch-up – after eighteen months there is probably a great deal to talk about. Please bring a poem, a prayer or a magazine article that particularly interests you to facilitate discussion. Refreshments will be

available and everyone is welcome. Members should feel free, as for church worship, to decide for themselves about sanitising, mask-wearing and distancing.

Editor's Note: *I suspect that I am not alone in feeling that Cathy's announcement represents a moment of sea-change in our progress through what we must pray are the latter stages of the pandemic. Since March 2020 it has often felt as though the world has come loose from its pivot, and that we can never again take anything for granted. So I received the news that the Mothers Union is resuming a version of their normal service with profound relief and a sense that perhaps we are beginning to regain our balance. The Mothers Union is the engine-room of the Church of England, and the news that it is re-opening must mean, please God, that things are really on the mend. I often think that the late Margaret Thatcher must have had the Mothers Union in mind when she said "if you want something said, ask a man; if you want something done, ask a woman".*

THE PARISH NEWS – PRICE INCREASE

The cover price of the *Parish News* has now been increased to £1.50 for those who buy it in church. Current subscribers who wish to renew their subscriptions in April 2022 will be charged a yearly rate of £15. The additional income generated by this increase will be used to print illustrations and photographs in the *News* in colour rather than in gray-scale. I hope this change will encourage people to send photographs in with their articles knowing that they will be properly reproduced. A reminder of the price increase is printed on the cover, and readers should note that the first *Parish News* at the new price is a hefty thirty-two page edition, the first since April 2019, which I hope readers will feel is good value for money.

CHURCH FLOWERS

Janice Torpy writes: Due to the lifting of lockdown restrictions the Flower Arrangers would like to let people know the Church Flower List is now re-opened. Therefore, anyone who wishes to make a donation in remembrance of a loved one, be it a birthday or anniversary, and have flowers placed in church, should add their name to the Flower List situated on the church porch notice board. Alternatively you can contact me by phone or email – Janice Torpy at 0191 296 2462 or janicetorpy@gmail.com – or catch me after Sunday Parish Eucharist.

MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Chris Benneworth writes: As we get back to something resembling normality, the social sub-committee has made plans for a number of events for the church and the wider community, including:

- **Jigsaw Competition: Friday, October 8th at 1830 in the Parish Hall** – entrance fee £10.00 per team. Each team may have a maximum of three members – contact Carol Davidson via the Church Office
- **Autumn Fair: Saturday 20th November at 1000 in the Parish Hall** – if you would like to run a stall, please contact Steve Dixon as soon as possible
- **Christmas Tree Festival – Tuesday 14th to Thursday 16th December;** culminating in *A Puddingful of Sixpences* - Christmas stories and songs at 1930 on Thursday 16th, in church, with seasonal refreshments
- **Sunday 19th December at 6.00 pm – Festival of Lessons and Carols**
- **Forthcoming: *Dust on the Needle II*** – January 22nd, 2022 at 1930 in the Parish Hall – [dancing round handbags optional]

DOUGLAS IRVING BRENNAN, 1931 – 2021

David Littlefield writes: We were all greatly saddened to learn of Doug's sudden death in June. He had not been feeling too well as the summer progressed but his dying, nevertheless, came as a shock. Doug was a regular member of our congregation and life at Holy Saviours was hugely important to him.

His family originated in the village of Buckie on Scotland's east coast but after the war he and his parents made their home in Queensway, Tynemouth. Doug attended Tynemouth School [later The King's School], of which he had many fond memories. As a boy he joined the Church Scout Group, became a Kings Scout aged 17 in 1948, and was appointed Assistant Scoutmaster the following year. After his



father's death he continued to live with his delightful mother who readily tolerated endless visits from Scouts looking for Doug, or seeking a key for the HQ. Scouting became a huge part of Doug's life and for many years he acted as Group Scout Leader. During the early 1960s he was very much involved in the building of the original wooden headquarters adjacent to the Parish Hall and when this was destroyed in a fire he, together with Ian Clark, set about raising the funds to build the fine Headquarters building we all enjoy now. When Doug retired he agreed to become the Group's President. In accepting this role he wrote to me: *"My time with the 6th both as 'man and boy' has given me many happy memories and the friendships made there have been long-lasting."* Even in retirement he took a keen interest in the Group's activities and we were all delighted when he agreed, together with Dorothy Smith, another much-loved Leader, to open the recently renovated Priory Room in our Headquarters.

During his earlier years Doug was very active on the Northumberland Scouts Training Team, spending many weekends at Gosforth Park which was then the County Scout Camp. Generations of younger Scouts and Leaders benefitted from his training in pioneering, backwoodsman-cooking and other similar activities.

Among Doug's various Scouting appointments he acted as Leader of The Scout Badge Training team for many years. One of my most lasting memories, as a Scout, is my having to sleep in my own home-made bivouac, which Doug tested during the night by pouring water through the branches.

Doug also had a long and successful professional career largely with Brims Construction. We were all delighted when he married Shelagh Murray, also a Scout Leader, and they made their home in West Dene Drive. Shelagh's premature death in 1986 was a source of great personal sadness but Doug continued to care very much for their son David who now lives in Australia.

