

THE NORTH TYNE AND REDESDALE TEAM MAGAZINE

The Meeting of the Waters



MARCH 2024

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A LETTER FOR MARCH 2024

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe that a good half year has passed since I started in North Tyne as United Reformed minister. I appreciate the warm welcome I've found here.

I am especially heartened by the willingness of people to roll up their sleeves and work together – sometimes literally, at the community lunches, for example. It is gladdening to find churches putting aside historic differences and working as one, often in practical ways, which show and share God's love for every human being.

I'd like to highlight the invitation to this year's Lent talks at Bellingham. Each session is free-standing, so please just come along in. The door of the MURC hall will be open and the kettles singing. Also, over the last few months, generous donations of toys have been made, suitable for babies and small children who might attend monthly Messy Church as part of a family group. A quiet play space can be set up, or even a homework table, should you want to attend with little ones.

The topic, '*Saying Yes to Life*', encompasses environmental and social justice concerns.

Many people might think the season of Lent is all gloom and giving things up. With the short, dark days of winter almost behind us, it's more the time for coming out of our houses and being with one another, for building new friendships and learning circles. Our time together will be especially enriching if people from different walks of life and fresh perspectives attend. That could be you!

Easter weekend falls in March this year. We might also recall Jesus' friends gathering to talk, wait and pray. They had seen their risen master and were beginning to grasp that hatred, evil and death would never have the last word.

Roberta

(NB: Roberta's official title is Rev'd.)

SERVICES IN THE DEANERY IN MARCH '24

3rd March: 3rd Sunday of Lent

Exodus 20: 1-17; 1 Corinthians 1: 18-25; John 2 : 13-22

- 8.30am Holy Communion at Wark
- 10.00am Holy Communion at Bellingham
- 10.00am Holy Communion at Chollerton
- 10.00am Morning Worship at Birtley
- 10.30am MURC Service at Wark
- 11.00am Parish Worship at Falstone
- 11.00am Parish Worship at Otterburn
- 11.30am Holy Communion at Simonburn
- 4.00pm Holy Communion at Bingfield
- 6.00pm Holy Communion at Elsdon
- 8.00pm Late at 8 Contemporary
Worship - Humshaugh

10th March: Mothering Sunday 1

Samuel 1: 20-end; Colossians 3: 12-17; Luke 2: 33-35

- 8.30am Holy Communion at
Thockrington
- 10.00am Holy Communion at
Humshaugh
- 11.00am Holy Communion at
Thorneyburn
- 11.30am Holy Communion at Wall
- 2.00pm Informal Communion at
Corsenside Village Hall
- 5.00pm Holy Communion at Horsley
- 6.00pm Holy Communion at Wark

17th March: 5th Sunday of Lent

Jeremiah 31: 31-34; Hebrews 5: 5-10; John 12: 20-33

- 8.30am Holy Communion at Gunnerton
- 9.30am Holy Communion at Falstone
- 10.00am Holy Communion at Birtley

11.00am Parish Worship at Bellingham

Special Service with Visiting preacher

- 10.30am MURC Service at Wark
- 11.30am Service of the Word at Bingfield
- 3.00pm Holy Communion at Otterburn
- 6.00pm Evensong at Simonburn

24th March: Palm Sunday

Isaiah 50; 4-9; Philippians 2: 5-11; Mark 15: 1-39 or Mark 11: 1-11

- 8.30am Holy Communion at Chollerton
- 10.00am Deanery Zoom
- 11.30am Holy Communion at Wall
- 3.00pm Holy Communion at Byrness
- 6.00pm Service of the Word at
Thorneyburn
- 6.00pm Holy Communion at
Humshaugh SL
- 6.00pm Parish Worship at Wark

25th March: Monday of Holy Week

- 7.00pm Compline with Address at
Bellingham (live streamed)

26th March: Tuesday of Holy Week

- 7.00pm Compline with Address at
Bellingham (Live streamed)

27th March: Wednesday of Holy Week

- 7.00pm Compline with Address at
Bellingham (Live streamed)

28th March: Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26; John 13; 1-17, 31-35

- Please note that there will be no services in the morning since the Clergy and everyone are invited to the Cathedral for Blessing of the Oils •

- 7.00pm Eucharist of Last Supper at Humshaugh (for south of Deanery)
- 7.00pm Eucharist of Last Supper (Live streamed) at Bellingham (for north of Deanery)

