



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

01.02.2026

Candlemas

Readings

Malachi 3. 1-5

Hebrews 2. 14-end

John 2. 1-11

Collect

Lord Jesus Christ,
light of the nations and glory of Israel
make your home among us,
and present us pure and holy
to your heavenly Father,
your God, and our God.
Amen

Dear friends,

This Sunday we celebrate Candlemas - the Feast of the Presentation.

The child who has been manifested to the Magi at his birth is now recognized by the elderly Simeon and Anna when he comes to be presented in the Temple, according to the Law of Israel.

Simeon responds with the song of Simeon, which we know as the Nunc Dimittus.

**Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace
according to thy word
for mine eyes have seen
thy salvation
which thou hast prepared**

**before the face of all people
to be a light to lighten the Gentiles
and to be the Glory of thy people
Israel Luke 2 29-32**

This child Jesus is both 'a light to lighten the Gentiles', and 'the Glory of God's people Israel.'

Simeon's final words move our attention away from the celebration of Christmas and towards the mysteries of Easter. This Canticle is recited each evening as part of the service of Compline. The symbolism of the Canticle is further emphasized by the lighted candles of Candlemas.

Do join us this Sunday, to see the beautiful stained glass window which depicts this story as we hear the Gospel together at our **10am All Age Service** and stay afterwards for brunch together in the hall.

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.

All are welcome

Rev'd Canon Yvonne

Post Communion Collect

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna,
who lived to welcome the Messiah;
may we, who have received these gifts beyond words,
prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes
to bring us eternal life;
for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.
Amen

Sarah Bishop of Jarrow

It was announced on Tuesday that Sarah Bishop of Jarrow is to become the next Bishop of Ely. Our congratulations go to Bishop Sarah who has made a huge difference to life in our Diocese, especially over the last two years as she has served as Acting Bishop of Durham. We give thanks for her ministry amongst us and wish her well for the future. We will continue to pray for her as she prepares to take on her new role and fulfil her call to the Diocese of Ely and its people.

Please find attached a letter from Bishop Sarah

Sarah Archbishop of Canterbury

Today (Wednesday 28th January) we witnessed history in its making as Sarah, Bishop of London, was confirmed as the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury at St. Paul's Cathedral.

The first woman able to take on this position in response to such a call. We continue to pray for her as she seeks to do God's will at a difficult time in the Anglican Communion.

Her appointment is not without opposition, having experienced misogyny in both her secular and church life, she was clear that such issues needed to be brought into the open. Archbishop Sarah is quoted as seeking to 'commit herself to making an environment where all people can flourish and which is safer for all.'

We continue to keep her in our prayers as she seeks to fulfil her calling and lead us into the future.

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.



BLESSING OUR
COMMUNITIES
IN JESUS' NAME

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 February 2026 **Services and Prayer**

10am Family Service for Candlemas at St. Helen's
Followed by brunch in the church hall. Everyone is welcome.

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 on
Wednesday 4 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 Mike Dixon 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.**

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 07847096709

St Helen's Church Celebration of 150 years –

A meeting of the Anniversary Committee was held on Saturday 10 January. We hope to confirm dates for events and provide an update 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.

St Helen's PCC Meeting Tuesday 3 February

St Helen's PCC meeting will be held in the church hall from 6pm. Please let us know if you have any issues you would like to be raised at the meeting.

Email: office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com

St Helen's Social and Pastoral Committee Friday 5 February

There will be a meeting of the Social and Pastoral Committee in the church hall on Friday 5 February from 11am. Please let us know if you would like any issue to be raised at the meeting. Email: office.sthelenschurch@gmail.com

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

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.

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>

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, despite the very wet and windy weather brought in by storm Chandra, 79 people representing 49 families/couples and 30 single persons attended the Food Co-op (123 adults and 97 children). We had a steady session with many members enjoying the refreshment area with the warm drinks and soup.

Donations were received from several churches, a local primary school, a food waste champion and individual supporters. Despite the awful weather the food waste champion was at the door at 8.00 am (on her way to work) with a selection of bakery items. Many thanks for all the donations including the warm coats that have been given. All members are very appreciative.

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 1st 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	
Ann	Les Gibson	
Stan Conway	Carole	
Niraj	Pauline	
	Joe	
	Sharok	
Recently Departed: Revd Bernice Broggio		

Anniversary of Death

Matthew Hall		
Patricia Georgina Foster		
George Foster		
John Peter Ball		
James Douglas		

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 12noon Eucharist - tbc

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 St Helen's 12noon Eucharist Ember Day

Morning Prayer/Evening Prayer Readings – Sunday 1st February
4th Sunday of Epiphany The Presentation of Christ in the Temple

Day/ Date	Morning Prayer	Psalm	Evening Prayer
Sunday 1 st Feb	1 Cor 3. 10-17	71 v. 1-6, 15-14	Heb 4. 11-end
Monday 2 nd	Matt. 27. 11-26	1	1 Cor. 12. 12-end
Tuesday 3 rd Anskar, archbishop of Hamburg, missionary to Denmark and Sweden, 865	Matt. 27. 27--44	5	1 Cor. Ch.13
Wednesday 4 th Gilbert of Sempringham, founder of the Gilbertine Order, 1189	Matt. 27. 45-56	119 v. 1-32	1 Cor. 14. 1-19

Thursday 5th	Matt. 27. 57-end	15	1 Cor. 14. 20-end
Friday 6 th The martyrs of Japan, 1597	Matt 28. 1-15	19	1 Cor. 16. 1-9
Saturday 7th	Matt. 28. 16-end	23	1 Cor. 16. 10-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.