



**St. Alban's Earsdon**



**Earsdon Methodist**



# **CHURCH VIEWS**

**July 2023**

**£1.00**



**Our Lady & St. Edmund,  
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

## July 2023

I have recently been pondering over the phrase “to live is to change”, a phrase that is attributed to Cardinal John Henry Newton, and one that my college principal would often quote. I confess that I have often made this point to my children (when they *were* ‘children’) when they faced something different and unexpected.

But now I have had to say it to myself. It started with my dahlias! I love these flowers and have grown them in pots for years, and each autumn carefully lift the tubers, store them over winter and then start them all over again the next spring. Well, this year, two of my favorites ‘bit the dust’. One I had kept (or its descendants) since I was a probationer Minister in the early 1970s given to me by a kindly elderly lady in one of my congregations. Even a new ‘look alike’ for which I am looking out will not be the same. However, to live is to change.

Then of course our Methodist Church has closed after a valiant battle by its faithful but diminishing congregation. We are all finding it strange not to gather there and have started to see each other in different local congregations. Naturally it does not quite feel the same, but to live is to change.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of this month, the Church celebrates the feast day of St Thomas the Apostle. He who had a very hard time after the death of Jesus believing about resurrection, especially as he had not had an early vision like some and who always wanted to know the far end of everything. Also, you will recall that Thomas could not comprehend what Jesus meant when he said, “I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.” Thomas’s question that followed was “How can we know the way?” and this prompted Jesus’ answer “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” A phrase that has given such hope and support to many. For Thomas, and all the disciples, to live was to change.

In all of our lifetimes, no matter how old we are, many things have changed ~ and so have each of us ~ It is inevitable, and to state the obvious, time does not stand still.

The complete phrase of Cardinal Newman is “to live is to change, and to change often is to be perfect.” While perfection is almost impossibly hard, like you I am surrounded by change, so I am resolved to go with it, enter into it with a positive spirit and enjoy my other dahlias, lest they feel abandoned. Hopefully Cardinal Newman and St Thomas would agree with that.

*Wes Blakey*



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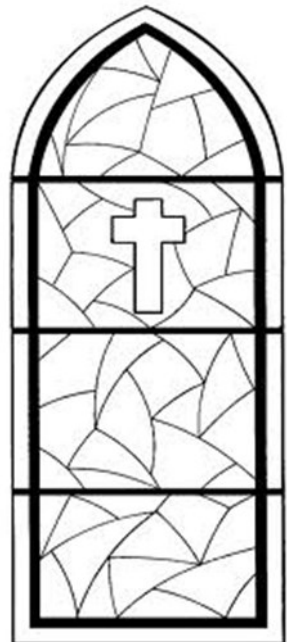
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## COMMUNITY NEWS

### Forthcoming events

The Parish of Earsdon and Backworth organises a number of social events throughout the year to raise funds and encourage fellowship.

### St Alban's:

St Alban's Ramblers group is back again for the summer, meeting every Tuesday outside the Vicarage, at 7pm. All are welcome to come and join us.



Some of the ramblers enjoying their walk at Druridge Bay Country Park on 20th June. (*Thank you Jill for the picture*).

Please do consider using the services of our advertisers who loyally support our church magazine. If you know anyone who would be interested in taking out an advertisement, please

**email: [magazine@stalbansearsdon.org.uk](mailto:magazine@stalbansearsdon.org.uk)**  
**or call Jean on 0191 2377273**



*A message from Anne and Jack Perry following the announcement by Rev Tim Mayfield at Sunday's (25th June) service, that the couple had received a card from the King and Queen!*

We would like to thank everyone for their good wishes on the occasion of our 65th wedding anniversary.  
Jack is working towards the 70th!  
Anne & Jack

*(From your editor Jean: I happen to know that this lucky couple had also received a card from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of their diamond anniversary!)*

\*\*\*\*\*

Saturdays throughout the summer  
St Alban's Parishioners'  
Open Gardens

See Joan for tickets and schedule for the gardens.