29th March: Good Friday

- 10.00am Walk of Witness at Wark
- 12.00pm Hour at the Cross at Bellingham
- 12.00pm Hour at the Cross at Gunnerton
- 2.00pm Last Hour at the Cross at Elsdon
- 2.00pm Last Hour at the Cross at Wall

30th March: Easter Eve

- 7.45pm Easter Vigil and renewal of Baptismal vows at Birtley

31st March Easter Day

- Acts 10:34-43; 1 Corinthians 15: 1-11; John 20-1-18 or Mark 16: 1-8 (NB CLOCKS CHANGE!) 5th Sunday*
- 6.30am Sunrise Service at Thockrington
- 8.30am Holy Communion at Wark
- 10.00am Holy Communion at Bellingham
- 10.00am Holy Communion at Simonburn
- 10.30am Holy Communion at Heavenfield
- 11.00am Holy Communion at Thorneyburn
- 11.00am Easter Family Service at Falstone
- 11.30am Holy Communion at Birtley
- 2.00pm Holy Communion at Corsenside
- 5.00pm Holy Communion at Byrness

FALSTONE COFFEE MORNINGS



Falstone Coffee Morning dates: 3rd Tuesday in the month, Falstone Village Hall at 10.30-11.30am. The next few sessions are: 19th March, 16th April, 21st May, 18th June and 16th July.

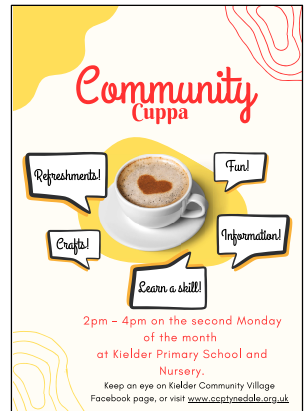
Over the last 12 months we have been able to donate contributions by people (servers and attendees) coming along to the coffee mornings. In 2023 the attendees of the coffee morning have

raised an incredible **£1365** for charities, including: Royal British Legion, Myeloma, Children's Air Ambulance, Macmillan Cancer Care, Alzheimer's, DEC Earthquake Appeal and Huntington's Disease. In January 2024, we raised £136 for Greenhaugh school and received a lovely thank you card (see the picture on the previous page) from Mrs Crow and the pupils. The message in the card read: "Thank-you very much for thinking of our school at your recent coffee morning. It is much appreciated, we will use the money to help support educational trips out of school".

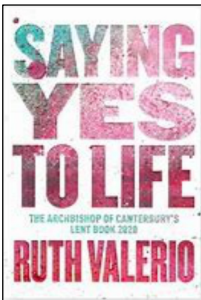
A COMMUNITY CUPPA

Everyone is welcome to come along to *Community Cuppa*, our brand new Coffee and Chat afternoon which we hold in the school hall at Kielder School and Nursery from 2pm-4pm on the second Monday of the month in term time. We have a lovely chat and there is an optional activity for each session.

- 11th March** *Fragile Earth...our Sacred Space* - story and craft led by Rev Frances and Jude
- 13th May** *The Forestry Commission* will be telling us about their work
- 10th June** *Decoupage on glass/wood/metal, and Felting*. Led by Sheila and Logan
- 8th July** A minibus trip into Kielder forest to see the working forest in the Summer - led by Alex and David.



LENT STUDY GROUPS FOR 2024



Lent started on 14th February, but there is still time to join us as we study '*Saying Yes to Life*' by Ruth Valerio, during Lent.

We are exploring the overall theme of *Caring for God's Creation*. You are very welcome to join us as we discuss the themes of the Creation story and look at how they relate to matters of environmental, ethical and social concern. We will also be exploring what it means to be human and, in particular, what it means to be a follower of Jesus during Lent.

In the North of the Deanery, we will be meeting at the MURC church hall each Thursday from 4pm to 5pm. Speak to Sarah Lunn, Cathy Smith or Michael Nixon for details of group meetings throughout the Deanery.

