

Planting faith - in the allotment

Four people have devoted their lives to God...on an allotment in Lancashire.

The baptisms, of three children and an adult, in the presence of the Bishop of Lancaster, Rt Rev Dr Jill Duff, were the first to be held by a new church on a housing estate in Blackburn.



Sharon Collins is the urban evangelist who set up the church. Speaking to Premier about how this new style of worship came about, she said: "I'm an urban evangelist, which means I've come to live on an estate and with a specific aim to reach out to making Jesus known to people with no church connection or no interest in having a church connection. And to draw them closer to God. He loves them and wants them back.

"I've planted a church that originally worked out of the community library, but during lockdown we lost our building and we actually became a homeless church. But that was one of the best things that ever happened to us. We began prayer walking in earnest around the estate, laying hands on and claiming places for Jesus and just crying out, when we got given the use of a disused allotment in the community, which means we could once again meet to worship and we became a very public and visible church.

"It's a very strategic position that God has thrown the doors out for us. So it is wonderful to be there. There's some fencing that surrounds the allotment and we use that as well for mission. So we often put posters up with Bible verses on them or with words of encouragement on them. And these are causing great interest for the community - we get lots of people wandering in and asking us who we are and what we're doing. So it's a massive community reach out, it's brilliant. It's like being a church without walls."

Sharon says that on the weekend of the confirmations and baptisms, people brought their families and friends who would not normally have come to church. There was a buffet and music and they all saw the love of Jesus. She hopes that this time next year the numbers coming forward for baptism will have significantly increased.

"We were absolutely thrilled. We had four baptisms, and two confirmations, which were held outside. And it was all done in a very cultural, beautiful way, with lots and lots of people who had no connection to God in attendance as well. So it was a really good piece of mission and a really blessed day for all of us. Wonderful."

Sharon believes worship should take many forms and be available in many different locations, despite the 'Save Our Parish' campaign which is calling for more traditional styles to be upheld.

"I would think there's definitely room for both. Where I'm based in the parish of St James's church, Lower Darwin, there's almost this heavenly blending going on between the two spaces. So St James's church do things and people from the church plant go and take part in that and people from St James's often visit us at the church plant as well. So it does work really, really well."

"We're just following what Jesus is doing here. And he's thrown so many doors open on the estate, we've got the offer of different community buildings. We've just recently started pop-up football and we've got 63 children on roll currently, with an average of 30 playing every week and hearing about Jesus during the talks that go on as part of the football. So it's just absolutely roaring along, which is wonderful.

"One of the loveliest things is that people feel that they can just wander in the space and come and talk to us about who we are and what we're doing. And we absolutely welcome them. We welcome people of all faiths and none - everybody's welcome. And it's definitely a growing thing.

"And it's God's thing."

Speaking after the baptism service, Bishop Jill said: "My experience of estates is that many people don't feel good enough for church, let alone good enough for God. But out in plain sight, on what was an abandoned allotment, it's so much easier to join the family.

"The sun came out just as I baptised the girls. It was a beautiful moment. I had been praying for an open heaven for everyone who came. There were lots of tears. Paisley (9) told me 'I want to open the door to Jesus'."

Almighty God,

We thank You for giving us the opportunity to follow You in so many ways.

We are grateful to be able to follow Your way and for all those who want to come to know You wherever they are.

And we pray for all who have chosen to give their lives to You.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Church of Scotland appoints first ever dedicated minister for the veterinary community

The Church of Scotland has appointed its first ever dedicated minister for the veterinary community.



Rev Allan Wright, who is based in Newcastle and a vet himself, will carry out pastoral support duties and visit all vet practices within 30 minutes of Newcastle.

“It's about being available and being present, with vets with nurses, receptionists practice managers, all those people who work in veterinary surgeries and our belt in the North, working with and as vets just letting them know that there is a caring and loving Christian ministry before them,” Rev Allan told Premier.