**Check out page 30 for a picture of Ella's garden opened on Saturday 10th June.**

If you have any suggestions, comments or requests regarding the magazine, or for anyone thinking of sending in their contribution for publication, please email it to [magazine@StAlbansEarsdon.org.uk](mailto:magazine@StAlbansEarsdon.org.uk) or call **Jean** on **0191 2377273**.

# Smile-lines

My friend was working at an amusement park when a couple stopped him. "Excuse me," said the woman, pointing to a pond. "What is that water made out of?" Bemused, my friend replied, "Two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen." "See?" she said to her boyfriend. "I told you it wasn't real."

\*\*

## Excuses, excuses

Found in a heap of recycled files donated to our school was this curiously labelled folder: "Excuses I Have Used."

\*\*

## Bathroom tidy

Constant nagging didn't seem to provide any relief from having to clean up the bathroom after each of my three teenage children. After I cleaned it one day, I resorted to posting a sign that read: 'Please leave the bathroom as you found it'.

Then I noticed the bathroom was in the usual mess after my son used it, so I called sharply:  
"Brian, how did you find the bathroom?"

After a brief pause, he replied, "Straight down the hall, first door on the right."

\*\*

## Couch

Friends sympathized as our curate complained that her back was really sore from moving furniture. "Why don't you wait till your teenage son gets home?" someone asked.

"Well, I could," our curate replied, "but the couch is easier to move if he's not on it."

# Smile-lines

## Church School Test

*For a church school exam, young children were asked questions about the Old and New Testaments. These were some of the (real) results...*

1. In the first book of the Bible, Guinness, God got tired of creating the world, so He took the Sabbath off.
2. Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. Noah's wife was called Joan of Ark. Noah built an ark and the animals came on in pears.
3. Lot's wife was a pillar of salt during the day, but a ball of fire during the night.
4. The Jews were a proud people and throughout history they had trouble with unsympathetic Genitals.
5. Sampson was a strong man who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah.
6. Samson slayed the Philistines with the axe of the Apostles.
7. Moses led the Jews to the Red Sea where they made unleavened bread which is bread without any ingredients.
8. The Egyptians were all drowned in the dessert. Afterwards, Moses went up to Mount Cyanide to get the ten amendments.
9. The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.
10. The seventh Commandment is thou shalt not admit adultery.
11. Moses died before he ever reached Canada. Then Joshua led the Hebrews in the battle of Geritol.
12. The greatest miracle in the Bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still, and he obeyed him.

\*\*

## Puppy

I arrived home from work to find all the windows and doors wide open. Apparently, our new puppy had had an accident. "Yeah, it was awful," my daughter told me. "In fact, when we first walked in, I thought you had come home early and were cooking dinner."

\*\*

# BITS 'N' PIECES

It was...

175 years ago, on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1848 that Waterloo railway station in London opened.

100 years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1923 that the Hollywood Sign was officially dedicated in Hollywood, Los Angeles. (It was originally erected as a temporary advert for a housing development called Hollywoodland.)

75 years ago, on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1948 that the National Health Service (NHS) began operating.

65 years ago, on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1958 that debutantes were presented at the British royal court for the last time.

60 years ago, on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1963 that the British government revealed that

intelligence officer Kim Philby was a long-term Soviet spy and that he was the 'third man' in the Cambridge spy ring. On 30<sup>th</sup> July the Soviet Union granted him political asylum.

Also 60 years ago, on 12<sup>th</sup> July 1963 that the Moors murderers, Ian Brady and Myra Hindley, killed their first victim, 16-year-old Pauline Reade, on Saddleworth Moor.

50 years ago, on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1973 that pharmaceutical companies in the UK agreed to pay more than £20 million in compensation to about 400 children who were born with birth defects after their mothers took thalidomide during pregnancy.


25 years ago, on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1998 that during the second Sudanese Civil War, both sides declared a ceasefire because of the famine.

It lasted until April 1999, then the war continued until 2005.

20 years ago, on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2003, that a team from the BBC reported that the Loch Ness monster did not exist. They had combed every inch of the loch using 600 sonar beams guided by satellite navigation, and still found nothing.

15 years ago, on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008 that NASA reported that its Phoenix Mars Lander had found frozen water in a soil sample taken from two inches below the surface of Mars.

