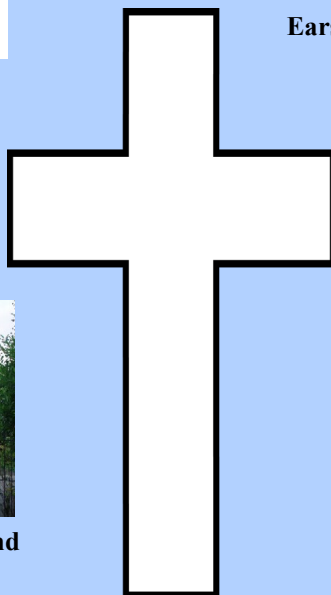




**St. Alban's Earsdon**



**Earsdon Methodist**



# **CHURCH VIEWS**



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**June  
2021**

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**Immaculate Heart of Mary**

# THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

## June 2021

One thing that we've probably missed over the past year is parties. This month should enable us to party again! Lots of Jesus' parables focus on parties, as they are a picture of the joy, hope and life of the kingdom of God. The parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14: 15-24) challenges us not to miss out on this.

In Jesus' day, when people accepted an invitation to a banquet, they were only told the actual time on the day: '*Come, for everything is now ready*' (17). Jesus invites each one of us to share in the life of his kingdom.

However, the guests made excuses for not coming. At the time, this would have been extremely insulting to the host. They said: '*I have just bought a field; I must try out my new team of oxen; I have just got married*' (18-20). These are all good things in themselves, however they reveal their priorities were elsewhere. We too can be pre-occupied with our own routines of work, family, retirement, holidays, friends, home, social media, that we forget God's priorities for our lives. Jesus calls for total commitment from his disciples. What priority in my life is holding me back from accepting his invitation?

How did the host respond? He ordered his servants to '*Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.*' (21). He invited the unexpected and unacceptable people to his banquet. Jesus makes the point that God's kingdom is open to all! Thinking about our family, friends, colleagues and neighbours, even if they're not like us or show little interest in God: Are we willing to offer them God's invitation to share His love and life?

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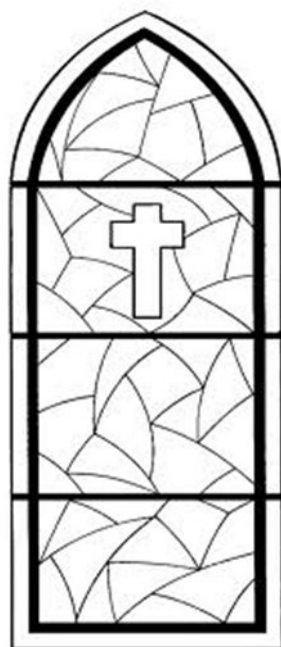
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## St Alban's Book Club

Our latest reads couldn't have been more different !

"Queen of the Desert" by Georgina Howell .....544 pages! Phew .... big applause to all who read every page! The movie version starring Nicole Kidman as Gertrude Bell takes less time!

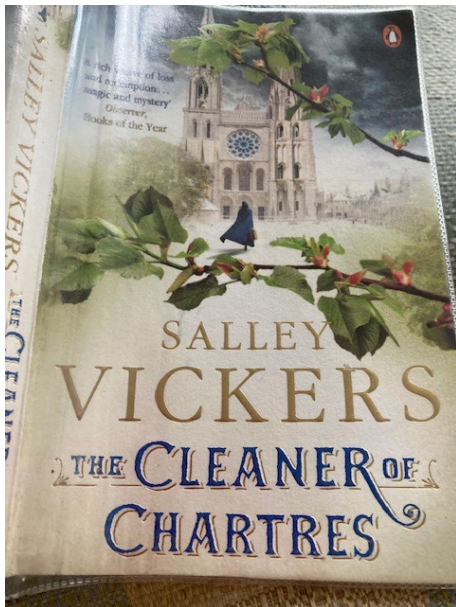
Our ratings range from 4.5 to 7.0 /10. We follow the amazing, extraordinary life of Gertrude Bell, born in the late 19th century into a wealthy industrial family on Teeside. The local references provoked interesting conversation in our group. Gertrude gains a first at Oxford, climbs peaks in the Alps before embarking on her career in the Middle East. She is a contemporary of T.E. Lawrence. She is instrumental in shaping politics in the Arab countries and achieved much respect. She sadly died young in 1926.

