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*Pastoral Letter and Church Notices*

***ST. HELEN'S CHURCH, LOW FELL***

**27.11.2022**

**Readings for Sunday**

**Isaiah 2 1-5**

**Romans 13 11-end**

**Matthew 24. 36-44**

**Collect**

**Almighty God as your kingdom dawns**

**Turn us from the light of sin to the light of holiness,**

**that we may be ready to meet you in our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ**

**Amen**

Dear Friends,

This Sunday we begin the season of Advent, when our churches are devoid of flowers. Instead there is an Advent wreath with four candles each lit on one of the four Sundays in Advent, with the final candle in the centre depicting the Christ Child, the light of the world, which symbolises the waiting, the one that we each are waiting for.

I suppose if you did one of those word association tests on Advent the word most associated with it would be calendar. Sadly, that's all that most people are aware of. The Advent Calendar is a count down to Christmas and has come to mean daily sweets and chocolates. Yet Advent is so much more, it is one of the most important and significant times in the church year – a time of waiting. Waiting is not a very attractive word, we are not a culture that is very used to waiting, we'd quite like to have things when we decide we want them. So waiting can seem negative, unexciting, passive.

As Christians we remember in Advent the time of waiting before the birth of Jesus, we remember that time as the bible shows it to us as a time when people were longing for something that would change everything, not quite knowing what that might be. You may say Jesus has surely come into the world – and yet he comes, there is more. We are still waiting to see what might happen if Jesus were allowed into our lives that bit more fully, that bit more radically.

Advent is a time when we can do some self examination - have we allowed Jesus in yet? Has the good news really made the impact it could make or am I still not at home with myself, with God and others? When the world is gearing up in busyness with anxiety for Christmas, it is good to allow ourselves time out, simply to wait. To self reflect, self examine, to face ourselves honestly, it's an opportunity to repent and to turn around and face the light.

Advent is a time of waiting, of quiet, of expectation and hope, also of a time of peace when we clear our hearts and minds a bit so we see clearly and feel fully the impact of Jesus' coming.

For us, this week has been the climax of almost a year of waiting, with some fear, anxiety, expectation, hope and finally amazing joy. Our daughter has given birth to a beautiful baby girl, we are blessed and so thankful.

But I leave you with the response of a friend's 4 year old - they live at the other end of the country.

She says '*I want to go to Newcastle to see the baby born like Jesus*'

I wonder, this Advent, can we create space to make the journey?  
Amen

With every blessing  
Revd Yvonne

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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/>

## **Worship and notices week beginning Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

### **Revd Canon Christopher Atkinson RIP**

The funeral, including Holy Communion, will take place at St. Helen's church on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> of November at 12noon, followed by refreshments at the Carlton Club. All are welcome to attend, to pay their final respects and give thanks for Christopher's life amongst us.

### **Revd Lloyd Brown**

Some have enquired about the absence of Lloyd - to confirm:

'Lloyd has been away from the Parish in the last few weeks, we are working together to review his working agreement and role description and consider any future training needs'

Thank you

### **Good news**

We are delighted to share that our first grandchild, Ruby Isla, came into the world on Wednesday the 23rd of November at 4.30 am. Mother and baby are both doing well.

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers, we are delighted, thankful and feel very blessed.

Revd Yvonne and Ian

### **Services and Prayer**

**Eucharist this Sunday 9.30am St. Helen's, Low Fell**

**Coffee after the service in the church hall**

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 8.10 am. or join us online.

### **Midweek Communion**

**This will take place each Wednesday at 12noon in the Lady Chapel in St.Helen's All are welcome**

### **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December 10am.**

**Service of thanksgiving for the ministry of Revd Derek Brown**

Many of you will know that Revd Derek is soon to be moving south nearer to his family. We will be taking the opportunity to thank him for his ministry in Gateshead at this service, not least at St. Helen's. Please note the service begins at 10am on the 18<sup>th</sup> December..

There will be refreshments in the hall after the service.