March 17th: A Sunday with an environmental theme

To fit in with our Lent theme of *Caring for God's Creation*, St Cuthbert's Bellingham would like to invite everyone to an ecumenical Service of the Word on 17th March at 11am when Andy Lester, Head of Conservation from A Rocha will be speaking. (A Rocha is a Christian charity working to protect and restore the natural world and is committed to helping churches in the UK to care for the environment. It also runs the Eco-church programme). After the service, there will be a Bring and Share lunch at Bellingham MURC hall at 12.30pm. This will be followed by an afternoon session at 1.30pm with Andy when he will tell us more about A Rocha and give an introduction to Eco-church. You are very welcome to come and enjoy all or any part of the day.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER 2024

We are delighted that Bishop Mark Wroe, the Bishop of Berwick will be joining us in the Deanery for part of Holy Week. There will be further details closer to the time of where he will be preaching and leading services.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2024
FRIDAY 1 MARCH
 A SERVICE FOR EVERYONE!
 I beg you, bear with one another in love

World Day of Prayer Services on Friday 1st March
 6pm - St Peter's Catholic Church, Otterburn
 7pm - Methodist United Reformed Church (MURC), Bellingham

INFORMED PRAYER, PRAYERFUL ACTION
 24-7 365 Days a year Prayer movement Ecumenical International Women-led

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Please come along and participate in our World Day of Prayer service. This year the service will be held in Bellingham MURC this Friday (1st March) at 7pm.

The World Day of Prayer is a women-led, global, ecumenical movement. This year the service has been prepared by an ecumenical group of Christian women from Palestine. As we participate in this service we are part of a great wave of prayer encircling the globe. The title of this years service is, "I beg you, bear with one another in love".

We hope you can join us as we join in with this global ecumenical movement. Please do extend the invite to anyone else who may like to come along. Best wishes, Marie Ness and Cath Brennan

DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR PARISH CHURCHES...

...changes but also no change! Recently, we were clearing out some old papers in one of the local churches and we found a Bellingham Deanery Church magazine from 1973. There was one magazine for all of the churches of this area, and there were 13 clergymen in full time posts to look after the 19 parishes! Today, in 2024, there are two full time clergy posts to look after all 19 churches - so the two of us each have many churches and people to care for.

In the busy lives we all lead, church going has been squeezed out of many people's lives, and therefore numbers of regular church goers has dropped, but most folk will find themselves inside one of our beautiful churches from time to time, for a baptism, a wedding, or a funeral, even if they don't come regularly. The dedicated folk in each area fund and care for their local church as there is no external funding for parish churches.

Though there are just two full-time vicars, covering the area from Wall up to Carter Bar, we still have the same parish system, where everyone - wherever they live in this area - is part of one of the Church of England parishes. For example, the parish of Chollerton covers the villages of Barrasford, and Gunnerton, as well as the hamlets of Colwell, Chollerton, and Barrasford Park, and all the farms and houses between.

Reverend Claire Maxim, in the North of the Deanery, looks after 9 churches and I look after 10 in the South. As you might imagine there is **a lot** of administration and many meetings, even though some churches and parishes are grouped together. In order to try to simplify the administration and therefore give us a little more time to do visiting etc., plus engaging in other community things that clergy would love to have time to do, we are trying to change the groupings of parishes. We hope that the three groups of parishes in the south of the Deanery, comprising the group with Chollerton, Gunnerton, Thockrington and Birtley, the group with Wall, Bingfield and Heavenfield, and the group with Humshaugh, Simonburn and Wark will be dissolved as groups, and will all be put together into one larger group. It will not affect how the churches are run but it will lessen the amount of administration that goes on behind the scenes.

In the North of the Deanery, the parishes have been grouped together already and so, when all the paperwork has been considered and been passed it will mean we have two large groups of churches making up our area, rather than multiple smaller groups, who are already working together. It is not likely that the number of clergy will increase above 2, as locally we cannot manage to pay for any more, but the wonderful thing is that everyone is working together to make sure the churches are alive and open and welcoming.

Sarah Lunn (Rural Dean)

CLOTH OF HOPES AND DREAMS

CHILDREN'S WORK TO GO ON DISPLAY IN THE DEANERY: This year the church Schools group is working with local Schools, looking at Our Fragile Earth, and the children (along with other members of the community) have drawn images of what they love most about our planet.

Volunteers are needed to help transfer the children's artwork onto fabric patches/blocks which can then be sewn together to create a Cloth of Hopes and Dreams for each school/area. Anyone who can machine, hand sew, embroider or even just stick fabric together would be most welcome.

