

St John the Baptist Church



Newsletter” **February 2026**

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Worship In February

Sunday 1st February

Holy Communion at 10.45 am

BCP Evening Prayer & Hymns 4.00 pm

Sunday 8th February

Morning Praise at 10.45 am

Sunday 15th February

Holy Communion at 10.45 am

BCP Evening Prayer & Hymns 4.00 pm

Wednesday 18th February – Ash Wednesday

Benefice Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes

11am at St John the Baptist, Cayton

7pm at St John's, East Ayton

Sunday 22nd February

Holy Communion at 10.45 am

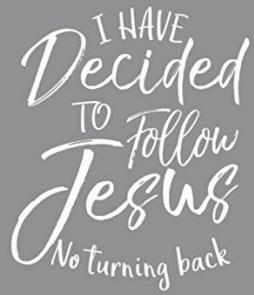
Sunday 1st March

Holy Communion at 10.45 am

BCP Evening Prayer & Hymns 4.00 pm

Coffee will be served from 10.15 am each Sunday morning.

We look forward to welcoming you.



The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases...

A lot has happened since the December newsletter. And much of it has been really encouraging. Here's a snapshot: The festive season began with Christmas coffee mornings and Fairs, a wonderful opportunity to work together as a team, to support one another and particularly a great opportunity to connect with people beyond the regular Sunday services.

The trees went up, with the chance to offer a prayer to remember people by name with Advent Prayer trees, the candles were lit, week by week and the nativity figures (little and big) were welcomed into and outside the 3 churches with delight.

We were then in full swing with this year's special services and carol singing events.

We enjoyed a family friendly Christingle at Cayton and a family nativity with the S Club children and young people along with their leader taking centre stage. We had a separate Crib service with Christingle on 23rd at Ayton which was well supported, families taking on the role of the knitted figures as the nativity was shared. I'd love a knitted angel and a camel for next year! At Cayton we held a crib service on Christmas Eve which was well attended again using the knitted nativity and at both we shared star prayers, placing ourselves at the crib. St Martin's, Seamer had to adapt the planned Nativity and Christingle owing to the effects of the fire on 22nd December but God was in it all, faithful as always. The whole team rallied and we held it outside around the crib which had been a visual symbol of the meaning of Christmas throughout Advent this year. I enjoyed attending nativity plays at the local schools and we again welcomed Seamer and Irton Primary School to share their Christmas carol service – over two sittings! There were festive refreshments, lunch clubs and meals, a quiz and lots of community carol singing. It was great to be part of the Parish Council Carol Services at Crossgates, Seamer and Cayton, Star Inn. We sang carols enthusiastically outside Wilsons Food Hall and the Christmas tree at Ayton and all 3 parishes had Carols by Candlelight services with traditional readings and carols which proved popular. We shared communion on Christmas Eve, Bethlehem and UK time and on Christmas Day in all 3 parishes and enjoyed an encouraging Benefice service together.

Many people were involved in church decoration, knitting, event organising, refreshment serving, worship leading, leaflet delivering, praying and much more and I want to say a very big Thank You to everyone.

Through it all, we welcomed many people to church services. We shared the Good News of the Gospel. Christ is Born. Emmanuel. God with us.

There is, of course, much we can reflect on, ways we can do things differently, dreams we can share for what we might do next Christmas. We hold this hopefully as we seek to help more people know the love of God, revealed in Jesus Christ and invite him into their lives beyond Christmas. But.. at this moment in time, we give thanks, for all we have done to make Christ known in our benefice.

Amidst all this, there has been sadness too. The fire at St Martin's has cause substantial damage to the North aisle and smoke damage everywhere. We are thankful no one was hurt and have been reminded that the Church is not the building. God is everywhere and where we are God is. It is sad though as it's a much loved and historic place of worship and we need to recognise this, whilst also being ready to embrace the new missional opportunities that may arise and explore further ways we can support one another as a benefice. The journey of restoration and to being able to use the building again for worship will be slow and challenging. Thank you to everyone in the churches and wider community for the support, prayers, kindness and care shown. Please do keep praying for everyone impacted by the fire and closure of the church building.

There has also been much to pray about in individual families with a number of people being affected by illness, hospital stays and feeling the sorrow of recent bereavements. We continue to pray for all we know who are finding life hard. Tuesdays from 10-12 at the Church Rooms in Seamer, sees an open drop-in, a time of offering prayer for any situation. Please do contact Jean Donovan or Deborah Brinley for more information. You can be connected to a text messaging group or ask for prayers for people by name, with their permission, and we do pray for people by name when asked in our regular intercessions.

The prayerful, pastoral support of a church community is vital to people feeling the love and peace of Christ in times of adversity just as it is for those who are newer to church. Do keep welcoming people, getting to know one another over a cuppa and encouraging one another as we navigate the ups and downs of life together as church family.

