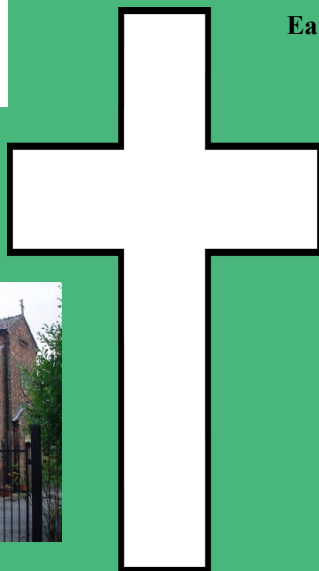




**St. Alban's Earsdon**



**Earsdon Methodist**



# **CHURCH VIEWS**

**December  
2023**

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Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea**



**St. John's Backworth**



**Immaculate Heart of Mary,  
Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea**

# THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

## December 2023

Dear All,

A very Happy Christmas to you and yours from Sue and I. I do hope all is well with you, and that each of our different churches know the deep joy of the God who draws close.

I'd like to tell you all about our Toddler Church Christmas Special. Our Toddler Christmas is at 4pm in St John's Backworth on Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup>.

Toddler Church was born in the summer of 2020. We'd had several baptisms at St John's. Each of those families then emailed to say 'we enjoyed that – when can we bring our children back to church?'

Given that – at that stage – the service at St John's was at 8.30 on a Sunday morning, we clearly needed to do something different. There's nothing new under the sun, and we reached for the 4pm on a Sunday afternoon slot. Our first Toddler Church was a Toddler Harvest in October 2020.

We weren't sure to begin with how many people would come. But we've been pleasantly surprised: Toddler Church has grown, and our highest attendance so far has been fifty – a collection of young families – a mix of adults and children.

For our very first edition, we'd had a planning meeting. Barbara Golightly, Kathy Henzell, Ali Griffiths and I together planned that first Toddler Harvest. But then I lapsed into planning it all myself. I myself would decide what to do, and tell the others. They were very patient with me.

Then enter Jo McEvedy. Jo is training to be a Reader in the Church of England. In layman's terms, that's like a lay preacher. Jo isn't going to be ordained, but she will lead worship and preach.

As part of Jo’s training, she was invited to take on a project. We decided that Toddler Church was ripe for development. So ‘developing Toddler Church’ is Jo’s project.

Finally! We got back to planning meetings: who says the vicar has all the best ideas? And indeed, when we met to plan for Toddler Christmas, the ideas flowed. Barbara showed us some pebbles, onto which she had painted various characters from the Christmas story. *Barbara* (not the vicar) will tell the children the Christmas story, in our new ‘story zone’ – the children sitting on brightly coloured cushions between the St John’s choir pews.

Kathy is going to help with action songs. We’re going to teach the children the chorus to ‘O come all ye faithful’. Kathy will crouch down for the quiet line, half stand for the middling line, and stand up fully, arms outstretched, for the loud line: ‘O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord’. Kathy is also going to make some mulled wine for the adults.

Meanwhile, Jo is going to play her saxophone as the families do an activity. They’ll each make a ‘Jesus in the manger’ with straw stuck on a paper plate, while Jo plays ‘Away in a manger’ on the sax. Then we’ll sing the carol as the children come out and display their mangers. Jo will also take the children to our new ‘prayer zone’, lighting candles up at the altar with the children kneeling at the altar rail.

Finally, there will be a knitted angel for each child, and we’ll end our Christmas special with a praise shout: ‘Glory to God! Peace on earth! Glory to God! Peace on earth!’ May the world’s trouble-spots indeed hear the message of the angels this Christmas as we pray for peace between Israel and the Palestinians, Ukraine and Russia. As we pray for an end to fighting in Sudan and the Yemen.

Toddler Church is designed with little children in mind. But people of all ages are welcome. Indeed, people of all ages come and join in the happy chaos. You’d be very welcome if you’d like to come – 4pm in St John’s on Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup>.

Again, a very Happy Christmas when it comes, and a peaceful New Year to you and yours.

Tim Mayfield.