It is hoped that the Greenhaugh School's designs will be incorporated into a new Altar Frontal at Thorneyburn. It's not just for children, though - adults in the area are invited to make their own patches too, so please contact your church or school if you can help in any way. In the North Tyne area, Bellingham, Greenhaugh and Kielder Schools have all been taking part. Jenni Holland jenni_holland1@hotmail.com and Amanda Gray amanda_donkleywood@hotmail.com are the people to contact if you would like to help and/or take part, so please do contact them directly.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

NORTH TYNE AND REDEWATER
CHORAL SOCIETY present:

"ASPECTS OF SPRING"

Love, loss and hope



Stainer's

CRUCIFIXION

*and including seasonal music by
Rutter and Kodaly*

Conductor - John Roper
Accompanist - Henry Wallace

at St Mungo's Church, Simonburn

**SATURDAY MARCH 23rd 2024
7.30pm**

Admission £10, plus refreshments

**Coach Trip to Whitley Bay and Tynemouth
Tuesday 23rd April: £5**



Photo by: Dave Dawson - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dawsondave/2277728524/>, CC BY-SA 2.0,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Whitley_Bay_Park.jpg#file:071324025

**Departing Falstone 9.30am
Pick-ups in Tarsset, Bellingham, Wark and Wall**

Limited places available, first come first served. For more information and to book your place
please contact Marie Ness Tel: 01434 240679

Supported by funding from PICA (Partners in Community Action)

NEWS FROM BELLINGHAM



THE END IS NIGH... Yes, the end of the work in the church is within sight. All the new heaters are fitted and checked to confirm they are working. They are very unobtrusive; some are hidden by the pews and others cleverly colour-coordinated to match walls or woodwork. The slight problem is that we need a new meter to allow us to use the full system. However, even with half of the system working it is proving very effective. Getting a new meter is frustratingly difficult as you must navigate through the online chat box of the electricity supplier to find the person who can organise the work. However, things are now moving in the right direction and by the time we write next month's news we should be able to say that the heating system is fully functioning.

The work in the transept: moving the vestry partition one metre north to make the vestry slightly larger, removing all the pews and tiling the floor, is almost completed. The space created by removing the pews will make it easier to serve coffee after services and allow us to have exhibitions in conjunction with the Bellingham Heritage Centre. Chairs will be provided so that small meetings can take place in the area. Access to the area has also been made easier by removing the front two pews on the south side of the Nave.

As you would expect all this work has created a fair amount of dust so a major cleaning operation will be required before we can open the church for public access. On the plus side the organ was fully covered before any work started so it should be in working order when the covers are removed. The contractor is going to bring an industrial vacuum and an industrial floor cleaner to clean up before finishing the work. This should make the final cleaning a lot easier, but we will still need a team of volunteers to polish and dust to get the church into pristine order.

TAKE A PEW

We have a few spare pews for sale. The pews are Victorian pitch pine and come in various sizes as they were all hand-made to fit the church.

The sizes of the pews are detailed below and can be viewed by appointment, please contact one of the churchwardens. You should note that we are not able to provide transport.

Four pews approx. 5ft 2in long, 2 pews approx. 8ft 4in long, 1 pew approx. 7ft 8in long, 2 pews approx. 6ft 4in long.

John Stevenson and Cath Brennand



NEWS FROM BYRNES

THE MONTANE SPINE RACE AT BYRNES...as you are all probably aware, the Spine Race was a great success even in the most dreadful conditions for the runners. Sub-zero temperatures over the 268 miles made the going difficult, but at least most completed before Storm Isha hit. Jack Scott, the overall winner, knocked a staggering ten hours off the last record, completing the 268 miles on only 54 minutes' sleep in the 72 hours 55 minutes he took to complete the race. Yes, he is human...honest!

St.Francis was used as a rest hub, and at one point we had 11 competitors sleeping in the Church. We provided tea and coffee and a kettle, of which they were most appreciative. The Spine Race has certainly raised the profile of Byrness and St. Francis, as Bishop Helen-Ann followed the Race and emailed to say how brilliant that St. Francis was used for this purpose. We had so many lovely comments and we are delighted.

Oliver Hague, who runs Forest View Hostel, let the Montane organisers take over and it was used as a check-in and feeding station for the runners, before they came to St.Francis for a sleep. Oliver also completed the Northern Challenge end of the race.

The Village Hall housed the Safety Team, which was a great boost to the Hall finances, which struggle with low usage. They were so impressed and we hope they will be coming back for the Summer Race, which will be warmer but with extra MIDGES, and also the 2025 Winter Challenge.

