

*Pastoral Letter and Church Notices*  
*ST. HELEN'S CHURCH, LOW FELL*

4.5.2025

*Second Sunday after Easter*

Acts 9. 1-6, 7-20

Revelations 5. 11-end

John 21. 1-19

**Collect**

Risen Christ,

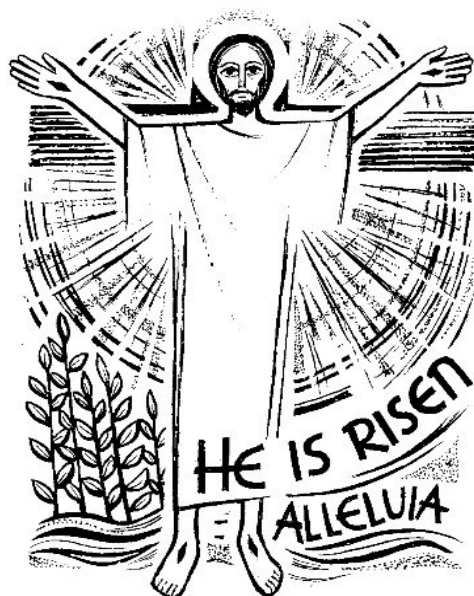
you filled your disciples with boldness and fresh hope:

strengthen us to proclaim your risen life

and fill us with your peace,

to the glory of God the Father.

Amen



**Post Communion**

Living God,  
your Son made himself known to his disciples  
in the breaking of bread:  
open the eyes of our faith,  
that we may see him in all his redeeming work;  
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.  
Amen

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**Safeguarding Statement**

*The Parochial Church Council is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and nurturing environment for everyone, especially for children, young people and vulnerable adults. It has adopted and approved the Church of England policy for promoting a safer church. This policy deals with all aspects of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.*

*To discuss any safeguarding concerns relating to St Helens please contact either*

- *the Parish Safeguarding Churchwarden 07505105184*
- *the Parish Priest, Rev Yvonne Greener on 0191 [4911317greener.yvonne@gmail.com](mailto:4911317greener.yvonne@gmail.com)*

*Concerns can also be raised with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Mrs Beth Miller - she can be contacted as follows: Address: Cuthbert House, Stonebridge, Durham DH1 3RY*

*Email: [beth@bethmillerisw.co.uk](mailto:beth@bethmillerisw.co.uk) or [beth.miller@durham.anglican.org](mailto:beth.miller@durham.anglican.org)*

*Mobile: 07968 034075. For further information please also see the Diocese of Durham safeguarding pages: <https://durhamdiocese.org/category/safeguarding/>*

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**A Prayer for Peace from Sanctuary Foundation**

Lord God protector of widows and orphans, may you bring your comfort to every family and every child that is grieving, frightened or homeless because of the conflict in Israel and Gaza.

Jesus wonderful Counsellor, may you give the wisdom and grace to all  
who are working to find a peaceful resolution.

Spirit of peace may you change people's hearts and minds so this conflict can end quickly  
for your names sake.

Triune and Almighty God, help us to trust you at this time and serve you by showing  
compassion to all those around us.

Amen.

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**Worship and notices week beginning Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

## **Services and Prayer**

**9.30am Sunday Service 4<sup>th</sup> May at St. Helen's**

**10am Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May Family Service Christian Aid**  
**Followed by refreshments in the hall**

**Eucharist at St Helen's on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 12noon**

**10.30am Eucharist each Sunday at**  
**Bensham and Teams, St. Chad's**

All are welcome to join in worshipping at St.Helen's and St.Chad's, we hope to see you soon. We will offer wafers and wine (optional) during the Eucharist and will, for the time being, stay in our places and share the Peace in non-physical ways.

There are services of morning and night prayer available on the website with attached readings and prayers. Alternatively, you may participate in worship with Songs of Praise BBC1 at 1.15pm or Morning Service with BBC Radio 4 at 8.10am.

### **Prayer and Evening Prayer**

We usually meet each Wednesday, Friday and Sunday morning for morning prayer in church, you are welcome to join us from 8.45am, to begin at 9am, and at 3.45pm, to begin at 4pm.

### **Life Call Vocations Event**

**Saturday 10th May 10am - 4pm at Cuthbert House, Stonebridge,  
Durham, DH1 3RY**

Please see attached poster for more information regarding this event.

### **Confirmation 2025**

If you are interested in exploring faith and becoming Confirmed, please see the attached information and contact Revd Canon Yvonne for further information.

**Christian Aid Week is coming 11<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> May**

### **Dying crops means food stops**

Uncertainty looms over Indigenous farming communities in the Alta Verapaz region of Guatemala, Central America.

