

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

01.03.2026

Second Sunday of Lent

Readings

Genesis 12. 1-4a

Romans 4. 1-5, 13-17

John 3. 1-17

Collect

Almighty God,

by the prayer and discipline of Lent

may we enter into the mystery of Christ's sufferings,

and by following in his Way

may we come to share in his glory;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Journey into Lent.

As we move into March and the Second Sunday of Lent, it is so good to see more light in the early morning and evening.

At St. Helen's our building work continues and progress is certainly being made, but we are still not using the main door as we await our newly crafted doors and their installation. It's so easy simply to be drawn to the huge plant machinery and piles of mud and rubble surrounding the work, but if you are around church do notice the beauty popping up all around you.

Seeds and bulbs, planted so lovingly in years gone past, are blooming. Tiny, seemingly fragile but determined snowdrops, and a beautiful border of purple crocuses speak to us of hope and new life in the midst of mud and rubble. Lent offers us time for reflection, repentance and new beginnings.

We often mark Lent through deciding to give something up: coffee, alcohol, cake, or take some something up: more exercise, swimming, walking, reading, joining a Lent Course. Repentance in its simplest form means turning around, not in a 360 degree circle so we end up where we began, but to turn from something or towards something. It can be an opportunity to develop life giving physical. mental and spiritual habits.

I was reminded earlier this week of St. Therese of Lisieux who dearly wanted to be perfect and Holy - like Jesus. However much she tried she found she fell short. Instead of trying to achieve self-perfection through difficult challenges or penances, Therese began to embrace her imperfections, turning to God and focussing on him in the present moment and letting him love her. Rather than being discouraged, she let his grace lift her up and she came to know she was infinitely loved despite her weakness, as we all are.

Therese's way became known as her 'little way'. She noticed God in her daily life turning to him in her joys and her difficulties, approaching him with a childlike trust. She began to do ordinary things with extraordinary love, aware of his continual presence with her and sharing all in her daily life with him. Give it a try today. Whilst you are in the queue for the till give someone a smile. As you are sitting on the bus and looking out of the window notice the flowers beginning to bloom amidst the traffic. Be aware that all through Lent whatever you give up or take up, and in all your limitations, God gazes upon each of us in love. Take a moment to turn to him, to receive and rest in that love.

With every blessing
Revd Yvonne

Post Communion Collect

Almighty God,

you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves:

keep us both outwardly in our bodies,
and inwardly in our souls;

that we may be defended from all adversities

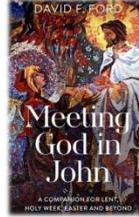
which may happen to the body,
and from all evil thoughts

which may assault and hurt the soul;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Lent Course



We warmly invite you to join us for our Lent Course, a special series of gatherings designed to deepen your faith and spiritual understanding during this sacred season. Through thoughtful discussions, reflective prayer, and meaningful fellowship, we will journey together, exploring the profound themes of Lent.

- Monday 16th February
- Monday 23rd February
- Monday 2nd March
- Monday 9th March
- Monday 16th March
- Monday 23rd March



17:45



All are welcome



Upper Hall
St Helen's Church,
Belle Vue Bank,
Low Fell,
Gateshead
NE9 6BR

A prayer for peace

We pray to you O God
the lover of all

for those whom we have named our enemies.

Deliver us from the hardness of heart that keeps us locked in confrontation.

Deliver us from the hatred that binds us in old ways.

Grant unto all your people the blessing of your love.

And grant unto us such transformation of our lives

that we make peace with our enemies

and that together we might make this world

a safer, kinder place for all.

In Christ's name we pray.

Amen

Safeguarding Contacts

To discuss any safeguarding concerns please contact either

- *the Parish Safeguarding Churchwarden 07505105184*

- *the Parish Priest, Rev Yvonne Greener on*

0191 [4911317](tel:4911317)greener.yvonne@gmail.com

Concerns can also be raised with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Mrs

Beth Miller

Email: beth@bethmillerisw.co.uk or beth.miller@durham.anglican.org

Mobile: 07968 034075.



INEQE independent safeguarding audit

Please see attached information and link to the full report.

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Worship and notices week beginning Sunday 1st March 2026

Services and Prayer

9.30am Sunday Service at St. Helen's

[Access will be through the Vestry Door to the right of the church whilst the building work to make our church more accessible is taking place.](#)

Wednesday 4 March

Eucharist 12noon St Helen's - access to the church as above

PLEASE NOTE THE CHURCH WILL BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC ON WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS DURING THE BUILDING WORK

10.30am Eucharist on Sunday at Bensham and Teams,

St. Chad's

Archdeacon Katherine Bagnall presiding

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, or on line each weekday and Sunday via Durham Cathedral worship online www.durhamcathedral.co.uk

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. **However, due to building work please join Durham Cathedral on line as above.**

Stations of the Cross

Do join us for Stations of the Cross each Friday in St. Helen's Church at 12 noon. This will commence from Friday 20th February.

