



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

08.02.2026

Second Sunday before Lent

Readings

Genesis 1.1 2.3

Romans 8. 18-25

Matthew 6. 25-end

Collect

Almighty God,
give us reverence for all creation
and respect for every person,
that we may mirror your likeness
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Journey into Lent and life in all its fullness

Dear Friends

As we leave the Christmas season behind us, we begin to look ahead towards Lent. We are long past the shortest day of the year, but the days still seem long and dark as the damp cold weather prevails and we long for the light.

This Lent we hope to meet weekly on a Monday evening in our Upper Hall to explore the Gospel of John where we are invited to listen to God speak to us. We will use David Ford's book, 'Meeting God in John'. David Ford is an inspiring guide through, with the help of his commentaries, we are offered a unique way into the promise of a 'deep, lasting and abundant life in Jesus Christ.'

Do join us, no knowledge or previous experience or understanding is needed, just a longing to know more, and perhaps a desire to have space to wonder or ask questions.

All are welcome each Monday at 5.45pm, week beginning Monday 16th February.
There are sheets at the back of church for you to add your name to, especially if you wish me to order you a book .

Meeting God in John
David F Ford
(ISBN 978-028108-963-5)

With every blessing
Revd Yvonne

Post Communion Collect

God our creator,
by your gift the tree of life
was set at the heart of the earthly paradise,
and the bread of life at the heart of your Church:
may we who have been nourished
at your table on earth
be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross
and enjoy the delights of eternity;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

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 4911317greener.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 8th 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.](#)

There will be no Eucharist this week
Wednesday 11 February due to building work.

**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

The Revd Canon Yvonne Greener 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.**

Ash Wednesday

We hope to meet for a Eucharist and the imposition of Ashes on Wednesday 18th February at 12noon at St. Helen's

There will also be a service at St. Chad's at 6pm.

Palm Crosses

If you have Palm Crosses from the previous year could you please bring them to church over the next two Sundays so that we can prepare the ash for Ash Wednesday.

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

Beginning Monday 16th February in St. Helen's Upper Hall at 5.45 pm.

Meeting God in John

Session 1 The Big Picture: Meaning, love, Jesus

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

All are welcome to explore John's Gospel, no previous knowledge or experience needed. Sign the sheet in church or contact Revd Yvonne if you want to know more

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.

St Helen's Church Celebration of 150 years –

A meeting of the Anniversary Committee was held on Saturday 7TH February. We hope to confirm dates for events and provide a leaflet very soon.

The idea of a Pledge Auction was put forward at the meeting. We would be pleased if anyone would like to step forward to help to organise this event. Please contact:

office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com in the first instance. Or speak to Tony Gunning in church.

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-1436758917599?aff=oddtcreator>

Full details are available if you follow this link – including directions, parking, a list of workshops etc.

Dates for Your Diary - Events at St Helen's



Sunday 8 March
Swing Bridge Singers
from 2pm 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, as succeeding generations have been doing for over 30 years.

Raffle Refreshments

We would be grateful for raffle prizes please

Fun with Flowers for Mothers Day -
Saturday 14 March

Come along and make a small posy and card
for Mother's Day

All ages are welcome

No charge for materials or activity

Refreshments available for sale - proceeds to
Project150



Save the Date!

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

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,

Today we had a busy session with 102 people visiting the Food Co-op to collect and choose food and household items. The 102 represented 62 families/couples and 40 single persons (157 adults and 115 children). Donations were received from several churches, a primary school, a food waste champion and individual supporters. The Fareshare allocation was mainly fresh vegetables - including parsnips, potatoes, cabbages and tomatoes with random chilled items of houmous, coconut water. The variety in the allocation always surprises us and we rarely fail to distribute everything given.

All members were well treated with cakes, biscuits and one of the volunteers made baclava for all. It was a real treat. With the soup and hot drinks available, many stopped and chatted. Many thanks once again for all the donations of food and warm clothing. Thanks also for those who deliver items to Corpus Christi in a timely manner. Your commitment is very much appreciated.

With thanks for your steadfast 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 8th 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 | |
| Niraj | Pauline | |
| John | Joe | |
| | Sharok | |
| Recently Departed: Revd Bernice Broggio | | |

Anniversary of Death

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|--|
| Iris Morgan | Gladys Futter | |
| Evelyn Armstrong | Raymond Heard | |
| Christina Clarke | Susan Howey | |
| Freda Rose | Phyllis Harrison | |

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 February 2026

Sunday 1st 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 3rd February St Helen's PCC meeting Church hall from 6pm.

Wednesday 4th February St Helen's No service due to building work

Friday 5th February St Helen's Social and Pastoral Committee 11am in the church hall

Saturday 7th February St Helen's 150th Anniversary Group Meeting
10am Church Hall

Sunday 8th February Second Sunday before Lent St Helen's 9.30am Eucharist
St Chad's Eucharist at 10.30am (*Revd Canon Yvonne Greener presiding*)

Wednesday 11th February St Helen's No service due to building work

Sunday 15th February Sunday Next Before Lent St Helen's 9.30am Eucharist
St Chad's Eucharist at 10.30am (*Revd Margaret Mackay presiding*)

Wednesday 18th February St Helen's 12noon Eucharist Ash Wednesday

Sunday 22nd February First Sunday of Lent St Helen's 9.30am Eucharist Service
St Chad's Eucharist at 10.30am (*Revd Dorothy Snowball presiding*)

Wednesday 25th February

Chapter Meeting 9.30am St Andrew's Leam Lane

St Helen's 12noon Eucharist Ember Day

Morning Prayer/Evening Prayer Readings – 8th February

2nd Sunday before Lent

| Day/ Date | Morning Prayer | Psalm | Evening Prayer |
|---|----------------|-------|-----------------|
| Sunday 8 th | Col. 1. 15-20 | 100 | Rev. ch4 |
| Monday 9 th | 2 Tim. 4. 1-8 | 30 | John 19. 1-16 |
| Tuesday 10 th Scholastica, sister of Benedict, abbess | 2 Tim 4 9-end | 36 | John 19. 17-30 |
| Wednesday 11 th | Titus ch,1 | 34 | John 19. 31-end |
| Thursday 12 th | Titus ch. 2 | 37 | John 20. 1-10 |
| Friday 13 th | Titus ch.3 | 31 | John 20. 11-18 |
| Saturday 14 th Cyril and Methodius, missionaries to the Slavs, 869 and 885; Valantine, martyr at Rome, 269 | Gen. ch. 35 | 42 | John 20. 19-end |



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.**