Best wishes
Barb

COUNTING BIRDS IN BYRNES... On 26th January St Francis took part in its second RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch, and not only were we able to compare our bird count to 2023, but we also found in the *History of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club vol. XXX*, a list of birds that had been spotted in the area between 1936 and 1939. Perhaps it's not fair to compare too closely – the 1936 and 1938 articles were based on observations throughout the year (as is clear from the inclusion of swallows and house martins!) and tend to include the rarer birds – but still it is very interesting!

	1936	1938	1939	2023	2024
Aquatic Warbler	✓				
Barn Owl	✓ (6)				
Blackbird					1
Black-Necked Grebe	✓				
Bluetit				8	10
Chaffinch				6	14
Coal Tit				15	1
Collared Dove					2
Corn Crake	✓				
Crow					1
Goldfinch	✓		✓ (2)		
Grasshopper Warbler		✓			
Great Tit				7	15
Green Finch					1
Green Woodpecker	✓				
House Martin			✓		
House Sparrow	✓			2	6
Jackdaw	✓ (2)				
Little Grebe	✓				
Long-Tailed Tit					4
Meadow Pipet			✓		
Nuthatch				1	
Robin				1	1
Rook	✓				
Sedge Warbler	✓	✓			
Swallow			✓		
Tree Creeper				1	
Willow Tit				1	
Wood Pigeon				1	4
Wren					2

1936: https://archive.org/stream/historyofberwick30berw/historyofberwick30berw_djvu.txt

1938: *Bird Life in the Highlands of Redesdale* by R. Crates.

1939: *Some Plants found during 1939* by John Brown; *Lepidoptera Hunting and Collecting in Upper Redesdale* by R. Crates.
Ornithological and Other Notes by R. Craig.

NEWS FROM CORSENSIDE

The deanery confirmation service at Byrness was a privilege to attend. Bishop Mark of Berwick gave a brilliant sermon and joked about the chilly atmosphere and how it could affect the baptismal font! The clergy were well represented and included Canon Sarah, Claire Maxim, and Frances Dower. All the clergy in our diocese need concentrated prayer at this time so please pray for strength and healing. It was a lovely and inclusive event and it was good to chat to the newly confirmed, and others, other refreshments provided at the impressively refurbished village hall (eco-friendly on all counts) – the renovations for which have been ongoing for several years.

Moving on, our parish clerk for Corsenside (Chris Woodcock of White Oak Studios) organised and ran a wonderful pinhole Cyanotype workshop in Otterburn Memorial Hall on Saturday 27th January. Chris gave us excellent instructions and provided three sizes of picture frames for the completed works. Since only three out of five possibles attended, we had the added benefit of virtually one-to-one instructions. Initially the paper is given a chemical and water-based wash over the whole surface and can also be brushed with natural products such as beetroot, red wine, paprika, lily, turmeric, red cabbage, cherry or raspberry. Then the image created can be made up from the seaweed grass as dried flowers lichens mass etc. The work has to be exposed to sunlight for about eight weeks, being held firmly in place by the glass during this period. The results of the work take longer to develop in winter because of the darker days, but we look forward to seeing the completed effect when the work is unclipped!

On February 11th, it was good to see the Rev. Dr. Richard Virden conducting communion in our village hall of Corsenside. He has been isolating since Covid, but has stepped into the breach as the clergy and our diocese have been needing extra assistants due to illnesses. Heartfelt prayers are with them all and especially for the extra duties at the build up to Easter, preceded by lent and a more sombre mood. Richard gave an excellent sermon, linking the old testament reading about Elijah giving his gift of the young Elisha, and the chariot of fire coming down from heaven as an affirmation. It is obviously a spiritual experience linked to the later transfiguration on the mountain top, when Christ became glowing white and urged his companions not to mention this until the resurrection. There are at least three mentions of divine intervention in the gospels, all of which confirm that Jesus is the Christ child: *“This is my son, in whom I am well pleased”* as the heavens opened at his baptism; the disciples on the Emmaus road; and Paul’s experience of blindness – *“Paul, Paul, why do you persecute me?”*. Our prayers were

mirrored in the service itself and in the beautiful words of the lord's prayer in its traditional form. The service ended with light refreshments.