We did feel somewhat in awe after reading of all her achievements but also a touch of sadness for her too.

"The Cleaner of Chartres" by Salley Vickers .... A Liverpudlian by birth, Salley in Irish means "willow" !

This novel, which we will review in our yet to happen May meet-up has received good comments informally, as we communicate via what's app! Set in and around Chartres Cathedral and Rouen the novel centres around

the life of another extraordinary woman .... Agnes Morel, a foundling. Is she a cleaner of the cathedral and/ or souls?



We learn much about the Cathedral's architecture as well as the folk who live nearby, as the author reveals Agnes' story from past to present. If you fancy a trip to France without "isolating" then you'll enjoy this read. A bientot!!

*Thanks to Dianne Morgan for this article.*

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## **Forthcoming events**

As we all know, there have been no events allowed during the Covid 19 restrictions, but as these restrictions are gradually eased, we hope to have new events to tell you about, in the near future!

## **Earsdon and Backworth Mothers' Union**

There have been no updates regarding the MU, due to the Covid 19 restrictions. The meetings may be able to resume again in September, and we will be delighted to keep you informed!

## **Earsdon and Wellfield Women's Institute:**

As mentioned above, virus restrictions have meant that no meetings have been allowed. However, there will be (fingers tightly crossed) news for you during or just after September!

### **What do you think will happen after Covid?**

You can take your choice: a recent survey has found that a third of us think society may *never* go back to the old ways, a third of us think we will go back to *exactly* as we were before, and a third of us think that we will be *keener than ever* to stay together.

The Together Coalition, chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury, has been working for the past year on a piece of research to track just what has happened to communities during lockdown.

The new research has found that “people feel a stronger sense of connection to their neighbours and community. ... We found a clear public appetite for a society in which we are more connected to each other, and the community spirit of 2020 is kept alive.”

It also found that around 12.4million people have volunteered during the pandemic, 4.6million of them for the first time. And 75 per cent of those volunteers would be happy to do so again.



Another of the genuine chalk boards :



\*\*\*\*\*



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**or call Jean on 0191 2377273**

A message from Joyce Whitehouse:

**Christian Aid.**

Many thanks to all who contributed so generously to the congregation collections from both churches, for Christian Aid. £215 was raised which was excellent considering the restrictions Covid has imposed on our fund raising.

This year our emphasis has been on climate change and the problems it brings. We are reminded daily of the misery suffered by so many in our troubled world and the aid agencies work constantly to bring some purpose and dignity to the underprivileged and displaced who are ever needful of financial support.



\*\*\*\*\*

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## Home alone, wanting a gnome

Do you yearn for a garden gnome? You are not the only one.

Since last year's lockdown, garden centres have been reporting a 'massive upswing' in ornament sales, due to people being forced to spend more time in their gardens. Gnomes top the list of most-wanted ornaments, with a near 100 per cent increase in sales over the past two years.

There was even a gnome crisis a while back, when the Suez Canal got jammed, and thousands of gnomes on their way to UK gardens could not get through.



\*\*\*\*\*  
\* 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** \*  
\* or call **Jean** on **0191 2377273**. \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

# BITS 'N' PIECES

It was...

175 years ago, on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1846 that Belgian musical instrument maker Adolphe Sax patented the saxophone.

100 years ago on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1921 that Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was born on a dining room table in Corfu.

90 years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1931 that Jesse Boot, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Trent, British pharmacist and philanthropist, died. He had turned his father's Boots Company into a national chain of chemists.

65 years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1956 that the first European Cup final (soccer) was held, in Paris. Real Madrid (Spain) beat Stade de Reims (France) 4-3. The European Cup is now known as the UEFA Champions League.

60 years ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1961 that Carl Jung, Swiss psychiatrist and psychologist, died. He was the founder of analytical psychology.

50 years ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1971 that John Reith (Lord Reith), 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Reith, Scottish business executive and politician, died. He was Manager and Director General of the BBC in its formative years. He also formed BOAC (now British Airways).

40 years ago, on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1981 that the first report of AIDS took place. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the USA reported that five homosexual men in Los Angeles were suffering from a rare form of pneumonia found in patients with weakened immune systems. These were later recognised as the

first official AIDS cases. (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.)