In later life Doug enjoyed following cricket and golf and regularly attended concerts at the Sage Gateshead, classical music being a particular pleasure. He always looked forward to visits from David's family as well as regular contact with former Scouts and Leaders. He also enjoyed holidays abroad often with his good friends Birkett and Enid Foster who supported him always after Shelagh's death.

As time passed Doug also greatly valued a long friendship with Wilma Drury, who became a welcome companion on outings and was also a source of great kindness and support. I should also record with gratitude all the generous friendship Helen Long showed to Doug in delivering his newspaper and doing his weekly shopping during the last few difficult months. Thank you, Wilma and Helen, for your friendship and kindness which Doug really appreciated: he often told me so.

When Doug died I wrote to our former Vicar, Canon Stephen Huxley, now living in Perthshire, and in acknowledging my letter he replied: *'I always looked upon Doug as a quiet and reliable Leader and superb supporter of the 6th Tynemouth and a faithful member of the congregation. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.'* This is a fitting note on which to end this tribute to a very special person whom many of us will remember with gratitude and affection. In conclusion, the Scout Group was pleased to send a donation in Doug's memory to the Urology Department at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital.

Editor's note: I was privileged to deputise for Malcolm Soulsby at Doug's funeral on July 27th, an occasion which coincided with the relaxation of Covid rules about funeral attendance and singing in church. The result was a full church who, albeit masked, sang three of Doug's favourite hymns – *All things bright and beautiful*, *The Lord's my shepherd* and *How great thou art* with a fervour reflecting their pleasure in being allowed to sing for the first time in eighteen months: the effect was completely overwhelming, and would have delighted Doug. Also very moving were the family tributes from Vera la Grazie and Guiliana Brennan, Doug's grand-daughter. I reproduce one of them, John T. Baker's *The Ship of Life* here, as a further memorial to Doug. He was, in every sense, a truly Christian gentleman.

The Ship of Life

Along the shore I spy a ship as she sets out to sea;
She spreads her sails and sniffs the breeze And slips away from me.

I watch her fading image shrink, as she moves on and on,
Until at last she's but a speck, then someone says, "She's gone."
Gone where? Gone only from our sight, and from our farewell cries;

That ship will somewhere reappear to other eager eyes.
Beyond the dim horizon's rim resound the welcome drums,
And while we're crying, "There she goes!", they're shouting, "Here she comes!"
We're built to cruise for but a while upon this trackless sea,
Until one day we sail away into infinity.

MARGARET GIBSON, 1949 – 2021

Janice Torpy writes: Margaret was the second child of Frances and Alexander Borthwick with three brothers and a younger sister. She was raised in North Shields, attending Linskill School leaving at 16, to take up a job as a Junior Clerk in the NatWest local bank and ended her working life when she retired early as Senior Buyer for Hayden Young, the plumbing firm, in 2007. She met David in 1974 and was married at St John's Church, Percy Main. They made their home in Blyth for a short time but then moved to Bedfordshire with David's job.

In 1980 they returned to the North East and settled in Aldenham Gardens, Tynemouth, bringing with them their six month old daughter Claire. Margaret, whose faith was always very strong, returned to worshipping at Holy Saviour's, which was where I first met her. Margaret, in her usual quiet way, attended church with a welcoming smile and friendly greeting. I got to know Margaret quite well during my first stint at Holy Saviour's; we even became members of the



Priory Ladies Group for which she worked hard, for example getting members of the congregation to purchase or cross-stitch a kneeler; no one was left out. These are the kneelers being stored in the Lady's Chapel, which we were still using up until lockdown. It was just one of her numerous projects, especially when she became a member of our W3 Ladies Group. When the Treasurer's job became vacant Margaret was elected to the post putting her accounting skills to very good use. As well as keeping our accounts up to date and understandable she brought ideas to the committee when looking to help raise funds for local charities. Margaret's favourite charity was the Royal British Legion; she was always doing something for their funds especially putting her craft and knitting skills to use. She would bring a box of poppies into church every year at Remembrance time for people who hadn't been able to get out to buy one for themselves.

You may remember that in 2018, to commemorate the centenary of the end of the Great War, there was a poppy display in church. The idea was brought to us by another member Heather Brandon and the W3 group took it to their hearts, but it was Margaret who was at the helm, organising the distribution of patterns and keeping us on our toes to get those poppies knitted, 2200 of them altogether. She also did her bit and then some, for the cover on the lectern was dressed with 600 poppies, all done by Margaret, aided and abetted by her granddaughters. There was no fuss at what she had done, just pride in what her granddaughters had achieved. This was so typical of Margaret – doing her bit to help but quite happy to stay in the background.

You may think that being a member of W3, being its Treasurer and efficient with the knitting needles and crafting comprised all of Margaret's talents: but I am here to tell you – not at all. This energetic lady had a few more strings to her bow, like getting 10,000 steps clocked up daily on her Fitbit, as well as her regular early morning swims at Tynemouth Pool and tending her garden. There was her love of local history and her connections with Tynemouth History Society. Every year she planned an historical walk around the local area so members of the W3 and their friends wouldn't get bored during the summer break in August.

