

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

22.02.2026

*First Sunday of Lent*

**Readings**

**Gen. 2. 15-17 + ch.3. 1-7**

**Romans 5. 12-19**

**Matthew 4. 1-11**

**Collect**

Heavenly Father,  
your Son battled with the powers of darkness,  
and grew closer to you in the desert:  
help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer  
that we may witness to your saving love  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

**Post Communion Collect**

Lord God,  
you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven;  
by it you nourish our faith,  
increase our hope,  
and strengthen our love:  
teach us always to hunger for him  
who is the true and living bread,  
and enable us to live by every word  
that proceeds from out of your mouth;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Dear Friends,

I am thinking by now you will have all heard the news of our new Bishop of Durham. Archdeacon Rick Simpson is no newcomer to our Diocese and will bring to his new role a deep understanding of our local communities and their people.

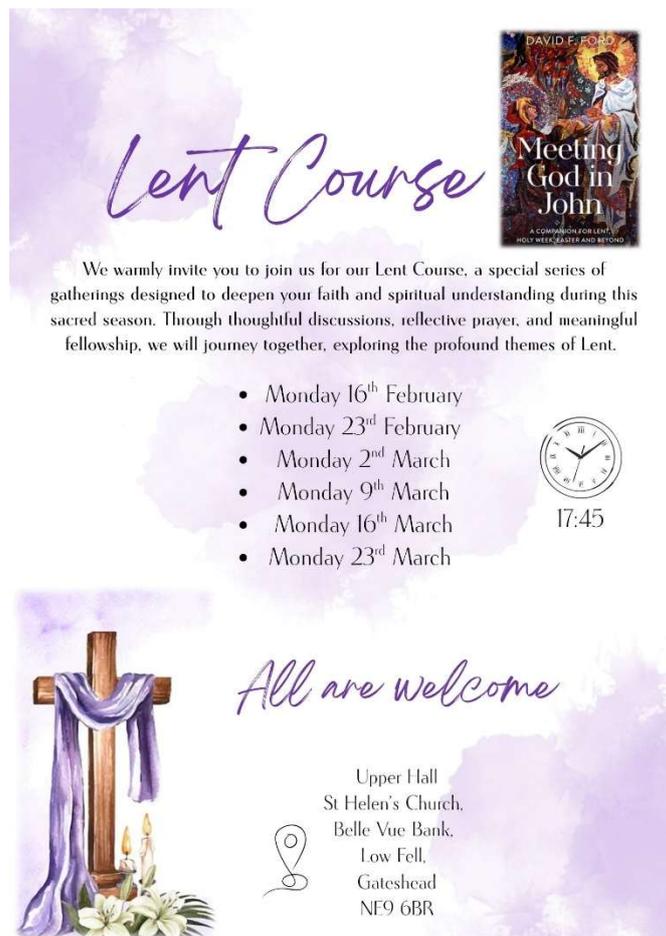
We are thankful for the stability his appointment will bring in a period of change but also we are excited for the new opportunities as he shares his understanding of God's vision for the future for our Diocese.

We continue to pray for Bishop Rick as plans for his installation take shape for the summer and we remember Bishop Sarah as she prepares for her move as Bishop of Ely.

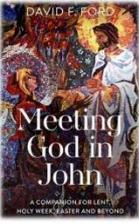
We give thanks for God's call and for those who discern his voice and step out in faith. We continue to pray for each of them and their families and friends as they undergo change and we pray for each other as we move into the future.

With every blessing

Revd Yvonne



*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 16<sup>th</sup> February
- Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February
- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March
- Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March
- Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March
- Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> 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

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**Safeguarding Contacts**

***To discuss any safeguarding concerns 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***

***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.***



**INEQE independent safeguarding audit**

**Please see attached information and link to the full report.**

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**Worship and notices week beginning Sunday 22nd February 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 25<sup>th</sup> February**

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

**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**

*Revd Dorothy Snowball 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](http://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 20<sup>th</sup> February.

**Lent Group**

**Next meeting:** Monday 23rd February in St. Helen's Upper Hall at 5.45 pm.

**Session 2 Identity: Who are you?**

**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 9<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

We will be holding a Deanery Confirmation on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> 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 25<sup>th</sup> March**

As part of St Helen's 150<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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**. **Dwonload 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-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 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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 Project150***

### **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](mailto:office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com)

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



Dear Supporters,

A steady session today with 67 families/couples and 38 single people calling in to choose and collect food (163 adults and 124 children). The Fareshare allocation included oranges, lemons, grapes, mushrooms and potatoes, ensuring a good selection of fresh vegetables and fruit alongside the dried and tinned items. All members left with a variety of goods.

Many thanks for all the donations. This week, items have been received from several churches, a primary school, individual supporters and a Food Waste champion. Any monetary donations are used to purchase staple items, e.g. sugar, flour, tea, lentils and fresh fruit and vegetables.

Your commitment is very much appreciated by the members, volunteers and trustees.  
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](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.



## Intercessions Sunday 22nd February 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	Valsa
John	Joe	
Ritchie Robson	Sharok	
<b>Recently Departed:</b>		

### Anniversary of Death

Susan Kennedy	Dorothy Margaret Johnson	John Mitchell
Ken Burnett	Joyce Martin	Myra Bunting
Olwyn Erskin Bryson	William Wakefield	Margaret Patrickson
John Lamb Thompson	Jennifer Morrison	

### 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.

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## St Helen's Church Monthly Diary February 2026

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February St Helen's** 10am Family Service Candlemas followed by brunch in the church hall

**St Chad's** Eucharist at 10.30am (*Revd Mike Dixon presiding*)

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February St Helen's PCC meeting** Church hall from 6pm.

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February St Helen's** No service due to building work

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February St Helen's Social and Pastoral Committee** 11am in the church hall

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February St Helen's 150th Anniversary Group Meeting**

10am Church Hall

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February Second Sunday before Lent St Helen's 9.30am Eucharist**

**St Chad's Eucharist at 10.30am** (*Revd Canon Yvonne Greener presiding*)

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February St Helen's** No service due to building work

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February Sunday Next Before Lent St Helen's 9.30am Eucharist**

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

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February St Helen's 12noon Eucharist Ash Wednesday**

**Imposition of Ashes**

**St Chad's Imposition of Ashes 6.30pm**

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February First Sunday of Lent St Helen's 9.30am Eucharist Service**

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

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February**

**Chapter Meeting 9.30am** St Andrew's Leam Lane

**St Helen's 12noon Eucharist** Ember Day

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**Morning Prayer/Evening Prayer Readings – 22<sup>nd</sup> February**

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent**

Day/ Date	Morning Prayer	Psalm	Evening Prayer
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Luke 18. 9-14	119 v.1-16	Luke 15 1-10
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, martyr, 155	Gal. 3. 22 – ch.4. v. 7	11	John 5. 1-18
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Gal. 4. 8-20	44	John 5. 19-29
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> Ember Day	Gal. 4. 21- ch.5 v. 1	6	John 5. 30-end
Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Gal. 5. 2-15	42	John 6. 1-15
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> George Herbert, priest, poet, 1633	Gal. 5. 16-end	55	John 6. 16-27
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Gal. ch.6	63	John 6. 28-40



**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](mailto: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.**