The northern leg of the Holy Cross pilgrimage will see the Pilgrims coming to west Woodburn for lunch on Tuesday of holy week. They travel all the way from Lanark cost priory and arrive at holy island on good Friday, stopping en route at various venues (next stop after Corsenside is at Holme Mill farm (Monkridge) for tea, followed by an overnight break in Elsdon). Offers of help from Andrea and Avril were very kindly given (and have been gratefully accepted), but any additional offers of help with refreshments would be very welcome.

In the meantime, welcome evidence of spring is all around, with buds beginning to open and daffodil heads appearing. It's a joy to see the aconites and snowdrops.

With love and best wishes to you all – and hope for answered prayers.

Diana

NEWS FROM ELSDON

WATCH AND PRAY: Lent started on Ash Wednesday 14th February and many have signed up to the Church of England's daily Lent reflections by email. The reflections are also available in a small booklet format, copies of which are available at the back of St. Cuthbert's Church. This year's reflections have the title "Watch + Pray". Do help yourself to a copy.



THE NORTHERN CROSS PILGRIMAGE 2024: The annual Northern Cross Pilgrimage is back! It starts at Carlisle on Saturday 23rd March and finishes at Lindisfarne on Good Friday 29th March, passing through Elsdon on Tuesday 26th March. Some of us will join the walkers as they walk from Wark, across Redesmouth and on to Elsdon on Tuesday 26th March. If you would like to join us, please give Helen a ring on 07791 539706. Alternatively, you can meet the pilgrims by calling in to Elsdon Village Hall in the evening, as that is where they will be staying overnight.



Alternatively why not join the walkers to cross the tidal flats to Holy Isle on the last section of the pilgrimage on Good Friday? The English pilgrimage coming from Carlisle and the Scottish pilgrimage coming from Lanark converge at this point, and traditionally are joined by many locals for the final crossing to Lindisfarne. It's a great way to mark Good Friday.

Best Wishes from
Helen Howie

NEWS FROM OTTERBURN

Firstly, here are the results of the 100 Club Draw for February:
40 - Helen Bolton; 70 -Joe Corbett; 1 - Gordon Moore

As I type the last Otterburn news (from me at least), I am in the peaceful atmosphere of my study. By the time you read it, I will have stripped the shelves, packed away the computer and will be sitting waiting the furniture van to take me and my husband Ken, to our new home...our last one, I hope!

So here's wishing you all many thanks for making us feel so welcome in Otterburn and our best wishes to you all and to my fellow Churchwardens (also in the picture) for the future!



Rosemary, Retired Churchwarden

NEWS FROM THORNEYBURN

NEWS FROM ST AIDAN'S: This last month we didn't have a communion service, but Michael stepped in and led a thought-provoking Morning Prayer which was very well received. Lizzie, as usual, led us in the hymns. Michael suggested we each took some prayers from our Christmas prayer tree and kept them in our prayers during the intercessions - which felt very meaningful.

I am in the process of sorting the rota for helping with services and there are some gaps - so if anyone wants to volunteer, that would be great. You support the service by preparing the church, doing flowers, and helping with readings and supplying the tea and coffee afterwards. It will be much appreciated.



During last month's stormy weather, we lost the top off the split topped fir at the gate to the church. Happily, it managed to fall between the wall and the gravestones doing no damage and has since been all cleared up by Team Waitt – Laura and Isla doing a great job clearing the brash while my brother Clifford was in charge of the chainsaw and felled another dead tree. I supervised at a distance! We also had some damage at Greystead with a very large limb of a beech tree dropping and again it didn't cause damage in the churchyard but blocked the Kielder Road for a time.

Anne Munroe organised the clear up with emergency services and Chris Mowatt - so by the time I heard about this, there was a neat pile of logs all cleared up. However, it does highlight that we need to do some more work on the trees to ensure they are safe. We will get a tree surgeon to check the trees and do the more complex work but clearing up the deadwood could be done by a spring working party which I will organise. Volunteers, please let me know!

So on to plans for this month – March, which covers **Lent and Easter**. Our next **Communion Service on the 10th March** is also **Mothering Sunday** and we are planning a joint service with Bellingham which will be lovely to have more visitors to the church. Our evening prayer falls on **Palm Sunday 24th** and we are having an **Easter Day Communion at 11am on the 31st**. We will be looking for Easter Gardens to be made for the service and nearer the time a joint effort to decorate the church for Easter. I will let you know. Please try to join us in some or all of the services.