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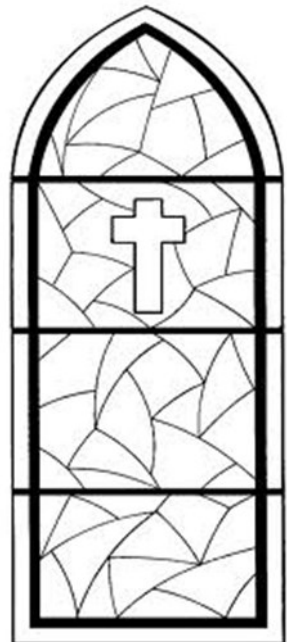
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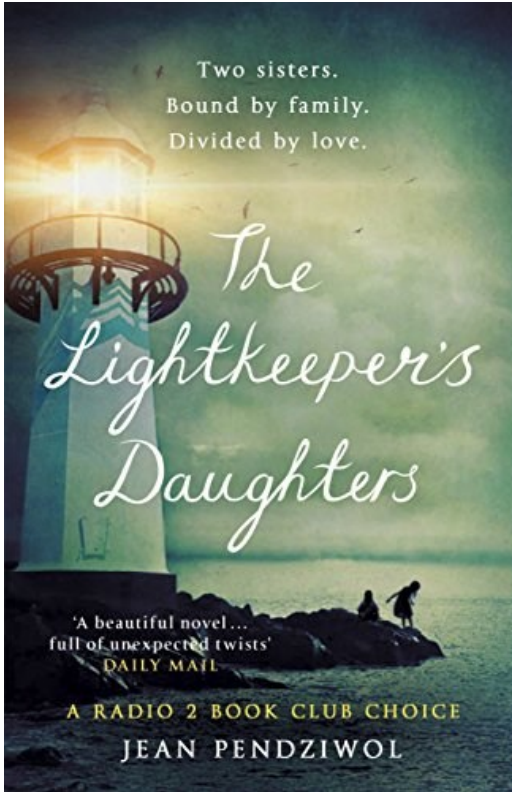
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Book Club Review from St Alban's book worm, Dianne:



## **The Lightkeeper's Daughters**

by Jean Pendziwol

“Loved it!! I enjoyed the setting in Canada, so much so I went on google earth to find the locations and see the landscape. There is a complexity of ethnic immigrants and First Nations people which makes up this country and its impact on cultural communities is described nicely in this novel. Brilliant storytelling, strong female characters, going from Morgan to Elizabeth (I liked the format and short chapters), through different time spans, made for compelling reading on a rainy day.....into a joyful

day! Grief, loss, hardship, relationships, family secrets and love of nature and animals all dealt with sensitively as the connection and life experiences of Elizabeth and Morgan unwound. Two ‘stand alone’ characters coming together and finding so much. I also enjoyed getting to know the incidental characters, Marty, Laurie, Becca and the other family members too.

I liked the author's notes... strongly based on truth and real life near Thunder Bay.

So glad my own visit to Canada was in the 1960s though, on a school exchange, staying near Montreal with a French Canadian family, experiencing the diversity of mixed heritage in this very big outdoors lifestyle country. So vastly different from growing up in Seaton Delaval and Whitley Bay!

A novel I'll not forget (I'm looking at another lighthouse as I write this)

Dianne Morgan



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## ERDESDON HOUSE

### The story of my dolls house



I always wanted a dolls house and would often go along to Dolls House Exhibitions just looking. One day I was particularly attracted to a house which looked like the Victorian houses overlooking Cullercoats Bay, made by a gentleman in Crawcrook. It was however quite expensive, so I came home and thought about it! I could hear Don (my husband who had recently died) saying "just get it, just get it" so I did! It took about 5 months to make and consisted of 2 attics 6 main rooms and 2 rooms in the basement.

The front of the house is quite impressive having a tiled roof and 3 attic windows. The top floor has railed balconies outside the bedrooms and the other rooms, including the basement, are all bay windows. You can reach the basement by a set of steps. There are railings dividing the house from the pathway where there is a Victorian Post Box and lamp post. The most important thing on the house is the Sun Alliance insurance disc, if you didn't display one the fire brigade just let your house burn!

Then the house had to go to a Sparky, who lived in Whitburn, to have the lighting installed, which took 2 months. Then the fun started!

*Continued on next page...*

The house was about as tall as me. How was I going to decorate and furnish this house as I hadn't even done any decorating before? The first thing I had to do, was to make it mobile because it was very heavy and that's when Terry (my son in law) came in, he put it on castors. The house was then moved in and out of various places until it found its home in the hall, I then got started sometimes working from 9 in the morning until 4 in the afternoon only stopping for a cuppa. I was totally engrossed, and it filled in many 'difficult' hours.

Joan A. suggested I share with you the tale of how my dolls house came about and I hope to be able to write a little story about a different room each month.