In this forested area of mountains and rivers, the livelihoods, traditions and very survival of farmers and their families are threatened by deadly droughts, savage storms and monster monoculture plantations.

That includes Amelia, a resourceful and determined 24-year-old farmer who lives with her husband and their two children, 8-year-old Lázaro and 4-year-old Yakelin, on ancient and beautiful land that's been in Amelia's family for generations.

The family belong to the Indigenous Q'eqchi' community, who are close, and live by a blend of Mayan and Catholic traditions.

Amelia's farm, first and foremost, feeds her young children. She tries to grow a range of crops and root vegetables that will provide her children with a balanced diet, such as bananas, peppers and cassava. This way, Amelia can protect them from malnutrition.

But the climate crisis is ravaging farms like Amelia's, causing both the dry and rainy seasons that would once arrive with predictability to intensify and shift erratically. As the river runs dry and water becomes scarce, the vital crops that Amelia depends on wither and die before her eyes. Amelia's ability to protect Lázaro and Yakelin is slipping away. **Because dying crops means food stops.**

**'My first priority is to feed my family,'** says Amelia. **'I worry about what my children will eat.'**

These conditions are challenging enough, but Amelia and her community also have to cope with the impact of industrial plantations on their landscape.

Amelia's community, like so many others, have done little to cause the climate crisis but they are paying the highest price.

Despite these challenges, Amelia's faith keeps her strong. And her hope for a better future drives her to keep working to improve life for her family and community.



**'I go to Catholic church,'** she explains. **'For me, faith is very important, and a way for me to reach harmony in my life.'**

#### **Pushing back**

As the community's farms are devastated, the search for solutions becomes critical. **'With high heat, there is little we can do but adapt,'** says Amelia.

When Amelia discovered the work of Christian Aid's partner, Congcoop, she quickly put herself forward as a community representative who would attend the specialist agricultural training on offer.

With funding from Christian Aid, Congcoop support communities to return to Indigenous farming practices and adopt agroecological approaches that conserve their land, culture and livelihood. Agroecology, put simply, is farming in a sustainable way that works with, not against, nature.

By joining Congcoop, Amelia's gaining the skills and knowledge to cultivate native seeds that are better suited to the changing climate. She's planning planting schedules that will deliver multiple harvests throughout the year, making her own organic fertiliser, and constructing rainwater collection systems. By changing the way she farms, Amelia's pushing back against the climate crisis.

Amelia is recognised as a leader in her community. Whatever she learns, she shares – confidently training other women to adapt their farming practices too.

Whatever the future may hold, Amelia remains resilient. As Programme Officer, Gerardo C. Tobar, says: **‘Amelia’s story is one of resistance, and it’s just beginning.’** The unstoppable power of hope compels Christian Aid and its amazing supporters to stand up for communities in crisis and support people living in poverty.

The organisation, now in its 80th year, and its supporters are joining together once again during **Christian Aid Week (11-17 May)** to fundraise in all kinds of ways – from coffee mornings and craft stalls to hiking and biking for the 70k in May challenge.

With **7 days to make a difference**, every gift, act and prayer counts.

**Will you demonstrate the unstoppable power of hope and help fund vital tools and training, so farmers like Amelia can push back against the climate crisis and beat hunger?**

- £6 could pay for the seed trays that kickstart a plant nursery at someone’s home.
- £10 could pay for the pruning scissors that mean a farmer can care for their cacao trees.
- £20 could buy two pounds of climate resilient seeds that diversify a family’s crop.
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**Find out more about the campaign at <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>**

### **Myanmar Earthquake Appeal (from Christian Aid)**

Families and communities are in fear of their lives after a deadly 7.7 magnitude earthquake devastated Myanmar on Friday 28 March. A second 6.4 magnitude quake followed soon after, making the destruction even more widespread.

We don’t yet know the full extent of the devastation, but we do know that huge numbers of women, men and children are without drinking water, food, shelter and power. Homes have been destroyed, access roads torn up, and we’ve had reports that the Kyaukse Kinta Dam in Mandalay has burst, flooding the surrounding lowlands.

We are working a great speed with our partners to identify the communities whose lives are now at most risk and in need of our immediate help. With your support today, we can provide water treatment kits, food parcels, shelters and cash for vital supplies, such as medicines for families who are fighting for their very survival.

**St Helen’s will be supporting Christian Aid week as usual but if people would like to donate to Myanmar specifically please visit [caid.org.uk/HelpMyanmar](https://caid.org.uk/HelpMyanmar)**

### **Safeguarding Training**

Church of England basic training on safeguarding is available to anyone who is interested. If you require further information please ask Helen Jones.