Also 40 years ago, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1981 that American tennis player John McEnroe earned the press nickname 'Superbrat' when he threw a tantrum during his first-round match at Wimbledon. He hurled abuse at the umpire, swore at the referee, and popularised the phrase 'you cannot be serious' when he disputed a line call. Nevertheless, he went on to win the men's singles championship that year.

20 years ago, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2001 that two British schoolboys who murdered two-year-old James Bulger in Liverpool in 1993 were released from secret custody after 8 years. They were given new identities and moved to secret locations.



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Unfortunately there is no **Secret Life of St Alban's and St John's Folk**" this month, but we hope normal service will be resumed soon. In the meantime, here is another subtly humorous letter from the fictional retired vicar to his nephew, a curate.

## St James the Least of All

### On getting to church at a social distance

The Rectory  
St James the Least of All



My dear Nephew Darren,

Since your parishioners mostly live in an area of half a square mile, where their only concern in getting to church is whether to take the underpass, or to risk a dash across the ring road, you may have little understanding of the problems our folk have in travelling our long country lanes to church, especially as we are keeping our social distance from each other.

Several parishioners have decided that they can't possibly share cars even with their own spouses, as in their 15-room homes they have successfully (and in some cases, happily) avoided each other for months. So the lane outside the church has filled up each week with Mercedes nudging Audis, and Land Rovers easing in between Bentleys.

Others arrive on horseback. But they are careless about leaving their horses to graze in the churchyard, and I have had to remind them twice that flowers in memorial vases are not fodder. The horses do help to keep the grass down, but unfortunately our verger now objects to standing outside during Matins, holding the reins of half a dozen horses. He says it is not part of his job description, which only confirms my view that there is entirely too much fuss these days about having job descriptions at all.

Major Crompton's devotion to his new sit-on lawnmower has inspired him to travel to church on it. Since he is unable to uncouple the mowing apparatus, the tarmac on his two-mile drive is acquiring interesting patterns.

His drive at two miles per hour along narrow lanes means he arrives leading a procession of cars with drivers given the opportunity to exercise the Christian virtue of patience.

Mrs Pendleton, on the other hand, leads a small but select group from the Mothers' Union who are all keen cyclists. They all arrive on a whoosh of fresh air, their hair in total disarray, but with pink cheeks glowing with health. Nobody in church minds sitting near them, as anyone who can manage to pedal an old three-gear bicycle up the hill to our church is most unlikely to be sickening for anything.

Finally, of course, the majority arrive on foot, having negotiated fields, stiles and assorted cattle on the way. The countryside may well praise God, but one does wish they wouldn't bring quite so much of it into church.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace.

\*\*\*\*\*

**A prayer for the lonely and lost**

Heavenly Father,  
Thank you for loving us. So many people feel lonely and isolated and unloved today. In a culture that values above all things, help us to look beyond our i-phones and i-pads and selfies. Help us to see with your eyes, to love with your heart; to reach out to the lost and lonely and marginalised with your compassion. Help us to reflect your Kingdom values and, by the way we live, enable your love to be experienced by all who so need you.  
In Jesus name, Amen.

*By Daphne Kitching*

Mgr Faley is going into hospital on 29 May for a hip replacement and will recover over the coming weeks. Fr Noel Colahan has kindly agreed to celebrate the Sunday Masses during his recovery. Mgr Faley is grateful for the prayers and support of parishioners.  
*(Correct at time of printed publication - now delayed)*

# CHURCH VIEWS FOR JUNE 2021 FROM THE PARISH OF OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA

## News from the Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea



This cherry-picker was used to access the arched stained glass windows of the apse, behind the main altar at St Edward's Church in Whitley Bay, one of the three churches which make up the Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea. Major external renovation has been carried out throughout the month of May, under the supervision of the Property Department of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. The ninety three year old Grade II listed building was in some need of TLC. Its Listing comes from its design as "a striking Romanesque design that blends German and Italian Romanesque elements to successful effect", and its brickwork is indeed striking.

Work began in 1926 and the church was opened by Bishop Thorman in April 1928. One of its noteworthy internal features is the painting of the Descent from the Cross which was added to the west face of the organ case in 1945 to commemorate parishioners who had died in World War II and members of the Tyneside Irish Brigade in World War I.