Happy Christmas.

Helen.



*Many thanks Helen - looking forward to more of this lovely story.*

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Merry Christmas, happy new year and  
peace to all of our readers  
and advertisers!

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# Smile-lines

Three phrases that sum up Christmas are: ‘Peace on Earth’; ‘Goodwill to Men’; and ‘Batteries not included’.

\*\*\*

## Children’s version of the Christmas story

- When the three wise guys from the east side arrived, they found Jesus in the manger.
- When Mary heard that she was the mother of Jesus, she sang the Magna Carta
- Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.

\*\*\*

A little boy rushed home from school and said excitedly: “I got a part in the Christmas play!”

“What part?” asked his mother.

“I’m one of the three wise guys!”

\*\*\*

Any astronomer can predict with absolute accuracy just where every star in the universe will be as the clocks chime midnight on Christmas Eve. He can make no such prediction about his teenage daughter.

\*\*\*

One cold winter night, during a violent storm, a mother was tucking her small, frightened little boy into bed. She was about to turn off the light when he said with a tremor in his voice: “Mummy, will you stay with me tonight?”

Mummy smiled and gave him a reassuring hug. “I can’t, dear,” she said, “I have to sleep with Daddy.” A long silence – and then came his shaky reply: “The big coward!”

\*\*\*

It was Christmas and the judge was in a benign mood as he asked the prisoner what he was charged with. “Doing my Christmas shopping early,” replied the man.

“Why, that’s no offence,” said the judge. “How early were you doing it?”

“Before the store opened,” replied the defendant.

\*\*\*



# CHURCH VIEWS FOR DECEMBER 2023 FROM THE PARISH OF OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA

## It must be time for the Nativity Play



It's that glorious family time for the school nativity play. You have to feel sorry for that poor donkey. But lots of shepherds give more pupils a chance to shine – especially the one who ignores the stage to smile at Granny and Mum, so proud of the sheep her Dad made for her. But she doesn't know that the audience is entranced to see how close she comes to bumping into the wobbly palm tree!





## Parish Christmas Events

### Christmas Craft Afternoon

This is being held on Tuesday 5 December, 1.00pm-4.00pm at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. Mince pies or shortbread on arrival then make a door swag or posy, with an option to make further decorations or buy extra materials. The afternoon will cost £15.00 and places are limited to 30, so book early. Bring your own secateurs, everything else will be provided.

### Parish Luncheon Club

The ever-popular Luncheon Club will hold its annual Christmas Lunch at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church at 12.00pm on Thursday 14 December 2023. Booking is essential.

### Parish Christmas Children's Party

A Christmas Party will be held on Sunday 17 December from 2.00pm until 4.00pm at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church for children up to the age of 11. Tickets available at both churches or the parish office. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

### Walking Group

Just to show November wasn't all wet and cold, the Group is pictured in bright sunshine among golden leaves drifting onto the paths they took as they explored the Wylam-Ovingham area. In the background is the restored Hagg Bank Bridge, a fore-runner of the Tyne and Sydney Harbour Bridges. Even the sunglasses were needed.



### And to end with a Christmas message...

Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart.

**Ecclesiastes 9:7**

*Gerry Latimer, Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea*

### Parish Mass Times:

*St Edward's: Sunday 10.00am, Tuesday and Thursday 9.30am*

*Immaculate Heart of Mary: Saturday 6.00pm, Wed and Friday 9.30am*

*Christmas Mass times will be available on the Parish Bulletin*

A couple of sunny shots of a very lovely Remembrance Service at Earsdon Cenotaph on Sunday 12th November.



## Christmas 2023 at St Alban's



A very Happy Christmas to you from everyone at St Alban's, Front Street, Earsdon. We warmly invite you to our Christmas events. More information from vicar Tim [tim.mayfield@btinternet.com](mailto:tim.mayfield@btinternet.com) or drop Tim a text on 07414 601351.

**Sunday December 17<sup>th</sup> 6.00pm**

Carols by Candlelight

**Christmas Eve 4pm**

Christingle Service for all the family

**Christmas Eve 11.30pm**

Midnight Mass

**Christmas Day 10.30am**

Christmas Day worship



**St Alban's Church**

**Earsdon**

### Why a Netty Project?

Our church is 180 Years old and still does not have any toilets. The need to bring our church into the 21st Century is obvious.