## Church is Open

The Parish Church is open for services each Friday and Sunday and for quiet reflection each Wednesday and Friday from 9am – 4pm.

People of all faiths and none are welcome to come and enjoy a moment of quiet in this peaceful and beautiful space.

## Morning Prayer

We are meeting each Friday and Sunday morning for morning prayer in church, you are welcome to join us from 8.45 to begin at 9.am.

## Evening Prayer

We meet physically in church each Wednesday and Friday at 4pm and each **Sunday at 5.15pm** using the Daily Prayer App on Zoom, join us by clicking below from 5pm.

### Zoom link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88354325623?pwd=SDJaNVFtazRmMW9PQjFNTnVEZmg2QT09>

Meeting ID: 883 5432 5623

Passcode: 914600

## Support for Ukrainian Refugees.

After all the confusion and chaos refugees are beginning to arrive in the area. If you would like to support this work please could you fill in [this form](#) which includes actions such providing meals, offering support with language. We have also produced useful guides and we will update these as the situation change [Preparing your church to support Ukrainian Refugees - Diocese of Durham \(durhamdiocese.org\)](#)

## *Warm Spaces*

**Every Wednesday morning 9.30am-12.30am** - 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.

We are planning to have books and magazines for people who may come to our warm space on a Wednesday morning. **If any of you have a bookshelf you are able to donate to display these on we would be grateful.**

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

## Warm Spaces at St Chad's

Every Tuesday afternoon 1:30pm – 4:30pm - there will be tea and coffee freely available and a warm welcome at St Chad's church 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. Volunteers also very welcome to help us facilitate both places of welcome. We are pleased to be part of Gateshead Council's Warm Spaces Charter.

## **Crafts and activities are available each week at Warm Spaces in St. Helen's Church Hall**

This Wednesday, 30 November, at group we are finishing making the Christmas bags to be filled and handed out, and also making items to sell at our little get together (see below)

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December – Wreath making class.

Lynda is bringing nearly everything we need for this event, which is a chargeable event at £10.00 and must be booked in advance, we already have 14 places filled so not many left.

The only thing you need to bring is any personal embellishments that you would like to add to your wreath, and an apron if you have one. If you have any secateurs they would be helpful but we can share.

17<sup>th</sup> December, we are having a get together with music mulled wine and mince pies in the church hall, along with a few stalls selling Christmas goodies and a craft table for the children to enjoy 1.30pm.

### **Bags of Comfort and Joy**

Once again we are putting together bags of Comfort and Joy for people in need at Christmas.

We would be grateful for donations of hats, scarves, gloves, Christmas food, small games and activities and also donations so we can buy tea lights and bulbs which were much appreciated in previous years.

Please drop items off in the church or church hall on Wednesday or ring Lynn on 07902 648959 or bring to church on Sunday

### **Wellness Project**

Following on from the success of the book box outside of church, we are now ready to provide a toy box also. Parents can help themselves to toys, some of which will be from our Toddler Group collection, but feel free to bring along any unwanted or used toys, in good condition. The toys must be clean and in good working order.

Hopefully this may help out some families who are struggling in the lead up to Christmas.

### **Thank You**

Some of you may recall that Diana and Ian Whaley very kindly stepped in at short notice to provide music at the Queen's Platinum Jubilee event in June. As a thank you, Lynn bought them an M & S voucher, here is their very kind 'thank you' received this week.

*'On the Sunday of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration my husband Ian and I came and played some folk tunes outside the church when another group had been unable to come.*

*A while later we received an M & S voucher in thanks from Lynn and the committee, which was a lovely surprise – we really hadn't expected anything, and thoroughly enjoyed playing and meeting the people of St Helens.*

*We've now, after a delay, used the voucher for some nice new drinking glasses and a small glass vase, so at last we can let you know that the voucher arrived safely and thank you very much for the kind thought.*

*All best wishes*

*Diana and Ian Whaley'*

### **St Helen's Church Hall – Open for bookings**

We are pleased to announce that St Helen's church hall is now available for external bookings. In keeping with our vision of health and wellbeing, we look forward to welcoming activity groups to use the large hall – book clubs, exercise classes, painting, crafts. The smaller, upper hall, is ideal for small meetings – AGMs. regular meetings, or perhaps as a hot desking space as a change from working from home.