The church was re-ordered in 1988, and blessed and re-dedicated by Bishop Hugh Lindsey in the same year. The new stained glass windows designed by local artist Paul Gannon and installed between 1988 and 2007 greatly enhance the interior of the building.

The Parish looks forward to welcoming full congregations again in June.



## Parish Walking Group

A further sign of a happy return towards normality is the first walk of the Parish Walking Group in the new relaxation. On 1st June walkers will meet at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church at 10.00am and complete a six mile circular local walk. Later walks will be from local meeting points



to avoid car-sharing until normality is established and wider horizons beckon. Anyone who would like to walk with us simply needs to join us at the church.

## First Holy Communions

Good to see that the First Holy Communion programme is underway too, yet another hopeful sign for our young people and their families. The final sessions will take place later in June. Monsignor Faley and the catechist team will also meet with the children's parents and carers by Zoom before the First Holy Communion Masses on 26 June and 3 July, always occasions for the entire parish to look forward to.

## Remembering Fr Tom Cunningham



This photograph of the late Fr Tom Cunningham, and his Commission as a Flt. Lieutenant Chaplain in the Royal Air Force, have been mounted in the Sacristy at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church where he was resident for several years in

his retirement. One of his family links with the area was that he celebrated his first Mass after ordination at the church of Our Lady and St Edmund in Backworth where his uncle was parish priest. May he rest in peace.

*(Please see also a note at the foot of page 15.)*

## **Reflected Faith: Sit and be Still**

How do you 'sit' in church? I'm a wriggler and change my position on the seat often. I cross one leg over the other, then swap them over, stretch them out, then cross them at the ankles. I do the same with my arms. I lean one way and then the other.

In other words, 'I'm a fidget.' But having been absent from a church building for so long, I wanted to think this month about simply sitting and being still before the Lord.

I'm well aware we've done little else this last 18 months – but if you manage to get into a church building, for whatever reason I'd like to encourage us all to just sit still and breathe in the place. To relish being 'back'!

To sit 'heavily' in that spot. To feel the solidity of the surface you are sitting on. Lean into it. Feel how it supports you. Feel each part of your body where it is touching the chair or pew.

Look around you at all the distinctive seating set aside for the different participants of the church: the choir, the worship leader, a deacon or curate, the priest and so on.

In an Anglican church there will usually be a chair especially dedicated for the use of the Bishop.

However plain or fancy each piece of furniture is within your building, they all have the same purpose. To hold the person and keep them safe.

*This month:*

As you sit in the church building – or at home if you are not able to do so – think of all those people in the Bible stories who sat with Jesus. The number of times He taught in the Temple or in a synagogue, or to crowds gathered on a hill. Recall the Last Supper and His friends gathered sitting with Him to eat and share the Passover meal, and then recall the meal with the men from the Emmaus Road. So many meal times with the bold and the weak, the saints and the sinners. With you and me.

*Taken from The Revd Dr Jo White's Reflected Faith on what it can really mean to 'be still.'*

*I particularly like this piece because I too am a fidget. - Jean.*

# Smile-lines

## Neighbourhood Watch

In one small rural village the local vet also led the local Neighbourhood Watch group. Late one night the phone rang, and his wife answered. An agitated voice inquired, "Is your husband there?"

"He is, but tell me, do you need him as the vet or the Neighbourhood Watch?" the wife asked.

"Both!" was the reply. "We can't get our dog's mouth open, and there's a burglar in it!"

\*\*

## Talking

Bishop Douglas Feaver, the notoriously outspoken former Bishop of Peterborough, was presiding at his first Diocesan Synod and a man at the back had been droning on and on for some length of time. Finally, a lady called out to protest that she could not hear what he was saying. Bishop Douglas replied: "You should thank God and sit down."

\*\*

## For sale

An estate agent's board outside a redundant church:  
FOR SALE.  
Suitable for conversion.



\*\*

## Belief

Our elderly vicar was very devout, but sometimes lost his place during the service. One Sunday as we reached the Creed there was a long silence, so the curate went across to him and gently touched his arm. "I believe in God," she whispered.

The vicar smiled back happily. "Oh so do I, so do I!"

\*\*

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## **22nd June St Alban, Britain's first Christian martyr**

Alban was the very first Christian martyr in Britain - or at least the first we know of. A 'martyr' is someone who has died for the faith - the word literally means 'witness'. He was probably killed during the persecution under the emperor Diocletian in the early years of the fourth century, in the late stages of the Roman occupation of Britain. His martyrdom took place in the amphitheatre outside the Roman city of Verulamium, which is now St Albans, in Hertfordshire.