### **Lone Worker Safeguarding Policy**

A reminder that St Helen’s has a Lone Worker policy in place for anyone who works/volunteers in any capacity for the church on their own. A paper copy of the policy is available from Helen Jones or for an electronic copy, please email:

[office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com](mailto:office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com)

### St Helen's Toddler Group

St Helen's now has a thriving toddler group which meets every Friday afternoon from 1pm-3pm. It is very much appreciated by families, carers and, of course, the children.

Joan and Elaine have helped this group to grow, offering a warm welcome and building relationships with all who come along.

We would really value more help for this group, if you might have a couple of hours to spare on a Friday afternoon and are interested to volunteer, please be in touch via email:

[office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com](mailto:office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com)

### Toy Donations

The box of toys which is left outside of church is proving very popular. We would be grateful for any donations of clean toys in good working order please. These can be left in church on Sundays, Wednesdays or Fridays or in the church hall on Wednesday mornings. Thank you!

### St Helen's Church Hall

A reminder that the church hall is available to hire for birthday parties/events on Saturdays and Sunday afternoons. We also have space for regular bookings (exercise classes, book club, craft activities etc) during the week. For further information contact :

[office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com](mailto:office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com)

### 'SAVE THE DATE'

**Please add these upcoming events at St Helen's to your diary**

*Details will be confirmed closer to the events*



**Three Choirs Concert**  
gibside singers  
gresley male voice choir  
city of newcastle male voice  
choir  
st helens church  
belle vue bank  
low fell neg 6br  
saturday  
may 31 2025  
at 7pm  
tickets £8  
Tickets from :  
St Helens Church  
or pay at the door

## Three Choirs Concert

**Gibside Singers, Gresley Choir and  
City of Newcastle Male Voice Choir**

**Saturday 31st May 7pm**

*With refreshments and raffle*

***Tickets available on the night at the  
door***



**A Solo Recital**

1 June, 2025 @ 13:00  
St. Helens Church  
Belle Vue Bank, Low Fell  
NE9 6BR

Including works by:  
Slapin, Solomon, Bach,  
Paganini, Hindemith, and  
Reger



Scott Slapin, violist

**FREE CONCERT!**  
\*suggested donations to benefit St. Helens\*

Free car park access nearby  
Join us for refreshments after the performance.

[www.scottslapin.com](http://www.scottslapin.com)

**Performance by Scott Slapin**

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June 1pm**

*Followed by refreshments in the church hall.*

*Tickets available on the door, on the day.*

**Programme available soon**

[The Official Site of Scott Slapin](#)

Scott is a recitalist and composer. His viola playing has received critical acclaim in Fanfare, Strad, Musical Opinion, Mundo Clásico, and the American Record Guide, and his popular recital compositions have been performed by hundreds of viola players worldwide.

**"Slapin is a real viola virtuoso..."**

**American Record Guide**



**St Helen's Church Summer Fair**

**Saturday 14th June**

**1-4pm**

*Join us for our Summer Fair in the church hall*

**Stalls Include**

**Jewellery**

**Jams and Preserves**

**Cake Stall**

**Pocket Money Gifts**

**Tombola**

**Preloved toys and games**

**Home Crafted Cards**

**Handicrafts**

**Kiddies Corner**

**Plants**

**Raffle**

**Tea / Coffee & soft drinks**

**We would appreciate your help with raffle prizes, to include items for hampers. Please leave in the church or the hall by 7 JUNE.**

**Thank you.**

**Performance by the Felling Male Voice Choir Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July 7pm**

*We are pleased to welcome back the Felling Male Voice Choir*

**Further details to follow**

*With refreshments and raffle*

**Christmas Fair Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November 1pm to 4pm**

**Gateshead Council Award Nominees –**

**Vote for Wendy Young**

As Secretary of Low Fell Gardeners and Secretary of Low Fell Forum, Wendy leads on the planting and maintenance of all Low Fell's planters and baskets securing plants, bulbs and equipment and helping organising planting events, awards and Remembrance and Christmas Lights Switch ons and is an active member of the Friends of Saltwell Park. Wendy has also taken on the role of Secretary of the Volunteer Gardeners and the Forum following the retirement of her predecessor in 2017/18.

Wendy also advised and helped with planting at St Helen's church and outside of the church all.

**Please vote for her in the Volunteer of the Year section – follow this link to vote:**

**[Gateshead Awards - Gateshead Council](#)**

**International Firefighter's Day Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May**

To celebrate International Firefighters Day, our Chief Fire Officer has extended an invitation to members of local churches and faith communities to pop along to their local fire stations to join the firefighters in marking respect at 12 noon on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May.