A passion of Margaret's was her family tree. She had been researching this for years travelling far and wide to discover more of her ancestry. I remember her telling me of an occasion when she had persuaded David to take her up the coast of Northumberland to a rather overgrown graveyard, where they both wandered through brambles and nettles until Margaret discovered the grave she was looking for. She then promptly produced paper and crayons to take a brass rubbing – we need to remember that there were no mobile phones to take photographs in those days. She has discovered relatives she was not aware of, some near home

and those further afield, all the while helping other people along the way who were also searching their family tree, even those living on different continents.

This brings me to more “modern times” as Margaret took a great interest in the world of IT. She was fascinated by the workings of technology helping anyone who was having difficulty in understanding their computer. Did you know our church website was originally organised and looked after by Margaret? When it came to the first lockdown last year and we could no longer have our W3 meetings Margaret created the W3 *WhatsApp* group so we could keep in touch with each other for a chat, pass information on or answering requests for help. It was used often and still is.

If you speak to people who knew her, they will all say similar things: how she was a hard worker but liked to stay in the background, friendly, helpful, generous, full of fun and loving to socialise. To me, Margaret was a truly special person, genuine, kind and generous, someone I am so pleased to have known and will miss greatly; a dear friend. Margaret, you touched so many lives and will be remembered with fondness and gratitude. You will be missed by everyone, not least of all by your friends at the W3 group. May you rest in peace and rise in glory.

Stuart Crozier writes: There are many of our congregation who will have known Margaret for a long time. I only became acquainted with her over the past four years, which perhaps may not qualify me sufficiently to mark her passing. All the same, there are three snapshots of Margaret that I wish to share.

Our unforeseen interregnum of 2018 began at just on the six-month mark of my time in post as Parish Administrator, when I was still very unsure of the numerous routines and history of Holy Saviour’s. Margaret was enormously helpful to me during that period in her capacities as both the unofficial church web mistress and parish historian. This indispensable help was proffered in her typically quiet, unassuming manner. Following enquiries from interested parties that summer, thanks to her I was able to trace both the church’s Foundation Stone and the ‘Murder Stone’ (both worthy of separate articles, which I will write one day.) Margaret was also the anonymous donor who funded the replacement church flag in 2018. Again, it was so very typical of her to ask for anonymity. However I think it only right she should be acknowledged for that now. Finally, as most of us will know, she was a long-time active supporter of the British Legion. Thanks to her I have been able to present a most appropriate wreath on behalf of mariners in both 2018 and 2019 at the village green on Remembrance Sunday.

It was a real pleasure seeing Margaret in and around the church or whenever she popped into the office. Margaret was one of those individuals happy to work away in the background to make things a success, whilst not wanting any praise or

recognition for her efforts. To me, she was always positive in outlook. Even her memorial service in August was typically Margaret – brief, modest, without fuss. One of her chosen musical pieces was *Sailing By* (the musical introduction to the evening broadcast of the Shipping Forecast), which perhaps belied her love of the sea. In nautical terms, our dear friend has now “crossed the bar”. Rest in peace, Margaret – you’ve deserved it, and I will miss you. Yours aye, Stuart.

The Editor writes: My thanks to Janice for her beautiful tribute to Margaret, and to Stuart for his warm and affectionate sketches of a lovely person. Although she was in many ways an unobtrusive part of our parish family, she was someone whose steadfastness and quiet energy enriched us enormously. I enjoyed our regular pre-Parish Communion gossips when we used to coincide in the Parish Centre kitchen – Margaret busy on coffee-rota business and I slowly stewing a pint-pot of tea to sustain me at the organ console. We often swapped family-history research news, and I remember how intrigued she was when I told her about my just-discovered great-great-grandfather, Winship Jack, who died in the Hartley Pit disaster of 1862. Wholly without pretence, Margaret would have deprecated such fond words as Janice and Stuart have written in her memory; the fact that she seemed to have so little idea of what a greatly good person she was remained perhaps the most remarkable and lovable thing about her.

IAN DAVIS, 1936 – 2021



Caroline Combe writes: Daddy was born on 23rd August 1936, the firstborn to his parents Tom and Margaret. Three weeks later he was christened at Holy Saviours Church. The next three years of his life were spent in Tynemouth bringing joy to his family and making friends with other children in Tynemouth. With the outbreak of World War II in 1939, his family took the decision to evacuate to their cottage at Foxton, near Alnmouth on the Northumberland Coast. Daddy loved being up there and it has, since then, always held a special place in his heart. He attend the local village school and made lifelong friends there. After five wonderful years at Foxton, he moved back to Tynemouth in September 1944 and enrolled at The King's School. At the same time he joined Holy Saviours Cub group. In September 1949 he moved to Giggleswick boarding school in Yorkshire. He loved his time at the school despite the cold winters and spartan accommodation. He was confirmed at the School Chapel.