The church historian Bede, writing six hundred years after Alban's death, records that Alban was a Roman citizen (possibly a soldier) who gave shelter to a priest who was being hunted by the Romans. During the priest's stay in his home, Alban was converted to the Christian faith. When the soldiers eventually tracked the priest down, they arrived at Alban's house and insisted on searching it. What they found was Alban dressed in the priest's clothes, while their real prey escaped. They arrested Alban and demanded that he make a sacrifice to the Emperor - a common test of loyalty. He refused. He was then condemned to death and taken into the amphitheatre, which still stands in the fields below St Alban's Abbey, to be put to death. One of his executioners was converted, Bede claims, but the other one took a sword and beheaded him.

He was buried nearby, on a site where a shrine was later erected. In the early fifth century two Continental bishops, Germanus of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes, were sent to Britain and record that they visited the shrine of Alban at Verulamium. The date of their visit was given as 429.

The martyrdom of Alban is a reminder that Christianity was planted first in these islands during the Roman occupation, though it was all but extinguished in England in the dark centuries that followed, until people like David, Cuthbert and the other Celtic missionaries restored the faith in many parts of the land - especially in the north. The fact that his shrine existed and was venerated right through to the time of Bede also demonstrates that the faith did not die out completely, even in the south of England.

# Earsdon Methodist Church

*June 2021*

At a meeting of myself with our Church Stewards and property Steward, we concluded that our Church would not yet open for Public Worship. Whilst we would very much like to do so, there are restriction of such a small building with access (in reality) by only one door.

We felt that the lack of singing; the lack of gathering before and after, the wearing of masks, as well as the careful and regular cleaning and sanitizing would be something that most are still uncomfortable about.

As the year wears on and we anticipate gradual lifting of restrictions we felt that we would be more comfortable aiming for a time after the end of June, thus allowing for any unexpected spikes and allowing us to fully deep clean the building appropriately.

Therefore, we are aiming to re-open for the beginning of the Methodist year on Sunday 5th September.

Hopefully there will be much singing and wide smiles then..

Wes Blakey

\*\*\*\*\*

DON'T LAUGH

My family laugh at me because I have 3 kinds of handkerchiefs: ~  
Everyday ; Gardening and Sunday best

I know it's crazy, but it was the method I grew up with and I find it very difficult to break.

It's the same with ties. I love ties, and one of the things I am looking forward to after all lockdown restrictions end is that even though on some days you can see me in a clerical collar, I yearn also to be able to attend some formal occasion that needs a collar and tie to be worn.

It's just that I belong to the generation of males who always used to carry hankies and wear a shirt and tie when going anywhere.

Now it is acceptable for folks of all ages wear jeans at formal occasions; and men my age walk the streets in tee-shirts and shorts even in winter!

Whilst I must agree with my son who says – “Do whatever floats your boat”, and who reminds me that I often quote the saying of John Henry Newman “To live is to change.”

Yet I confess that on some occasions I can’t help wondering if all change is good. For instance, I have just thrown out old gardening jeans.

Yes, they were stained and frayed. Yes, they were getting a bit tight. Yes, I do have other trousers I can wear in the garden, but I’d had them for years, and they were just the job, ~ so I wonder if this was a good move.

Yet I recall how I would despair sometimes of my friend Mark, who lived to the ripe old age of 90 and died some years ago, who was really stuck in his ways. For instance, Mark had the same routine every morning when he went for his morning newspaper and pint of milk.

Even though he was partially sighted, he never faltered in his daily journey and crossed the very busy main road at the same certain place, launching himself in between the traffic, ignoring the blaring of car horns and the sometimes screeching of brakes, risking life and limb. Then, to everyone’s joy and relief, mine included, the local Council constructed a pedestrian crossing on this traffic laden road.

A few days after its opening I was passing it, only to see Mark attempting to cross the road 20 yards further away from this innovation. I thought he did not realise what had happened on this road and so went down to him and asked him if he did not realise that this new crossing was now in operation. His reply was typical, “Oh, yes, I know where it is, but they’ve built it in the wrong place. I always cross down here!”

Mark did NOT cope well with change!