10 years ago, on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2013 that Mel Smith, British comedian and screenwriter, died. Best known for the TV comedy series *Not the Nine O'Clock News* and *Alas Smith and Jones*.

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## The sweet smell of rain

Have you ever noticed the sweet, fresh smell after a downpour of rain? That 'smell of rain' is called petrichor, and it fascinates scientists.

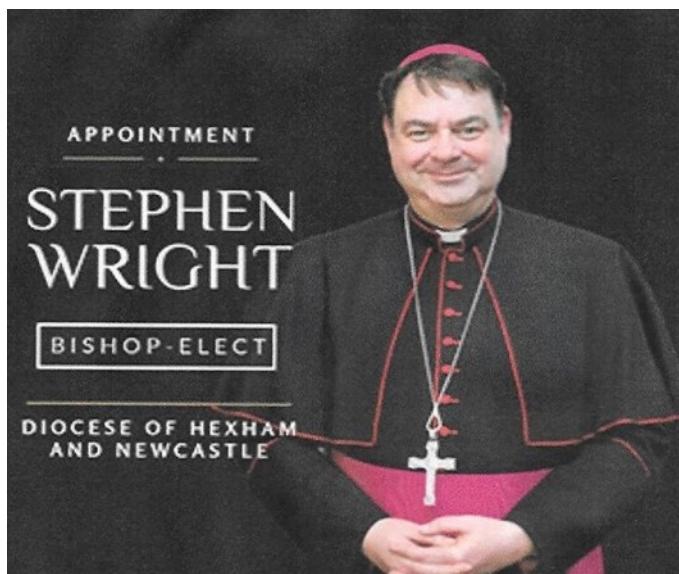
It was back in 1965 that scientists first named it. Petrichor comes from the Greek for stone, 'petra', and the golden fluid flowing through the veins of the immortals, 'ichor'.

Petrichor is produced when raindrops form air pockets on the rocks and soil, and softly force the release of aromatic chemicals trapped there. The petrichor-scented compounds drift upwards into the atmosphere as a gas, like a glass of champagne.

The odour itself comes mainly from a chemical called geosmin, which is made by bacteria in soil. Geosmin is made by soil microbes, to fend off hungry worms. Geosmin is highly pungent, and even just five parts per trillion can be picked up by the human nose.

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

**Right Reverend Stephen Wright**



On 14 June 2023, the Rt. Rev. Stephen Wright, 52, currently Auxiliary Bishop in Birmingham, was appointed by Pope Francis as 15<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle. He is due to be installed at St Mary's Cathedral on 14 July 2023.

Bishop Stephen - which is how he wishes to be known - was born in Stafford and later graduated in Law at Leicester University in 1992, was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1993 and practised as a barrister. After his decision to follow a very different vocation he completed his ecclesiastical studies at Saint Mary's College Seminary, Oscott in Birmingham and at the Venerable English College in Rome, obtaining a licentiate in theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University.

He was ordained as a priest in 2000 and was appointed parish priest in 2007, which he remained, albeit with ever-increasing other duties, until 2019. His twelve years' experience in the role has obviously remained with him. In his first letter as Bishop-Elect, he says: *I am delighted that at its heart a Bishop's ministry is like that of a Parish Priest. Stand with your people. Know them, serve them.*



He was appointed auxiliary Bishop in Birmingham, receiving episcopal consecration in October 2020.

He is a member of the Bishops' Advisory Panel supporting Bishop Paul Mason as Lead Safeguarding Bishop in the work of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA). He is a member of the Social Justice Department of the Bishops Conference with a focus on human rights and criminal/civil law matters.

We all know what a difficult position Bishop Stephen has inherited, and you will find his very forthright awareness of this and his resolution to deal with it in his letter on the Diocesan website [www.rcdhn.org.uk](http://www.rcdhn.org.uk) If you read nothing else this month.....

### **First Communions**

32 of our youngsters made their First Holy Communion last month at Saint Edward's Church. The whole of Year 4 of Star of the Sea Primary School attended morning Mass in Immaculate Heart of Mary Church the following week – and what a delight they were!