The 33-year-old brought a proposal for a dedicated vet minister before the Church of Scotland after seeing and experiencing a real need in the veterinary community. Mental health issues, isolation and staff shortages are among some of the issues Rev Allan observed.

“There's a whole lot of isolation, people tend to work very much, by themselves, or in very small teams... People move away from home and suddenly, they're stuck in a new role, which is a fairly intensive role with no option to go and meet other people.

“There's huge numbers of mental health problems,” Rev Allan said. “We know, for example, that vets are four times more likely to commit suicide than your average member of the population. And so, there's huge issues there that need some form of addressing.”

The coronavirus pandemic and Brexit have amplified some of these issues. Increased paperwork for sending animals and animal products abroad and a shortage of foreign vets have led to some farm animals having to be slaughtered because they can't be sent to abattoirs, Rev Allan explained.

“It costs more money to keep them on farm than it is to get rid of them and that's a huge strain not only on farmers, but also on the vets that are looking after these animals as well,” Rev Allan explained.

Together with his wife, Rev Allan opened a vet practice 18 months ago in Birtley and will continue working as vet.

“It's just been these two parts of my life that have up to now run simultaneously. And, and of course, there are crossovers, there's so much pastoral care...and then there's so much from the beginning of the church side about looking after creation and the importance of value in animal life. It's now wonderful to take both of them and run them as one thing.”

The father of two hopes to be a “supportive ear” for the community and encourage Christians to pray for the veterinary community.

“[This] is completely new for everybody. And that's just slightly scary and slightly daunting, because we don't know where this ministry is going to be in six months...ten years, down the line. Just pray that the veterinary community opens their hearts to having a new support structure in place, and that the church is full of recognition that this is a place that the church needs to go into.”

Salvation Army children's magazine, that's older than the Beano, celebrates milestone

The Salvation Army's children's magazine [Kids Alive!](#), which was launched in 1881 as the Little Soldier, is marking its 140th anniversary.

Aimed at children aged from 7 to 11, the magazine started running comic strips in 1928, at least a decade earlier than the appearance of Dennis the Menace in the Beano in 1938.



The content of the magazine is broad featuring competitions, jokes, crosswords and cartoons but it has always had a serious purpose, introducing children to hard hitting issues through a Christian lens. Its first ever front cover highlighted child hunger and featured a Salvation Army tea party in Hull which fed 2,500 children.

Editor Justin Reeves told Premier the magazine has been known under a few different names over the years:

"It was published on the 27th of August in 1881. Since then, we've had a few name changes. It was the Little Soldier for about seven years; It changed its name to the Young Soldier and it remained as the Young Soldier for the best part of a century. In the 80s, as was the way, I think people thought it was cool to shorten things, give them an acronym, so it became Y S for a little while. And then in 1996, it became Kids Alive! which is what we know and love today."

Kid's Alive! has had a variety of cartoon characters over the years. It kicked off with The Bunny Boys, followed by The Joy Boys and Peter of the Primary, which had a full page throughout the 1930s, Billy the Bear, Bram and the Jelly Babies and continues today with Patch's Pals and Kiddo.

Reeves added that they aim for a good balance of content but the magazine's prime focus is to communicate the Gospel of Jesus.

"It's evangelistic, it's educational and it's entertaining. What we try to do with all of the content in Kids Alive! is that we try to make sure it's wholesome. And we like to encourage our readers to be active and healthy, physically, mentally, spiritually. So, if you open up a copy no one week is the same. There's always something different inside. But the regular features include a cartoon, Bible story, and a comment that goes alongside it, which is aimed at helping the kids understand the Bible story and how they can use that particular story in their everyday lives. We also have a competition every week, there's usually something to make or do either in colouring corner or creative corner. We also have a double page spread where we try to go a little bit deeper on the issues of the day. Over the years, we've done articles about bullying, about cyber bullying. Last year, we ran a series on those pages regarding Black History Month. No topic is really too tough for us to tackle," he said.

Readers of the anniversary edition have been encouraged to take part in a fundraising challenge to mark the anniversary, while raising vital funds for their local Salvation Army church or centre. The 140 challenge will see young people get sponsored to take part in 140 different activities.