It seems good to be looking forward to Spring and hopefully warmer and dryer weather. Already the catkins and pussy willow are showing along with emerging daffodils and crocuses are lending cheery colour.

People have been asking about Soup and Pud but as yet we haven't organised anything. I need a little more energy and Gloria too has just had a knee op but we haven't forgotten and will be planning one as soon as we are fit enough.

Caroline Waitt caroline.waitt@btinternet.com 01434 240210 (Churchwarden)

FOOL'S GOLD presents old king coal



At Corsenside Parish Hall on 6th April 2024, acoustic duo *Fool's Gold*, present a new show for 2024: *Old King Coal*, which they describe as an 'unashamedly nostalgic retrospective of life in the North of England in days gone by'. But it's not just about coal - numerous places, events, and characters of the North all rub shoulders with tales of the pit. Those who have seen the duo perform past shows will know to expect quirky humour, fascinating facts and a blend of

well-known and original songs, which all add up to a genuinely entertaining evening. The bar will be open and teas/coffees will be available to buy.

Corsenside Parish Hall, 6th April 2024 7.30pm (doors and bar open at 7pm)

Tickets are £6 (children free) and are available from West Woodburn shop or by phoning 01434 270062

TWO POEMS FOR SPRING

Otterburn lambing

by Sheila Cameron

Between my garden
and the distant chevots,
Peace breaks out for lambing.

Over the ranges
the military fall silent,
as field and farm await
the birthing, the nurturing.

Christ of the green shoot,
heal the violated moor,
dismantle the rocket-launcher
re-form the artillery,
let the primrose take root,
the lapwing guard its nest.

Christ of the mangled earth,
we know this respite will end.
You, the Paschal lamb,
inhabit all suffering things,
accompany each birth.



Waiting for Swallows

by Sarah Hallberg

Hawk hangs lazily against the sky,
motionless in defiance of the wind.

Small birds chitter their fright
and their rallying cry.

Where are the Swallows, those bright,
gleaming defenders of the skies,
whose small stature seems too little
to contain hearts of such steel?

They would test the mettle
of Hawk and Buzzard,
harrying, darting, risking all
in dizzying displays of wingmanship,
with fierce chatter and
feathers flashing iridescent against the sky.

Soon, those brave hearts will come
winging their way home
over the warming earth.

The very air rejoices in their arrival
for they mean spring, and life, and hope.



A BRIEF WORD FROM THE EDITOR

This month's cover photo is of Spring crocus and snowdrops in the frost at Lanehead and was taken by Sarah Hallberg.

The magazine is always looking for photographs of people, places, events, history or nature in our local area - which covers Bellingham, Byrness, Corsenside, Elsdon, Falstone, Horsley, Otterburn, Thorneyburn, Kielder and all areas in between!. If you have any photos and would like to see them in print in the magazine (whether online in colour or in print in black and white), please do email good quality versions of them to me - I can also use scans and PDFs I will need details of who took each photo as well as who, what, where and when the photos were taken. You may find they are printed on the cover of the magazine or used elsewhere inside.

In addition, if you have anything else you would like to see included in the magazine (articles, cartoons, news, photos, events, birthdays, etc.), please feel free to email it to: **sarahMOTW@btinternet.com** - or you can simply give me a call on 240767.

The copy deadline for next month's issue is **MONDAY 18th MARCH 2024** and in the meantime, I hope you all have a Happy Easter!

Please note that any views, thoughts or opinions expressed within this magazine are those of the authors/contributors and do not officially represent those of the wider church or of any other group or individual.

NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE MEETING OF THE WATERS

We would like to say a huge thank you for supporting this publication. If you are an occasional reader and would like a regular copy, please contact your local distributor below - the annual sub is just £7 for 11 issues. If you would just like an occasional copy, feel free to pick one up at your local church, where a donation in the box would be gratefully received and very much appreciated!

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Please note: Friday is my day off and I will respond to any queries when I return to work

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Falstone with Greystead and Thorneyburn:

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Horsley with Byrness, Elsdon and Otterburn:

Dr Andrew Brittlebank: 07740 224324
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OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

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Children's Services 01670 714 411
NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

DISABILITY & CARERS

DWP Helpline 0800 882200

DOMESTIC ABUSE

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Northumberland Cygnus Support 01670 853977
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