### What are we doing?

We plan to create a level entrance to the church with a gentle ramp. An accessible toilet will be added in the old boiler room, which is not used currently. Access will be via a new door through the wall next to the tower stairs. A second toilet will be added under the stairs. The entrance to the church is to be opened up and a kitchen installed on one side of the entrance under the balcony and a media room and office on the other side. To allow space in front of the kitchen and media room three rows of pews will be removed and reinstalled in the gallery.

### What will it cost?

The current cost estimate is £209,000 based on the detailed specification produced by our architect. We are in the process of approaching a number of builders to get actual quotes for the work.

### When will we start?

We need to get grants in place and this will take up to 6 months. We also need to raise more money by significant fund raising over the next 6 months. The planned start date is early summer 2024 with a build time of 4 or 5 months. All being well, we will be up and running in November 2024 well before Christmas.



## How are we going to pay for it?

Currently in the bank in 'restricted' funds, we have £65,585.67. We have already received a small grant from 'W Spooner Trust' for £500.00. The grant team currently applying for large grants for £50,000 each and a number of slightly smaller grants. Combined we forecast this could give us a further £100,000.

This would leave a shortfall of around £45,000, which we will need to raise by fund raising. We need to create a '**Netty Fundraising Team**' to organise a Grand Raffle, social media campaign, identify sponsors and other fund raising activities.

## How you can help

There are many ways **YOU** can help. Join our Fundraising Team, just contact Rob Swindells for details ([rob@no-81.co.uk](mailto:rob@no-81.co.uk) or 07971775498) Anyone can help and the more people involved the easier it will be. Even if you are new to our Church, you are more than welcome to help.

## Donate money

You can help by making a donation by bank transfer to:-  
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Sort code : 20-62-09

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Or scan QR code

# Earsdon Methodists

## December 2023

### Doing the Message

I vividly remember the Christmas morning when I was 10 years old. On looking under our Christmas tree, I found presents for me – a selection box, a new jumper and a number of Dinky toys. These were great, but although I was not going to say anything, it was a little disappointing. However, when I walked into the kitchen for breakfast, there it was – a two wheeler bike; ~ a red and silver dream machine. Alongside it was a big leather saddle bag which was a present from my Grandparents.

Grandad had been retired from the Durham coalmines on ill health grounds for some years, so this was a generous gift that they could ill-afford. With it came the request that I would put bike and bag to good use on Saturday mornings by doing their messages.

Consequently, every Saturday that I was able, I cycled the two miles or so from our house to theirs, and on receipt of their list, pedalled off to the shops. There were some constants on this list – bread and a cream cake from the Baker; eggs, boiled ham and pease pudding from the butcher; and some combination of fruit and vegetables from the greengrocer. Now and then there was a trip to the Post Office, Wool Shop, or cobblers, but not every Saturday.

When I'd completed the messages, I returned with all purchases crammed into my saddle bag and sometimes in an extra bag hanging from the handlebars, keeping my fingers crossed that everything would be in an un-squashed and presentable condition when I got back to my Grandparents. I confess that this was not always the case, I mean those back lanes of Shiney Row were not always smooth!

I realise that for some people my journeys would be described as going shopping or doing errands, but in our family, it was always a matter of doing the messages.

Now we are into the season of Advent with Christmas fast approaching it is the season of doing the messages. I don't just mean shopping and card writing but as we hear again the story of Christmas and its message of love it is an encouragement for me to **do** the message – even though all that is left of my bike is a rusty bell.

*Wes Blakey*

As previously reported all the former members of Earsdon Methodist Church are part of other Methodist Churches in the area. We have enjoyed being part of the Christian community of this area for 137 years , and have been delighted in the company of our Christian sisters and brothers. As Geoffrey Chaucer is recorded as saying “But at the laste, (as) every thing hath ende,” ~ and so we end this particular local link and send for a final time to all the readers of this magazine our warmest greetings and very best wishes for a happy Christmas and may the future bring good things for you all.