Lent Group

Next meeting: Monday 2 March in St. Helen's Upper Hall at 5.45 pm.

Session 3 Desire: What are you looking for?

Session 4 Home: Where are you staying?

Session 5 Glory: Meeting God in John

Please see information and poster above.

Deanery Confirmation 9th May 2026

We will be holding a Deanery Confirmation on Saturday 9th May.

If anyone wishes to be baptised or confirmed or want to know more about this, do speak with Reverend Yvonne.

Songs of Praise at Durham Cathedral Sunday 15 March

Songs of Praise will be held at Durham Cathedral on Sunday 15 March at 3.30pm, for anyone who wants come and join in at our Cathedral.

If you have a hymn request please write to the Cathedral with your suggestion.

Visit/Pilgrimage to Holy Island Wednesday 25th March

As part of St Helen's 150th Anniversary celebrations, a visit to Holy Island has been proposed for **25 March**. The tides are good on this date with a crossing from 9.30am to 5.40pm. Those who wish to, can walk across the Causeway and others can drive to visit the Island. Transport options will be discussed once we have an idea of interest. **If you would like to join us, please sign the sheet in church or email:**

office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com

Embrace the Middle East

As we no longer receive a hard copy of the magazine from Embrace the Middle East, please follow this link to read the newsletter and view other resources.

[Resources from Embrace — Embrace the Middle East](#)

Beyond Food Banks Summit 2026

Communities Together Durham and Food Durham are co-hosting a Food Summit on 14 March 2026. The Summit will explore alternative food provision which goes 'Beyond Food Banks' and gives churches and charities a menu of opportunities to investigate different approaches to meet the local needs of those experiencing food insecurity.

Second Course: December 2025 – February 2026 'Do Something'

The 'Do Something' £200 grants are now open. Application form attached along with the Food Summit information and the booking link below. These mini grants are **The Second Course on the Menu to The Food Summit. Download an application form here:**

[Beyond Food Banks – Food Summit – Communities Together Durham](#)

Last submission is 28 February.

Third Course – The Food Summit Saturday 14 March 2026 9.30am The Sjovoli Centre, Framwellgate Moor

[https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/beyond-food-banks-summit-tickets-](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/beyond-food-banks-summit-tickets-1436758917599?aff=oddtcreator)

[1436758917599?aff=oddtcreator](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/beyond-food-banks-summit-tickets-1436758917599?aff=oddtcreator) Full details are available if you follow this link – including directions, parking, a list of workshops etc.

St Helen's Church Celebration of 150 years – Save the Date!

Sunday 8 March Swing Bridge Singers (*see below*)

Saturday 14 March Fun with Flowers for Mothers Day (*see below*)

Wednesday 25 March Visit to Holy Island (*see details in Newsletter*)

Saturday 18 April St Helen's Church Hall Users and Open Day (*more details to follow*)

Monday 11 May Pie and Pea Supper with a Quiz and Bingo. At the Gateshead Arms from 7pm. (*more details will follow*)

Sunday 17 May Durham Cathedral Choir in St Helen's Church from 3.30pm

Saturday 6 June Grainger Singers in St Helen's Church from 7pm (*Further details will follow*)

Wedding Dress Exhibition

As part of the 150 Anniversary Project we will be hosting a Wedding Dress exhibition in Church between 11th – 13th September, to coincide with Open Heritage week.

We are looking for anyone who was married at St Helens and still have their wedding dress or photographs/memorabilia from their special day and would be willing to loan us these items for display. Please contact Lynn Oliver Mob: 07902648959,

email kevllynoliver58@outlook.com. Please ask your friends/relatives for any items. Thank you!



Sunday 8 March
Swing Bridge Singers
2pm- 4.30pm in St Helen's
Church

Tickets £8 – available on the
day

Celebrating close-harmony from Abba to Zulu, via barbershop and blues, film music and folk, madrigals and Motown, the Swing Bridge Singers tackle a huge range of styles with their own unique teenage energy.

Raffle Refreshments during the interval

We would be grateful for raffle prizes please

St Helens Church Low Fell

Fun with Flowers for Mothers Day –

Saturday 14 March
Drop in between 1pm and 3pm



This is an event for children of all ages to come and make a small posy and card for Mother's Day

No charge for materials or activity

Refreshments available for sale – proceeds to Project 150

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 £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 078470967

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.

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

Do please also remember the ministry to family and young people in your prayers.



Dear Supporters,

With it being the half-term break this week in Gateshead, we had a busy session with many youngsters accompanying their parents to choose and collect food. We had some stationery items surplus from Christmas, and we had been donated toys from a couple of sources including the Peoples Kitchen. All children left with a toy and books for colouring in and, most importantly, a smile.

This week 109 people representing 54 families/couples and 55 single persons attended the Food Co-op (153 adults and 85 children). Donations were received from local churches, the Saltwell Park Run and individual supporters. The Fareshare allocation included lettuces, potatoes and a variety of ambient produce. There was an excellent choice for all who attended.