The larger hall is also available for one-off bookings for birthday parties and other special occasions. Kitchen facilities and wifi available.

Please email: [office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com](mailto:office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com) for further information, rates and availability.

### **Listening to Our Communities and Each Other – Training Exercise**

In response to concerns around food poverty, two training meetings will be held in **St Helen's Church Hall**, led by Val Baron and Joanne Thornes.

**Next meeting Thursday 15 December 6.30 for 7pm**

These are open meetings, and all are welcome to attend.



To show our appreciation of your steadfast support to Bensham Community Food Co-op, you are warmly invited to an open afternoon on

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December at 1.30 – 3.00 at Corpus Christi Church.**

There will be light refreshments and an opportunity to meet some of our volunteers.

*We look forward to seeing you.*

RSVP [benshamfoodcoop@gmail.com](mailto:benshamfoodcoop@gmail.com)

Our Parish supports The Bensham Community Food Coop, it is open every Tuesday in Corpus Christi Church Bensham 11am - 1pm. Food donations can be brought to St.Helen's church on Sunday mornings or on a Wednesday or Friday. All donations are gratefully received in these deeply challenging times. Thank You. Revd Yvonne

### **Gateshead Foodbank**

Our next AGM will be at 7pm on Wednesday 30th November at Fellside Methodist Church, Ancaster Road, Whickham, NE16 5BJ. It will be a great opportunity to hear about the work of Gateshead Foodbank, what's been happening at each of our distribution centres and

warehouse and also to hear about our finances. It's also a chance to meet our Trustees and volunteers. Everyone is invited, so please join us.

**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 income does not currently reflect this.

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

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 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 27.11.2022**

**Sick**

Emily Rhodes  
 Maria Barrel  
 Vera Robinson  
 Hilda Branch  
 Derek Gunning  
 Mark Adams  
 Tom Spence  
 Jessica Johnson  
 Diane Dunwoodie  
 Lucy  
 Joan Huddleston  
 Martin Rodgers  
 Jamie Lee Slassor

Roger Barrell  
 Derek Robinson  
 Helen  
 Hannah Corcoran  
 Frank Morton  
 Robert Reay  
 Cyril Anderton  
 Amilia Grace  
 Pamela Page  
 John Jopling  
 Julie Hillan  
 Vivienne Carr

**Other needs**

Stephen

**Recently Departed**

Revd Canon Christopher Atkinson, Andrew Grey

**Baptisms**

**Anniversary of Death**

William Gibson	Douglas Radcliffe	
Alan Clarke	Bob Huddleston	
Flo Blenkinsopp	Anthony Branch	
Ute Spath		

**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

**Church**

Parishes in vacancy. All in our Parishes preparing for Baptism. All young people and leaders in our Uniformed organisations.

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**Morning Prayer/Evening Prayer Readings – 27<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2022**  
**First Sunday of Advent (Common Worship Year A begins)**

Day/ Date	Morning Prayer	Psalm	Evening Prayer
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent (Year A begins)	1 Thess. 5. 1-11	44	Matt. 24. 15-28
Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> Daily Eucharistic Lectionary Year 1 begins)	Rev. ch.19	50	Matt. 12. 1-21
Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup>	Rev. ch.20	80	Matt. 12. 22-37
Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> Andrew The Apostle	John. 12. 20-32	47	John. 1. 35-42
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec. Charles de Foucauld, Hermit in the Sahara, 1916	Rev. 21. 9-21	42	Matt. 13. 1-23
Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Rev. 21. 22- ch22. 5	25	Matt. 13. 24-43
Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Francis Xavier, Missionary, Apostle of the Indies, 1552	Rev. 22. 6-end	9	Matt. 13. 44-end