If anyone at St Helen's would like to attend please do so.

**Thursday Luncheon Club at St. Chad's**

**Rawling Road Bensham**

**Thursday Luncheon Club Time 11am -1pm**

Join us each Thursday for a freshly cooked two course lunch Cost £5.

**As from 8 May, the cost of the lunch club will be £6.00**

Tea, coffee and biscuits on arrival

Each week there is a quiz, coffee and a game of bingo.

A chance to meet people and enjoy different company. All are welcome

**Contact Ron Bellinger 07847096709**

**Wednesday Warm Welcome Drop In at St Helen's**

**Every Wednesday morning 10am-12noon** - there will be tea and coffee freely available and a warm welcome at St Helen's church hall for any who wish to come in for a cuppa and a chat, or who simply want a warm space to relax in for a few hours.

No need to be at home alone, you will be made welcome at St. Helen's. We are pleased to be part of Gateshead Council's Warm Spaces Charter.

**There will be a variety of opportunities on offer for you to join in with if you come along to this Drop In.**



## Crafts

You are welcome to join us for crafts and projects in the Warm Welcome Drop In from 10am. each Wednesday in the hall. Everyone is welcome.



Dear Supporters

**We are closed on the 22nd and 29th April but will be re-open on the Monday morning of the 5th May to receive donations.**

Thank you for your ongoing commitment.

Kind regards,

Kath

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### THE PARISH GIVING SCHEME A BETTER WAY TO GIVE

The Church of England, in the Diocese of Durham, has a vision to Bless our Communities in Jesus's name for the transformation of us all. This means having a Christian presence in all our communities.

In turn, your church blesses our community by sharing our faith and values, worshipping together through our wonderful buildings. For the Church to grow and plan for the future we rely on your regular gifts.

If you would like to consider joining the Parish Giving scheme, which runs as a monthly direct debit, please see **Tony Gunning Churchwarden**

### Our Christian Giving

We express our Christian Discipleship in part through the financial support of our Church Family. The life, work, witness, and ministry of our Parish costs £762.00 every week, our weekly income does not currently reflect this.

If you value the witness, worship, and support that we offer please help us to enable this to continue by giving generously.

Forms to set up regular giving can be found near the church door or from [office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com](mailto:office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com)

One-off donations are always welcomed, no matter how big or small, and can be deposited by electronic transfer to St Helen's bank account:

**Sort code. 20-33-51    Account number 70684449    Account name. P.C.C. of St. Helen's** or into the in-wall church deposit box, by the door. Thank you.

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## Intercessions Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Sick	Sick	Sick/Other needs
Maria Barrell	Amelia Grace	Lena
Mark Adams	Lesley Baister	Sarah Hamilton
Lucy	Felicity	Maryam
Diane Telfer	Margaret Clayton	Sienna
Roger Barrell	Alan Brownlee	Atila
Joyce Rowell	Joyce Tindale	Michael
Ann	George Lackenby	Joe
Stan Conway	Carole	Harry Palmer
Niraj	Emily	Eddie Clarke
Joan Laidler	Ollie Sutcliffe	Jimmy White
<b>Recently Departed:</b> Pat Manning		

### Anniversary of Death

Michael Brian Low	Angela Gibbs	
Clifford Oliver	Robert Bryson	
Julia Elizabeth Smith	Martin McIntosh	
Lilian Ancrum	Ethel Neil	

### Church

Please pray for our current Deanery vacancies.

### Local Projects

Gateshead Care Homes

Bensham Food Co-op, Gateshead Food Bank, Oasis, Changing Lives

Kells Lane, Kelvin Grove and St Aidan's Primary schools

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### Morning Prayer/Evening Prayer Readings – 4<sup>th</sup> May 2025

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter

Day/ Date	Morning Prayer	Psalm	Evening Prayer
Sunday 4th	John 10. 1-9	80 v. 1-8	John 11. 17-44
Monday 5th	Ephesians 1. 1-14	96	Luke 1. 1-25
Tuesday 6th	Eph. 1. 15-end	98	Luke 1. 26-39
Wednesday 7th	Eph. 2. 1-10	105	Luke 1. 39-56
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> Julian of Norwich, spiritual writer, c.1417	Eph. 2. 11-end	136	Luke 1. 57-end
Friday 9th	Eph. 3. 1-13	107	Luke 2. 1-20
Saturday 10th	Eph. 3. 14-end	110	Luke 2. 21--40

Here is the QR code for St Helen's website.