The volunteers worked well, translating when necessary and generally keeping the trollies topped up to ensure the food was available and distributed fairly to all. This is a demanding time of year for all faiths, so all volunteers' time is appreciated more than ever.

With thanks for your continued commitment.

Kind regards

Kath

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, in worshipping together in 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

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 1st March 2026

Sick	Sick	Sick/Other needs
Maria Barrell	Amelia Grace	Sarah Hamilton
Mark Adams	Felicity	Michael
Lucy	Margaret Clayton	Maryam
Roger Barrell	Ollie Sutcliffe	Sienna
Joyce Rowell	Tom Spence	Eddie Clark
Ann	Les Gibson	John T
Stan Conway	Carole	Helen
Niraj	Pauline	
John	Joe	
Ritchie Robson	Sharok	
Valsa		

Anniversary of Death

Cyril Thomas Johnson	Cuthbert Ridley	Zara Rose Sloan
Robert Cutty	Stephen Sampson	Vanessa Ann Foster
Elizabeth Pears	Benjamin Illingworth	Haldane Rogerson
Jane Marshall	Joyce Ward	Rene Rogers
Tom Coulson	Joan Kenny	Isabella Bowen
Hilda Branch		

Church

Please pray for our current Deanery vacancies
Bensham and teams St. Chad
Eighton Banks St. Thomas
Gateshead St Edmund and St James and St Bede

Local Projects

Gateshead Care Homes, Bensham Food Co-op, Gateshead Food Bank, Oasis, Changing Lives. Kells Lane, Kelvingrove & St Aidan's Primary Schools.

St Helen's Church Monthly Diary March 2026

Sunday 1st March Second Sunday of Lent St Helen's 9.30am Eucharist
St Chad's Eucharist at 10.30am (*Archdeacon Katherine Bagnall presiding*)

Monday 2nd March Lent Course Session 3 Desire: What are you looking for?
St Helen's Church hall from 5.45pm.

Wednesday 4th March St Helen's 12noon Eucharist

Friday 6th March St Helen's Social and Pastoral Committee 11am in the church hall
St Helen's Stations of the Cross 12noon

Sunday 8th March Third Sunday of Lent St Helen's 9.30am Eucharist
St Chad's Eucharist at 10.30am (*Revd Canon Yvonne Greener presiding*)
Swing Bridge Singers 2pm-4.30pm St Helen's church with interval refreshments in the church hall, and raffle.

Monday 9th March Lent Course Session 4 Home: Where are you staying?
St Helen's Church hall from 5.45pm.

Wednesday 11th March St Helen's 12noon Eucharist

Friday 13th March St Helen's Stations of the Cross 12noon

Saturday 14th March Fun with Flowers for Mother's Day 1-3pm St Helen's Church Hall

Sunday 15th March Mothering Sunday St Helen's 10am Family Service, followed by brunch in the church hall.

St Chad's Eucharist at 10.30am (*Revd Dorothy Snowball presiding*)

Monday 16th March Lent Course Session 5 Glory: Meeting God in John

St Helen's Church hall from 5.45pm.

Tuesday 17th March St Helen's 150th Anniversary Meeting 6pm in the upper church hall

Wednesday 18th March St Helen's 12noon Eucharist

Friday 20th March St Helen's Stations of the Cross 12noon

Sunday 22nd March Fifth Sunday of Lent St Helen's 9.30am Eucharist Service

St Chad's Eucharist at 10.30am (*Revd Margaret McKay presiding*)

Monday 23rd March Lent Course Session St Helen's Church hall from 5.45pm.

Wednesday 25th March Pilgrimage to Holy Island – all day

Friday 27th March St Helen's Stations of the Cross 12noon

Sunday 29th March Palm Sunday St Helen's 9.30am Eucharist

St Chad's Eucharist at 10.30am (*Clergy tbc*)

11am St Helen's APCM in the church hall

Morning Prayer/Evening Prayer Readings – Sunday 1st March

2nd Sunday of Lent

Day/ Date	Morning Prayer	Psalm	Evening Prayer
Sunday 1st	Matt. 8. 1-13	74	Luke 14. 27-33
Monday 2nd Chad. Bishop of Lichfield, missionary, 672	Heb. Ch. 1	32	John 6. 41-51
Tuesday 3rd	Heb. 2. 1-9	50	John 6. 52-59
Wednesday 4th	Heb. 2. 10-end	35	John 6. 60-end
Thursday 5th	Heb. 3. 1-6	34	John 7. 1-13
Friday 6th	Heb. 3. 7-end	41	John 7. 14-24
Saturday 7 th Perpetua, Felicity and companions, martyrs of Carthage, 203	Heb. 4. 1-13	25	John 7. 25-36



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

To contact St Helen's church to book the church hall or for all enquiries please email: office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com church

To make initial enquiries or book a baptism or a wedding please come along to a Sunday service – check our website for times.