Reeves told Premier how Christians can best pray for the future of the magazine: "Prayers for the team to help us to be innovative, and to keep up with where kids are at today and to find ways of communicating with them, not just about the Gospel, but about important issues that affect them in their everyday lives. Also for our readers. You know, it's great being a kid, I just about remember being a kid and I remember it being fun. But I also remember, you know, it could be a bit of a challenge as well, and there are some tough, tough things that our kids face every day. So pray for our readers as well, that they will continue to love what we do, they will continue to engage with what we do, and they will continue to benefit from the articles that we write and the various content that we include in the comic.

Sheep and Lambs Together **Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages**

5th September 14th Sunday after Trinity

Read Mark 7: 24 - 37

Make paper chain people and decorate each person differently

Think about the reading from Mark's Gospel which shows how outsiders are included in our journey of faith. The Gentile woman and the disabled man are both people who were

considered to be outsiders in Jesus' society. But there are no borders to God's love and welcome. Then think about how we can be inclusive in our lives.



Sponsor a church chair

We have selected some fresh, new replacement chairs.

During the last few years, as well as worship, the church has been used for concerts, educational activities, conferences and even a curry and carols evening. We need the building and its furnishings to support the developing uses of the church space and replacing the chairs is a big initiative.

The sale of the old chairs covered approximately half of the cost of the new ones. You can help us with the cost of the new chairs:

- ❖ £90 covers the cost of a chair
- ❖ £225 covers the cost of a stacking dolly or trolley

Features of the new chairs:

- They stack (up to 10 in a stack or 25 on a special dolly)
- They link together at floor level, making them safe and compliant with current regulations
- They are lightweight
- They are upholstered – for comfort and looking good
- The upholstery is wipe-clean
- They come with and without arms, so all the chairs will match
- The chrome finish is an upgrade and will not scratch (like the chairs in the hall)





We will recognise the sponsors of the new chairs in a memorial book / list which will be displayed in church – you can donate either in memory of someone or as an individual donation.

Thank you

If you are interested in sponsoring a chair, please complete a form that can be found:

- At the back of the Church
- On the Website
- Or Contact the Parish Office

Cheques are payable to St Hilda's PCC or you can transfer monies direct;
St Hilda's PCC
Sort Code: 60-01-22
Account Number: 36290696

Sheep and Lambs Together

Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages

12th September 15th Sunday after Trinity

Read Mark 8: 27-38

Think about the way we treat a king or queen, and then to think about the way that Jesus was treated. Ask: What are the similarities and differences?

Make a crown and before you fix it into a round :

On one side write words relating to Jesus' kingship, e.g. poor, suffering, sacrifice.

Decorate the other side to make a crown our kings and queens might have.

Wear it!



St Hilda's Parish News

If you have any Parish News you would like to share, then please send them into the Parish Office.

Hatton Musical Theatre Society

Hatton Musical Theatre Society will be performing Songs from Movies, Musicals and More at St Hilda's Church on Saturday 11 September at 7pm. This is a great chance to see and hear your favourite songs, live and local.

Tickets are £7.50 and must be booked in advance either through Paula Gething (07788258871) or Mike Davenport.

Garden Tools

If anyone has some gardening tools that they no longer need, please see Frances as they will be gratefully received to help with the upkeep of the Church properties gardens.

Spelthorne Deanery Confirmations – Sunday 19th September

Spelthorne deanery confirmation service is taking place at St Hilda's at 3pm.

If you would like to find out more, please do get in touch with Fr Joseph.

Confirmation preparation for adults will run on Thursday the 2nd, 9th and 16th September.

Women's and Men's Breakfast



We are planning to hold individual breakfast get togethers for Women and Men separately. The aim of these is to create a new time for fellowship, followed by a full English breakfast, and a talk by a guest speaker.