He was called up for National Service in 1954, and joined the Royal Tank Regiment in reconnaissance, where he saw active service at Suez and received the General Service medal. He then returned to Tynemouth and started working with his father Tom in the family Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable business, to begin with in Newcastle and later at the new location in the Team Valley.

He met Mummy on Saturday 28 May 1958 and they married in Lamesly Parish Church on 23 August 1961, they would have celebrated their Diamond Wedding this August. They settled into married life in Tynemouth and had three daughters – Caroline, Christina and Victoria. It was a very happy home. Theirs was a great partnership with lots of love and laughter.

Daddy was Tynemouth-born and bred. He was a regular attender at Holy Saviours, a sides-man and a member of the PCC. His faith was very important to him and sustained him throughout his life. He was a member of Tynemouth Golf Club for over 70 years, he played rugby at Percy Park and latterly was a great supporter, attending most home games. In later years he joined the Quoits Club.

Daddy was kind, caring and very much a gentleman in all senses of that word. He had a rather wicked sense of humour and loved telling jokes. Family to him was everything, and he always put our needs and happiness first. We miss him dreadfully, but are so grateful we had him with us for so long.

IN MEMORIAM DOROTHY SMITH

Julie, Anthea and Kathryn write: we would like to thank everyone who braved the rain on July 31st to attend the Celebration of Life Service for our mum Dorothy. It was lovely to see everyone enjoying a chat and singing again in church.



We do understand that some people who would like to have been there on the day were a bit nervous to venture into large crowds, which is not surprising after all the restrictions and isolation of the last eighteen months. Can we also say a huge Thank You to Steve and Malcolm, who did everything they could and gave us such tremendous support to make this possible. With lockdown going on for an extra four weeks and as a result our not knowing what we would be able to do, it was good to have them beside us. The poem by Pam Ayres and the cartoon reproduced below were printed on the back of the Order of Service, and for us summed up the irrepressible spirit with which Mum animated our whole family.

You have to dance while you are able,
Do the can-can on the table,
Grab each chance that flashes past,
For life goes by so deadly fast.



GOD'S AGENTS [I]: ABRAHAM

[The first in a new series of articles on the ways we meet God]

Clive Harper writes: Readers might recall that I intended to write under the heading of *God's Messengers* but, on reflection, I have opted for *God's agents* which, in a sense, we all are, or can be. Biblically, it all began with a Word; God spoke and it was done: Creation came into being (Genesis, chapter 1). And, without detracting from the science, we see too that St John commences his great work with the phrase *In the beginning was the Word*; thus, through a Word, God effected His great work of Creation and holds it together by the eternal Word (*Hebrews*, Chapter 1). And thus, in due course of time, we too came into being.

I remember when I was training for the Christian Ministry, we trainee clergy had a visitation from a one-time Archbishop of Canterbury by the name of Donald Coggan. Dr Coggan stood before us holding the Holy Bible and said, 'The God we worship is the God who speaks to us.' During these coming months I would like to explore with you some of the many ways in which I believe God has spoken to individuals in the past and still speaks today, and by so doing gives scope for His promises and His purposes to come into effect.

Around the year 1800 BC that same voice, which brought all things into consciousness, spoke to a man called Abram, a descendant of Noah, who was living with his wife Sarai in a place called Haran (in present day Turkey). At that time, they had no children nor, it seems, was there any prospect of any being born. Abram's father, Terah, had moved his family from the land of Ur in ancient Mesopotamia to Haran and there they had settled. We are told that Terah had originally intended to move on to Canaan but he did not. Were God's purposes delayed? we can only conjecture but, in Haran, Abram heard the eternal voice and, to his everlasting credit, he responded. He moved with Sarai his wife and possessions and his wider family to the Land of Canaan, which, to all intents and purposes was to become the land of Israel. There they settled and, despite many adventures and experiences, they made their home there and laid the foundations for the nation of Israel to come into being.

One other fact needs to be recorded here; at a stage God spoke again to Abram and did two things: He changed Abram's name to Abraham, meaning *father of many nations* and Sarai's name to Sarah, and He promised Abraham and Sarah a son, despite their advanced age. Sarah, we are told, laughed in disbelief at the prospect but Abraham believed God and, as St Paul reminds us, *it was reckoned to him as righteousness*.

In due course, a son was indeed born to them and they named him Isaac; Isaac was the child of God's promise and, with that promise, God established a Covenant with Abraham and Isaac and their descendants which we know as the Old Testament; and thus began a great dynasty which was, in due course, to culminate in the birth of Jesus, the greater Son, our Saviour.

LABORARE EST ORARE – TO WORK IS TO PRAY

Malcolm Railton writes: Even with no magazine produced in August this deadline seems to have come around rather quickly and I am sitting, looking at the screen of my laptop thinking, "what on earth can I write about?" Being on holiday for the last two weeks has probably contributed to what seems like time passing more quickly, also a symptom of old age, I fear.