We all have had to cope with a lot of changes in recent times, most of which we have managed with fortitude, but some have been hard to take. In the Bible there are numbers of examples of people who faced change. For example, Saul of Tarsus took quite a while to change from Christian persecutor to Christian preacher. And when he did amongst the many things he wrote in letters he said, (I paraphrase) “Will hardship or distress or peril separate us from the love of Christ? No! We are conquerors through him who loves us.”

It can be a big thing to accept change, and our approach needs to be designed on true honest to goodness love, and remember no-one looks forward to change, except perhaps a baby with a dirty nappy.

Wes Blakey

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

## Diary Page for June 2021



Wednesday	2nd	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	6th		<b><u>First Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	10th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	13th		<b><u>Second Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wednesday	16th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	20th		<b><u>Third Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	24th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	27th		<b><u>Fourth Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wednesday	30th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	4th July		<b><u>Fifth Sunday after Trinity</u></b>	



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

## Sunday Gospel Readings June 2021:

6th	13th	20th
Mark 3. 20- end.	Mark 4. 26 – 34	Mark 4. 35 – 41

27th	4th July
Mark 5. 21 – end.	Mark 6. 1 - 13

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plants centre



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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.

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

Please note - all material for next month's magazine (July 2021) will need to be in before Wednesday, 23 June 2021. *Thank you.*

# The **co-operative** funeralcare

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## Marti's Musings 87

The walks are back on! I'm so excited! I've really missed going on our walks and wildlife spotting. This week we went to Morpeth and had a pootle round Carlisle Park. We said hello to Emily Davidson, smelt lots of wild garlic and ended up in The Waterford Arms. I'm allowed in now and it's the first time all of us had actually been inside a pub!

I've also snuck into church and sat in the balcony, it was lovely sitting listening to Tim's sermon all about listening, I was fascinated and it was a real treat to go. I'm curious to see the new projector in place and think the live streaming of services will be great.

I'm off to set up the laptop in readiness.

Lots of excitement  
Marti xx



# WORDSEARCH

## St Alban - the first British martyr

Persecution of Christians worldwide is rising fast, so it is worth remembering St Alban, the first British martyr. Alban was a Roman citizen living in England when the Roman emperor, Diocletian, began a fierce persecution. Soon Alban found a desperate priest on his doorstep, hunted by local soldiers. Alban gave the priest shelter, and within days was converted. When the soldiers arrived, Alban took the priest's place, refused to offer sacrifice to the Roman gods, and was condemned to death. Alban went to his execution on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 250AD with such serenity that one of the executioners was converted. Alban died on the site of the Hertfordshire town that now bears his name.

Alban  
martyr  
persecution  
Roman  
emperor

Diocletian  
priest  
converted  
soldiers  
sacrifice

gods  
condemned  
death  
execution  
serenity

died  
site  
town  
name  
doorstep



## **Church Contacts**

### Earsdon Methodists:

#### *Minister*

Rev'd John Mason, 61 Ingleside Road, North Shields NE29 9PB. Tel: 2908745

Email [jmason4468@gmail.com](mailto:jmason4468@gmail.com)

#### *Church Council Secretary*

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

#### *Church Treasurer*

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

#### *Church Stewards*

Mrs S Bowen 7 Woodside, Prudhoe, NE42 5PH. Tel: 01661 835811

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

#### *Reader*

Edward Newton, 10 Hesleyside Rd., South Wellfield, Whitley Bay , NE25 9HB

Tel: 2528977

#### *Church wardens*

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

Tel: 07841 986 019

Mr Ali Griffiths, 144 John St, Cullercoats, NE30 4PJ, Mobile: 0772 9805957

Tel : 0191 3665269 .

#### *PCC Secretary*

Mrs Jo McEvedy, 31 Front Street, Earsdon, Whitley Bay NE25 9JX.

Mobile 07855 405605

#### *PCC Treasurer*

Mr R Swindells, 81 St Mary's Avenue, Whitley Bay NE26 3TS. Tel 252 3919

### St. John's Backworth:

#### *Vicar*

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

Tel: 07414 601 351

#### *Reader*

Edward Newton 10 Hesleyside Rd., South Wellfield, Whitley Bay NE25 9HB

Tel: 2528977

#### *Assistant Church warden*

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

#### *Treasurer*

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

### Our Lady, Star of the Sea :

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