In July, 51 young people of the Deanery will be confirmed. We are extremely fortunate in our young people.

### **Diaconate Ordination**

On 5 July 2023, Joseph O'Brien, a seminarian at the Venerable English College in Rome and a member of our parish will be ordained into the Diaconate at the Church of Our Lady of the Snows, Palazzola. This former Franciscan Monastery, now a summer Retreat Centre for the English College, high in the Alban hills overlooking Lake Albano, is cooler in summer than the centre of Rome eighteen miles away. Joseph will be ordained as a priest at St Mary's Cathedral in Newcastle in 2024. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.



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

### **Parish Mass Times until further notice:**

*St Edward's: Saturday 9.30am, Sunday 10.00am*

*Immaculate Heart of Mary: Saturday 6.00pm, Tuesday to Friday 9.30am*

**Backworth Male Voice Choir and Backworth Brass Band Concert  
at St Alban's church on Saturday 24th June.**



This was a lovely evening's entertainment, which raised a profit of over £600 !

Many thanks to everyone involved, from the Events Committee to the excellent performers and of course those who attended.

*(Picture curtesy of Jill, although at the time of printing, she doesn't know I've used it. )*

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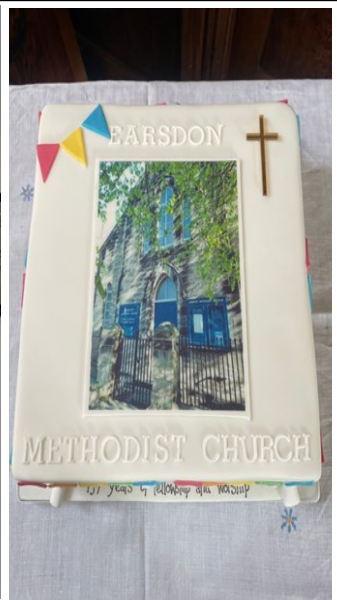
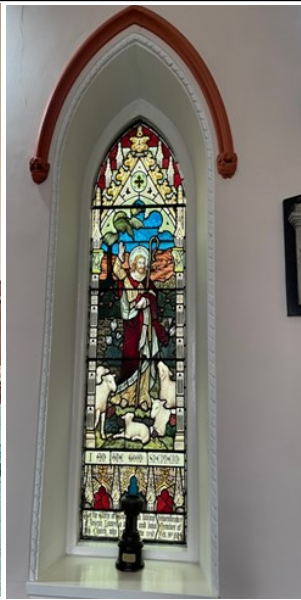
## July 2023



The first Primitive Methodist society met in 1825 at the home of John Lowes. It originally had only 8 members. It moved to a building in Teapot Close, which later became the Legion Hall and through the efforts of local blacksmith Joseph Lowes (a descendant of John) and James Hedley, the present building at Earsdon opened on Pentecost Sunday 1886. It was a much more central site.

The lower floor, known as ‘the School Room’ has seen many activities; one class of the local Day School -The Taylor Memorial School; our own Sunday School; during the 1939 -1945 World War The Royal Berkshire Regiment were stationed there, and many social gatherings including meals and coffee mornings.

After a lot of discussion, careful thought and prayers, we held the final service on 28<sup>th</sup> May, Pentecost Sunday and our 137<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary, which was led by Rev Canon Wes Blakey and Rev Eva Walker.



The people who came filled the Church, all of whom had some connection with the Church, many travelling quite a distance to be there. Also, it was live streamed and we know that two people watched it in Alaska USA. There were tributes by Mr Norman Bloomfield, one of our oldest and longest serving members; Rev Walker who gave a tribute from the Circuit; and Mr Ian Baird and Mrs Bev Henderson also took part. It was a service tinged with sadness, for as well as marking the closure of the church only days before we heard of the sad death of our Minister Rev John Mason. Yet along with this we recalled some happy memories of events past and of the faithful people who had worked hard and inspired many both in the present and in the past.

At the close of the service the celebration cake was cut by the Bloomfields and most people stayed to share in conversation and memories and so we ended on a good note.