I spent the first week of my holiday at Wydale Hall in North Yorkshire, near Scarborough, or Scarbados as it is referred to by some of the locals. Along with Glynis, Dylan (grandson) and more than sixty other people, ranging in age from nine to eighty-five, we descended on the Hall and its beautiful grounds to take part in "Retreat and Repair", something we have been doing for a number of years. In the past, under the direction (and inspiration) of the manager, Mark Rance, we have taken part in a number of projects, including building a woodland chapel, converting a series of ponds into a terraced rockery, building a fire pit and shelter, laying the ground-works for what became an art room; the list goes on.

This year however, Mark had a 'vision' – a project involving clearing an area of woodland and waste ground (about 900 square metres) to create an area suitable for large meetings and gatherings. Within the area to be cleared we knew that there were some buried concrete sections which had been the bases for huts used by Italian prisoners during the Second World War. The recycling of these concrete areas has provided solid bases for a large barbecue and great seating areas, maybe even dance floors! With the assistance of a hired digger and the hard work of many, we cleared and levelled the area, this included the removal of a number of tree trunks, and the spreading of sixty cubic metres of bark and wood chippings.

In five days of work, we achieved our goal even though I must admit that after the first day, I thought that this would take at least two weeks. The result is spectacular, but still hidden in the woods so as to preserve the wilderness ambience. It will, we hope, provide another useful space to be used by visitors to the Hall for many years to come.

Mark, the manager, provided the faith and the vision for the task; he then put me in charge of this project, with a team of about fifteen. I supply the brute force and ignorance, qualities which I possess in abundance. As I mentioned earlier, there

was a wide range of ages and abilities taking part. In my team the youngest was nine and the oldest was eighty-five, a number of us had various health problems, including dementia, but everything worked out better than I could have hoped. The way that everyone came together and worked was a sight to behold and the result is a testament to their efforts. Was someone else involved?

Throughout the week, many acts of worship took place, (the “Retreat” part of “Retreat and Repair”) and I participated in most of them, including a service of Holy Communion on the Wednesday at which I preached. The Gospel reading for the day was Matthew 18: 15-20 but I only referred to the last verse. *“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”*

We often think of this verse as referring to coming together or gathering for prayer or worship, but I think that it has much wider applications and relevance. To paraphrase Brother Lawrence, a 17th century Carmelite monk who lived in Paris: washing the dishes, peeling the carrots, and going to market in the service of the Lord, are just as important as praying and worshipping in the chapel. I added that digging, weeding, landscaping, painting, spreading bark and gravel, and the many other tasks that we were given that week, are just as valid and as important as attending church or chapel. As George Herbert wrote, and we often sing, “Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws, makes that and th' action fine.”

However, I am not giving anyone permission to skip church: your works done in the name of and in the service of the Lord do not replace your worship, they are part of it. In a nutshell, what I am trying to say is that everything we say and do is important; and if we do it and say it in the name of, and in the service of the Lord, He will be here among us, wherever we are, and whatever we are doing.

SAVE THE PARISH.....

Editor's note: *Readers may well have seen, in the press and elsewhere, coverage of the **Save the Parish** movement, a pressure group formed by the Revd Marcus Walker, Rector of St Bartholomew the Great in London. The material below is based on reports on their website which I urge you to visit if you wish to look at fuller accounts than I have space for here. On principle, I am very wary of pressure groups, because, far too often, essentially worthy causes are liable to be hijacked by fanatical individuals with their own agenda, their principle being that “if I don't want to, then you mustn't” – read Matthew Parris on Stonewall, for example.*

That said, it is a truism that top-heavy and unresponsive hierarchies are all too common in large organisations like the Anglican Church and, if the mitre fits, Stephen Ebor and Justin Cantuar are duty bound to wear it. That said, read on and form your own view. If you would like to support the movement – or even stand for

General Synod on the Save the Parish ticket – then please look at the Save the Parish website, <https://savetheparish.com/> where you will find much of interest.

During August, a meeting in London's launched a campaign; over 100 people attended, and thousands more have watched online. The movement was begun with the aim of electing its members to the General Synod, with people committing to stand under the banner **Save the Parish**. They will pledge to

- resist plans to redirect money away from parochial ministry
- resist further centralisation of power and authority away from parishes towards dioceses

Revd Marcus Walker, who began the campaign, had issued a rallying cry in the pages of the *Spectator* magazine in July, reading in part as follows:

"This is your church. This is not the Archbishop of Canterbury's, nor the House of Bishops', nor the clergy's, not even the General Synod's. It belongs, in a broad sense, to the people of England (regardless of your faith or lack of it — which is why parliament is still its ultimate decision-making body) and very specifically to the laity of the Church of England. You have a say.

There are about to be General Synod elections. So, stand. Stand and write in your manifesto that you are standing to 'Save the parish'. Stand whether you are an Evangelical or an Anglo-Catholic or a High Churchman. Stand if you're a female priest or a woman who doesn't think women can be priests. Stand if you want to save the parish, because these are your parishes and this is the only important question for the next five years. Stand because this might really be the last chance to save the church we love.