I write this month, as I did last year, preparing to head back to Llandudno, to the Loreto Centre for a time of silent retreat. It has been a busy time and I am ready for resting – not simply lounging about, but resting in God's presence, being

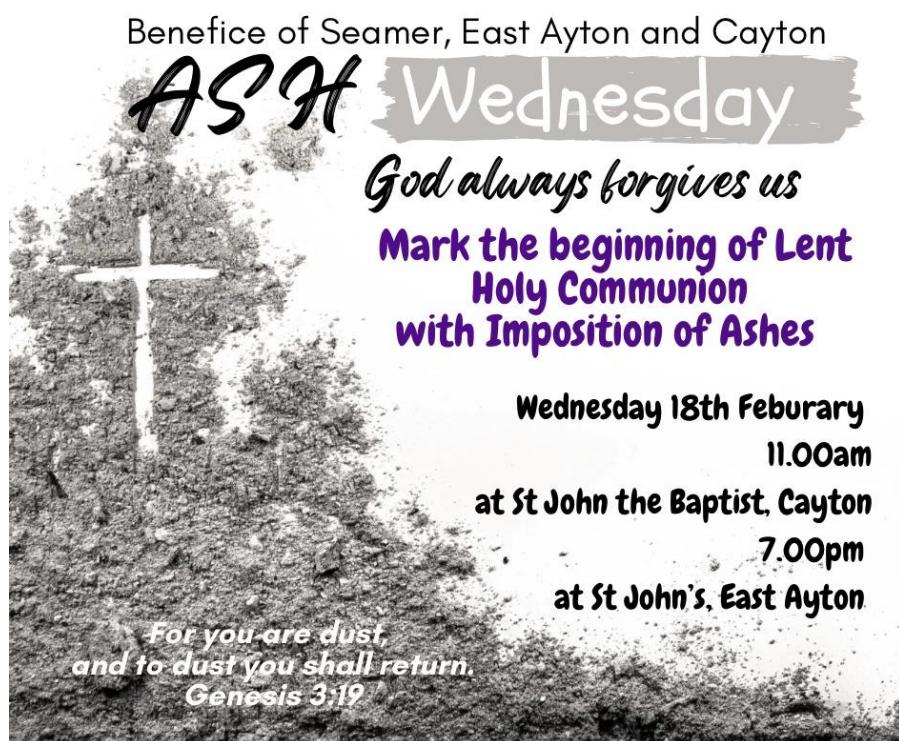
reminded of God's love for me and for each of us. I find that structured times of silence, prayer, scripture reading and worship held within the supportive hands of a retreat guide help me focus on who Jesus is, on trusting his unconditional love for me and what difference this then makes to my life.

As February unfolds, we see our worship and hearts turning from away from the celebration of Christmas and towards the mysteries of Easter. Candlemas is a pivotal point in the year, a turning towards the cross. Here, Jesus is proclaimed as the light of the world. It is a poignant service with words that speak of hope and renewal, the light of Christ here to dispel the darkness of the world. Simeon though, recognises too that the freedom Jesus offers must come through his suffering.

So, do put Ash Wednesday services in your diary and come along if you are able as we mark the beginning of Lent and take time to consider what Lent might look like for you this year. Take time to explore your own ways of finding rest and nourishment for your soul, and trust that if you seek the Saviour of the world, he will meet you where you are, rejoice that you have come and love you as you are.

Peace,

Revd Claire



For our prayers

This month, alongside those we know who are struggling, we also pray for those who have lost someone they love.

Funerals:

Reginald 'Reg' Thomas Everett whose service was held at St John the Baptist, East Ayton

Paul David Hunter whose service was held at St Mary's Scarborough followed by burial at St Martin's, Seamer

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Diary Date for looking ahead.

Confirmation



Bishop Eleanor will be leading a Deanery Confirmation Service on Tuesday 5th May at 7.00pm at a location to be confirmed.

Confirmation offers the opportunity for anyone aged 12 or older wanting to make a deeper commitment to Christ to affirm for themselves the promises made at their baptism. For an adult not yet baptised, it can also be a point at which baptism takes place in advance of the confirmation service. During the service, the Bishop prays for the Holy Spirit to be with each person in a new way. It can be a point at which someone begins to take the bread and wine. It is an important stepping stone in the ongoing journey of faith that we are all on. I, alongside others, would be very pleased to explore confirmation with anyone, looking to this service or at another point within the benefice. If you would like to talk about what this means and involves do speak to me or email me.

Planning the year.

Come along to an open meeting to chat about social events for the coming year. All Welcome.

Monday 9th February at 10am-11am.

This will be followed by PCC meeting (for PCC members)

Easy Fundraising

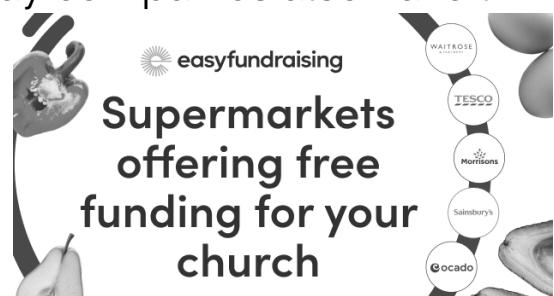
Over 8,000 retailers including all the leading supermarkets (Tesco, Morrisons, ASDA, Waitrose, Sainsbury's, Iceland) will give free donations to your church when you order online from them via easyfundraising, at no extra cost.

With up to £6 offered per order, on average, just two people could generate £114 of unrestricted funding in a year by doing their regular food shop online!

Amazon, lots of clothing shops and holiday companies also have links on Easy Fundraising.

For more info – download the app and put in St John the Baptist Church, Cayton or speak to Sue Hill.

Thank you to those who already use it.



Benefice Bible Study Groups

The Flourish Group for women continues throughout February meeting on Thursday afternoons at St John's, East Ayton from 2-4pm.

All are welcome for fellowship and digging deeper into scripture.

Please contact Deborah for more information

deborahbrindley@hotmail.co.uk

Prayer Meetings

Tuesdays in St Martin's Church Room, opposite the church. 10-12. Drop in anytime.

Keep in touch

Find us at

www.achurchnearyou.com/church/6116



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