*(continued on next page)*



We thank God for the 137 years Methodism through which this Church has reached out from this building and served many people. Baptisms, weddings, funerals and many services have been held here, as well as musical and social events. We thank God for all that this society has achieved and for all the men women and children who have given such a lot to each other and whose effect has reached much further afield. Looking back, we are proud of all that is past, and we can do no other than trust God for all that's to come.

*J W Wesley Blakey*



## JOHN PETER MASON

It is with sadness that we report the death of John our Minister on 25<sup>th</sup> May after a long and brave battle with bowel cancer.

Born in North Yorkshire the son of Eileen and Eric on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1960. When young his family home was in a number of places, his father being a Methodist Minister. He met and married Sue in Ponteland where they lived until he was accepted for the ministry himself. Before that he trained and worked as an accountant and then ministered in Carlisle and Leeds before coming to the North Shields and Whitley Bay Methodist Circuit, having responsibility for the North Shields and Earsdon Churches.

John was an outstanding Minister, extremely well organized, a great pastor being patient and kind with a spirit of humility in all he did and was.

On 9<sup>th</sup> June, his cremation was followed by a Thanksgiving Service at North Shields Methodist Church.

Our prayers continue with Sue and all his family. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

*JWWB*

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

## Diary Page for July 2023



Sunday	2nd		<b><u>4th Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wednesday	5th	9.30am		St Alban's
Sunday	9th		<b><u>5th Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	13th	9.30am		St John's
Sunday	16th		<b><u>6th Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wednesday	19th	9.30am		St Alban's
Sunday	23rd		<b><u>7th Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	27th	9.30am		St John's
Sunday	30th		<b><u>8th Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wednesday	2nd Aug	9.30am		St Alban's
Sunday	6th Aug		<b><u>9th Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	
			Transfiguration	

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

## Sunday Gospel Readings for July 2023 :

**2nd**

Matthew 10.40–end

**9th**

Matthew 11.16–19, 25–end

**16th**

Matthew 13.1–9, 18–23

**23rd**

Matt 13.24-30, 36-43

**30th**

Matt 13.31-33, 44-52

**6th August**

Luke 9.28-36

Website: [www.stalbansearsdon.co.uk](http://www.stalbansearsdon.co.uk)

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# SUDOKU

Complete the 9x9 grid with digits so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 blocks contains all of the digits from 1 to 9.

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

Please note - all material for next month's magazine (August) will need to be in by Wednesday 26th July. Thank you, *Jean*.

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Saturdays throughout the summer -  
St Alban's Parishioners' Open Gardens

Here we have Ella's lovely garden being enjoyed on 10th June.

# WORDSEARCH

On 3<sup>rd</sup> July the Church remembers St Thomas, also called Doubting Thomas, because he would not believe his fellow disciples' news of the Resurrection. But 'doubt' did not mean that Thomas did not love Jesus! Only a few weeks before, Thomas had urged his fellow disciples to follow Jesus to see Lazarus in Bethany, despite danger from the Jews. "Let us also go, that we may die with him." (John 11:16) Instead, Jesus had brought Lazarus back to life. Thomas was sometimes very confused about just where Jesus was headed. But in John 14:5 Jesus untangled his confused commitment: "I am going to my Father", and "No one comes unto the Father but by me." Finally, after the Resurrection, Jesus appeared to Thomas, showing him the wounds of His crucifixion. Thomas was electrified, and his response immediate: "My Lord and my God" (John 20:26). Thus Doubting Thomas' honest doubts, turned to honest faith, have become a reassurance for thousands of people down the centuries.

Thomas  
Resurrection  
Doubt  
Doubting  
Love  
Jesus  
Follow  
Lazarus  
Bethany  
Danger  
Jews  
Die  
Life  
Confused  
Going  
Father  
Wounds  
Crucifixion  
Response  
Immediate  
Lord  
God  
Honest  
Faith  
reassurance



## Church Contacts

### Former Earsdon Methodists:

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#### *PCC Treasurer*

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### St. John's Backworth:

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Tel: 07414 601 351

#### *Church warden*

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

Mobile: 0772 9805957

#### *Treasurer & Assistant Church Warden*

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### Our Lady, Star of the Sea :

#### *Parish Priest*

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