And if we're going to promise to 'Save the parish', let's use those 'limiting factors' as our banners: 'a building and a stipend and long, costly college-based training for every leader of the church'. That sounds like an ambition worth having — and a more plausible and desirable one than 10,000 mansion churches led by the untrained super-rich. Let us be a 'key limiting factor', not to the growth of the Church of England but to the emergence of a church we do not want and we do not need".

The meeting also saw the publication of a letter with 400 signatures from supporters of the campaign, to be sent to the Church Commissioners on behalf of the laity, asking for a Royal Commission to be appointed to look into a lay-led reform of the Church's structure and finances. The letter is far too long to print here in full, but the summary below attempts to give a true flavour of the whole document. In cutting it down from 1300 words to 850 I have tried my hardest to reflect accurately the tone of a hard-hitting document, but I would urge readers to

consult the full version at <https://savetheparish.com/> before coming to any conclusions as to what the document leads them to think. As follows:

“THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CRISIS: we approach the Commissioners on behalf of many congregations, particularly in rural parishes, beset with difficulties in maintaining and expressing their faith in the face of falling revenues, declining congregations and seemingly inept management by the hierarchy. If we failed to draw these concerns to the attention of the Commissioners we should be letting down the Supreme Governor of our church. As active members of our Churches we observe at close quarters the difficulties faced by our incumbents in holding together congregations, and preserving vulnerable church buildings.

Recent interest in various newspapers suggests that the church really is facing a serious crisis across the nation about which nothing constructive is being done by a heedless hierarchy. Support that we have received from parish volunteers around the country confirms that there is a groundswell of dissatisfaction with how the Church of England is being managed.

THE CENTRAL CHURCH: We feel that the church is top-heavy and unwieldy, with authority too widely spread to initiate the reforms which are necessary. These would involve cuts in staffing, at first of the seven bodies charged with governance¹, and then, later, of the 42 dioceses. We have seen no move to simplify organisation, improve decision-making and reduce its costs.

THE DIOCESES: The dioceses are not interested in the reforms needed to reduce their costs – which are being loaded onto the parishes and slowly suffocating them. Congregations have shrunk, revenues have fallen and more and more parishes are unable to pay the Parish Share, putting huge pressure on incumbents. Many now manage multiple parishes with no help from the dioceses, who choose to cut stipendiary priests and close parishes rather than axe diocesan jobs.

200 years ago there were 26 diocesan bishops. Today there are 42. The number of parish clergy fell from over 25,000 in 1820 to fewer than 7,000 last year². Almost all 42 diocesan bishops have at least one suffragan bishop – making 112 bishops

¹ These are *The Archbishops' Council, Lambeth Palace, Bishopthorpe Palace, The Church Commissioners, The Church of England Pensions Board, The National Society for Promoting Religious Education and the Church of England Central Services.* **[Editor's footnote]**

² These figures are the more startling when you reflect that, in 1820, a still largely rural country with poor roads, a rudimentary postal system and unreliable communications was covered by a church with one bishop for every 960 parish clergy. Today the ratio is one bishop to every 165 clergy, although overseeing a much smaller church. **[Editor's footnote]**

altogether. All have staff, including proliferating archdeacons and assistant archdeacons, few of whom noticeably support the parishes. We believe that

- there are too many dioceses
- their administration could be centralised - all diocesan administrators do the same jobs
- many posts – often paid far more than parish clergy – are set up purely for promotional activities; they should be abolished as not adding value to the parishes

An example of this kind of expenditure is the £90,000 salary offered for a Chief Executive Officer in Chelmsford Diocese, where 26 churches are being closed. Relieved of these administrative and marketing tasks, dioceses could focus on spreading Christ's gospel through ministry and pastoral work in support of the parishes. Bishops and archdeacons should concentrate on helping existing parishes to grow rather than smothering clergy and volunteers with ever increasing administrative demands. This would reduce the burden on parishes whilst helping them to grow.

THE PARISHES: A fundamental belief is that our church should have a presence in every parish, but it is apparent that parishes are threatened by the financial burden imposed by the dioceses. We are witnessing closures, and incumbents forced to take on additional parishes with no additional support. The central church and the dioceses should recognise this, reduce their costs and reduce the Parish Share. Incumbents should not be dispossessed of their vicarages while they are still living in them. Sacking middle-aged clergy with families, with no alternative jobs in view, seems callous and un-Christian. Very few parish priests care to state this publicly, so lay members, with less at stake, must argue for them.

THE ESTATE: parishes must care for their churches and graveyards, many of historic importance and local significance, and expensive to maintain. The need to conform with centrally imposed rules, leads to repair bills which congregations cannot afford. The cost of maintaining and restoring these national resources should be assumed by Historic England or English Heritage.

RECOMMENDATIONS: with the exception of the estate, the growth in central and diocesan costs should be reversed. This view is fully supported by a financially distinguished member of the General Synod who wrote: "It is time to plan for reconstructing the arrangement of the Church of England's finances and, in particular, financial responsibility for Diocesan Church House activities across the country". He went on "From the expenditure perspective this will motivate the

Church to reduce significantly the duplication of administration across our 42 dioceses, as was requested by the General Synod in 2018”.