# St. Alban's and St. John's

## Diary Page for December 2023

Sunday	3rd	<b><u>Advent Sunday</u></b>	
	9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
	6pm	Advent Carol Service	St Alban's
Sunday	10th	<b><u>Second Sunday in Advent</u></b>	
	9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
	4.00pm	Toddler Church Christmas Special	St John's
Sunday	17th	<b><u>Third Sunday in Advent</u></b>	
	9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
	6.00pm	Carols by Candlelight	St Alban's
Sunday	24th	<b><u>Fourth Sunday in Advent</u></b>	
	9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
	10.30am	* NO SERVICE *	St Alban's
	4.00pm	Christingle Service for all the Family	St Alban's
	6.00pm	Christingle Service for all the Family	St John's
	11.30pm	Midnight Mass	St Alban's
Christmas Day	25th	<b><u>Christmas Day worship</u></b>	
	9.00am	Christmas Day Communion	St John's
	10.30am	Christmas Day Communion	St Alban's



# St. Alban's and St. John's

Sunday	31st	<b><u>1st Sunday after Christmas</u></b>		
	9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's	
	10.30am	Special Service for New Year's Eve	St Alban's	
Wednesday	3rd	9..30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	7th	<b><u>Epiphany</u></b>		
	9.00am	Holy Communion for Epiphany	St John's	
	10.30am	Holy Communion for Epiphany	St Alban's	

## Sunday Gospel Readings for December 2023:

<b>3rd</b>	<b>10th</b>	<b>17th</b>
Mark 13. 24-end	Mark 1. 1-8	John 1. 6-8, 19-28
<b>24th</b>	<b>31st</b>	
Luke 1. 26-38	Luke 2. 15-21	

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					4	5		2
				8				3
	7		8			9		
		2				6		
		3			2		8	
4				5				
1		6	3					
				4			9	7



Please note - all material for next month's magazine (January 2024) will need to be in before Wednesday 27th December Thank you.

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Here's a little reminder for those of you who pay your magazine subscriptions annually and have your magazine delivered, next year's subscription (still £12.00) will be due next month, so we will be calling early in January 2024.

Website: [www.stalbansearsdon.co.uk](http://www.stalbansearsdon.co.uk)  
(Apologies - the website is still under construction.)

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* If you have any suggestions, comments or requests \*  
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\* email it to [magazine@StAlbansEarsdon.org.uk](mailto:magazine@StAlbansEarsdon.org.uk) \*  
\* or call **Jean** on **0191 2377273**. \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Church Views magazine email:  
[magazine@stalbansearsdon.org.uk](mailto:magazine@stalbansearsdon.org.uk)



# WORDSEARCH

## The story of 'Silent Night'

This much-loved carol comes from Austria, where it was first sung as *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht* on Christmas Eve, 1818. It was written by Father Joseph Mohr, a young priest at St Nicholas parish church, in the village of Oberndorf bei Salzburg. As Christmas 1818 approached, he asked the local schoolmaster, Franz Xaver Gruber, to compose a melody for his carol. Gruber was organist in the nearby village of Arnsdorf, and so was happy to oblige. On Christmas Eve they presented the carol to the church during the midnight mass. The carol went on to become loved world-wide; and the version sung by Bing Crosby is the third best-selling single of all time.

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Loved  
Carol  
Austria

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Sung  
Stille  
Nacht  
Heilige

Christmas  
Eve  
Father  
Joseph  
Mohr

Young  
Priest  
Organist  
Midnight  
Mass



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## **Church Contacts**

### Former Earsdon Methodists:

#### *Former Church Council Secretary*

Mrs. A. Blakey, 14 Hesleyside Road, Whitley Bay, NE25 9HB. Tel:251 9813

#### *Former Church Treasurer*

Mr Ian Nicholson, 28 Huntly Road, Whitley Bay, NE25 9UR. Tel: 252 9564

#### *Former Church Stewards*

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Mrs B Henderson 46 Kingston Drive, Whitley Bay, NE26 1JJ. Tel: 291 3678

### St. Alban's Earsdon:

#### *Vicar*

Rev'd. Tim Mayfield, 5 Front Street, Earsdon, Whitley Bay NE25 9JU

Tel: 07414 601 351

#### *Church wardens*

Mr Ali Griffiths, 2B Coquet Avenue, Whitley Bay NE26 1EF.

Mobile: 0772 9805957

Mr R Gowdy, 82 Chipchase Court, New Hartley, Northumberland NE25 0SR

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#### *PCC Secretary*

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#### *PCC Treasurer*

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### St. John's Backworth:

#### *Vicar*

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#### *Church warden*

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#### *Treasurer & Assistant Church Warden*

Mrs M Oliver 10 Melrose Avenue, Backworth, Newcastle NE27 0JD Tel: 268 4334

### Our Lady, Star of the Sea :

#### *Parish Priest*

Mgr. Andrew Faley

Church of St Edward, Coquet Avenue, Whitley Bay, NE26 1EE. Tel: 252 8021

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Parish Office Tel: 252 7066- open on Weds, Thursdays, & Fridays, 10am to 1pm.