The first get togethers are:

Men's Breakfast – 11th September

Women's Breakfast – 16th October

The guest speaker for the first Men's Breakfast is Jeremy Crame who will be talking about the EV energy platform with an emphasis on Tesla and the vision of Elon Musk. Tickets can be booked via the ticket tailor links on our website or Facebook page or by contacting the parish office. There is a suggested donation of £5 to attend the breakfast. All are welcome.

Soup and roll

Starting on **Wednesday 29th September**, after the 11am service and continuing on the last service of each month.

There's something spiritual about breaking bread together. After the Eucharist, we will gather for soup and roll. It will be an excellent way to get to know each other better, to share in fellowship, meet some new faces and enjoy a delicious home cooked soup with a bread roll.

Hope Into Action

Thank you, to everyone who has used the blue bins to donate clothing. The bins will remain in place, please feel free to continue to leave clothing and shoes. The money raised will be put towards the work of Hope into Action locally.

Homelessness has been a key element of St Hilda's missional engagement and St Hilda has started to support Hope Into Action:

"We provide not just shelter and housing know-how but also friendship. Together with over 70 churches, we provide direct support to people whom others have often given up on. Our vision is for every church to lovingly provide the homeless with a home. The tragedy of homelessness is in every community"

There are two blue wheelie bins, one in church and one in the church hall to take donations of clothes, belts and shoe. It will all be sold, and the proceeds donated towards the partnership with Hope Into Action. Please – clean clothes, paired shoes, and belts only. We cannot do anything with bedding, towels, curtains, and other soft furnishings.

Anniversary Wishes

Congratulations to Helen and Ian on their 30th Wedding Anniversary, they have shared the local newspaper cutting from the time, together with Helen's memory of the day.

"7th September 1991 and a wonderful sunny day with ceremony at St Hilda's, followed by wedding breakfast at Royal Holloway College where Fr Blood joined us at the evening reception.

We then had a day of rest and packing before jetting off to Barbados for our Honeymoon."



Congratulations also go to Pauline and Gary Milton who celebrate their 30th Anniversary on 14th September.

Happy Anniversary to both of the happy couples.



Canaan Ministries are open for any of your needs. Just simply phone or email them and they will look after you. They also offer a delivery service.

Any other information can be found on their website www.canaanchristianministries.co.uk/

Job 5: 9

He does great things and
unsearchable,
marvelous things without
number.

This weeks services

Sunday Eucharist – 5th September @ 9.30am

This service can be viewed via our Facebook page, our new YouTube channel (St Hilda's Ashford), and Twitter.

Wednesday Eucharist – 8th September @ 9.45am

Tickets can be booked for this week's services via the links on our website and Facebook page or by contacting the Parish Office by 5pm Friday for Sunday's service and 12pm Tuesday for Wednesday's service.

Please note we asking for the safety of yourselves and others that you continue to wear a mask whilst in the church.

Please hold in your prayers and thoughts this week those who are affected by the Corona Virus as well as the family and friends of those below.

The Sick

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| James Bedford | Jane Johnson | Elsie Stone | Izzy |
| Darren Burkin | Pat Kyle | Roy Stone | Nic |
| Robb Clarke | Mrs McCammon | Rev. Peter Taylor | Baby Reuben |
| Ann Considine | Libby Mills | Carla Wells | Bob |
| Julia Cowley | Raymond Nation | Sheila West | Margaret |
| Michael Dixon | Pat Parish | Philip Willerton | |
| Peter Garner | Peggy Pinfold | Chick Wilson | |
| Juliet Griffith | Elizabeth Savill-Burgess | Peter Wilson | |
| Alison Griffiths | Delphine Scrivener | Jo Wood | |
| Jean Iddiols | Riley Shaw | | |

The Recently Departed

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Sandra Swain | Marion Otieno | Joan Andrews | (Auntie) Kath Brown |
| Clifford McCammon | | | |

Prayer

Almighty God,
 whose only Son has opened for us
 a new and living way into your presence:
 give us pure hearts and steadfast wills
 to worship you in spirit and in truth;
 through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
 who is alive and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

Amen