Any change will have to be imposed from above because the bureaucracies naturally have no interest in reforming themselves, but the Church of England must reduce the financial burden on the parishes. The process of doing this will take time, but for the meantime, the Church Commissioners should support the rationalisation of the dioceses, forcing them to support the parishes by reducing Parish Share, using central funds to subsidise those who need it.

If our Church is to survive and flourish again, it can only be done by the parishes, freed from our shackles by the measures above. Or, if it is not saved, what is to be done with all the parish buildings we have loved, a network which we should never be able to put back, once lost, for any future generations of Christians?”

***Editor's note:** In the interests of balance, I add to the above an article from the **UnHerd** website by **James Mumford**, a post-doctoral research fellow in philosophy at the University of Virginia. An Englishman, he has been associated in this country with the Vineyard Church movement, and has also worked for the think-tank the Centre for Social Justice. The title of his article, **What the ‘Save the Parish’ campaign doesn’t understand**, makes plain his misgivings. As to the case he makes, I leave it to readers to decide. To me, his response seems not only selective, but also makes rather more use of the “straw man” fallacy than is healthy. At the same time, the Save the Parish manifesto and letter also contains its fair share of undistributed middles and casuistry, and so needs to be read sceptically too.*

Some fighting spirit, at last, from Church of England traditionalists. Last week, they launched a campaign, **Save the Parish**, vociferously attacking Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby’s attempts to save the church. But although *Save the Parish* is right in what it seeks to defend — the local church is, I believe, the hope of the world — it is wrong in what it is intent on attacking. Welby, more than anyone, wants churches in every corner of the country. Up and down the land he longs for churches opening, reopening and, crucially, filling.

Save the Parish seems to have missed this. Giles Fraser writes that: ‘the centre of gravity in church affairs – as well as the funding – has shifted from the local parish towards an increasingly bureaucratised and centralised church structure.

Yet in fact, as one Suffragan Bishop informs me, the vast majority of the Church of England’s church planting initiatives in recent years have been into existing parishes. Many church closures have been fought (the once-doomed St. Peter’s Brighton, for example, now boasts a congregation of 800 people). Last month, meanwhile, the Church Commissioners’ Strategic Development Fund (SDF) awarded £24 million to eight dioceses (making the total £166 million since 2014).

What was July's cash injection to be spent on? *Inter alia* refurbishing churches (the Diocese of Manchester will allocate its share to the Church of The Ascension, Hulme) and renewing mission in extant congregations in particularly deprived areas (the Diocese of Chelmsford is to invest its new share in All Saints, West Ham). Alongside these moves, larger churches in one city have sponsored smaller ones in another, in a kind of reverse social Darwinism. New wine — that is, clergy, cash and lay people — has been poured into old wineskins.

What is frustrating about the traditionalists is that they don't seem to be willing to make room for secular 21st century Britons. Father Marcus Walker, Rector of St. Bartholomew's in London, at the launch of *Save the Parish* dismissed "a style of church set up in a cinema or bar or converted Chinese takeaway," but these words have the whiff of snobbery about them. It seems to suggest that people exist for the sake of the church, not the church for the sake of people. Jonah felt the same way about the Ninevites; he, not they, were engorged by the obliging whale.

Then there's the criticism that any ecclesial attempts to innovate, to do things differently, to experiment, are, as academic Alison Milbank puts it, "a capitulation to market values." This, again, simply isn't true. The church is merely trying to reach as many souls as it can.

Jesus of Nazareth clearly saw his mission as a de-sacralizing one. Instead of hallowing one particular place in which to worship, Christ tells the Samaritan woman in John 4, *'a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.'* It wasn't about stones any more, he taught, it was about people.

THE NAME'S THE SAME.....

Editor's note: *If you google Church of the Holy Saviour and click on Images, about four hundred photographs of churches come up on the front page. Even the briefest glance through them will find Holy Saviour's churches in Prague, Hitchin [Hertfordshire], Lincoln [Nebraska], Croydon, Bitterne [Southampton], Nesebar [Bulgaria] and dozens more: in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, America, and more than half the countries in Europe. The churches themselves range from the most ornate Byzantine and Baroque structures to serviceable brick boxes with, in between, some dilapidated, even disused buildings slowly crumbling for want of use and support. The article below is the first of an occasional series in which I will be looking at other churches that share our name from different parts of the world, and telling some of their stories. This will, I hope interest readers as much as it interests me. Every week we pray for churches all around the world: it will not hurt us to learn a little about them as well.*

Սուրբ Ամենափրկիչ Եկեղեցի, Գյումրի³



Picture credit: Yerevantsi, Wikimedia Creative Commons

Not only did I not know where Gyumri was, I was little the wiser after looking it up and finding that it was in north-western Armenia, which means that it is not far from the border with Turkey to the west and Georgia to the north. As a founder-member of the USSR in 1922, access to it was for many years strictly controlled by the Soviet regime. Becoming an independent republic when communism collapsed in 1991, Armenia is now a state combining European and Asian interests, commerce and economic development. As a Soviet Asian republic, its religious life was severely curtailed for much of the twentieth century, and is still, as we shall see, in a state of recovery. Mount Ararat [now part of Turkey] forms a natural border to the north of the old Armenia, in which has been traced, in various archaeological investigations, evidence of the world's earliest leather shoe, waisted skirt and [perhaps most significantly], the organised cultivation of grapes and the making of wine. Mount Ararat is, of course, associated in most people's minds with the traditional resting place of Noah's Ark, so it is perhaps fitting that Aram, one of the founding fathers of Armenia who is said to have given his name to the country, was claimed to be a direct descendant of Shem, Noah's eldest son. The Church of the Holy Saviour, Gyumri, Armenia, is an Armenian Apostolic Church, and must be one of the few churches constructed in an extended fit of

³ "Church of the Holy Saviour, Gyumri" in Armenian; the Armenian language has links with Greek and Slavic dialects. Its alphabet has thirty-nine characters, and is read from left to right.

pique. The Armenian Orthodox Church, part of Eastern Christendom, reflected a strong national Christianity – Armenia was the first of the western Asian countries to become officially Christian. By 1850, the majority of Gyumri's inhabitants were Armenian Orthodox, so it was with dismay and irritation that this community saw the Armenian Catholic and Greek Orthodox congregations build two large churches on opposite sides of the city's central Vartanants Square. It was resolved to build a third, much larger and more ornate Armenian Orthodox church in the middle of the square, within sight of the other two churches and moreover to wipe their eyes by out-doing them for size, elaboration and cost.

The church, begun in 1858, was completed in 1872 and consecrated the next year. It survived an earthquake in 1926 but had less luck in the Spitak earthquake of 1988, when it was too badly damaged to stay open. During the Soviet era, when the city was known as Leninakan, it had been closed for worship anyway, its belfry demolished, and the nave used as a museum and a concert hall. Following the Soviet collapse, restoring churches was low on the new Armenian republic's agenda but even so the process was begun in 2002. My picture shows the church in 2019, with the roof repairs still incomplete. The repairs were projected for completion by the end of 2021, but the pandemic may well have delayed this.

Nonetheless, this story appeals to me because of a parallel, although not an immediately obvious one, between the two Holy Saviours. Soviet Christendom, ruthlessly suppressed for fifty years, proved to be surprisingly resilient. In 1997 I went to a Russian Orthodox Mass at Almaty Cathedral, in Kazakhstan, re-opened after years during which it had served as a stable, a repair shop and a regimental jail for the Red Army. I will never forget my surprise at seeing that much of the congregation was younger than I was [then fifty-three]: I had expected only the very old. I wonder if the same will apply to the Armenian Christians when their church is open again. In the nature of things anyone who was an adult in 1930 when the church closed will be long dead, as will most children who were alive then. But the rebuilding of Holy Saviour's Church, Gyumri, represents a leap of faith not dissimilar, at least in kind, to our leap of faith in contemplating the renovation of our Parish Hall. We are building for an uncertain future, like our Armenian brothers and sisters; and that very uncertainty will have to underlie and energise our faith, just as it has stimulated them into looking forward by restoring the past, in the name of the Holy Saviour to whom we all look for redemption.

Copy for the October edition should be posted either to the Parish News Mailbox, or to JCPrintmail@gmx.co.uk by **Thursday September 23rd. Completed artwork will be sent to the printers overnight on Sunday September 26th for publication in church on Saturday October 2nd.**

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Sunday worship has resumed with celebrations of Parish Holy Communion at 1000 and of Evening Prayer at 1800, both services including the liturgy in full and with hymns and anthems. A said Holy Communion Service according to the Book of Common Prayer will be celebrated at 1000 in the chancel each Wednesday. The 0800 Sunday celebration of Holy Communion will be restored should there be a demand for it.

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 Chris Benneworth

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Church Flowers:
 Janice Torpy, janicetorpy@gmail.com
 Tel. Tel: 296 2462
 Barbara Walker, 2 Monkstone Crescent,
 Tel. 257 4159



Picture Credit: Cullen Smith, unsplash.com

ACTIVITIES

Mothers' Union

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

W3 – Women's Group

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

Rainbows

Lucy Skillen	Tel. 07891101262
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Brownies

Pat Corbett	Tel. 0191 2800510
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Guides

Grace Paul	Tel. 07803371929
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Rangers

Grace Paul	Tel. 07803 371929
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Beavers

Gillian Smith	Tel. 296 1426
tynemouthbeavers@gmail.com	

Cub Scouts

Fiona Lydall	Tel 257 3047
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Scouts

David Littlefield	Tel. 257 8740
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Explorer Scouts

Lucy Mace	Tel. 258 5948
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Group Scout Leader

Michael Dyer	Tel. 259 6236
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Asst. Group Leader

David Littlefield	Tel. 257 8740
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Scout Hut bookings:

Helen Preston	Tel: 257 0574
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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.