

June 2026 -----BENEFICE NEWS-----June 2026

For enquiries please contact Revd Dr Robert Brown

Priest-in-Charge, Bewcastle, Stapleton and Kirklington with Hethersgill

Greenholme, Bewcastle, Cumbria CA6 6PW T: 016977 48438

email: Robert.Brown@BewcastleHouseOfPrayer.org.uk

Please note my parish working days are Mondays and Fridays (plus Sundays). I will be on leave from 20th June to 4th July; for any emergencies, please contact the rural dean, Ben Phillips, at ben@lanercost.net

Date	Sunday	Bewcastle	Stapleton	Hethersgill	Kirklington
7 th June	Trinity 1	6 pm Evensong			
14 th June	Trinity 2			10 am HC	
21 st June	Trinity 3		10 am BCP Matins(1)		
28 th June	Trinity 4				10 am HC (2)
5 th July	Trinity 5	10 am HC			

HC = Holy Communion, MP = Morning Prayer, EP = Evening Prayer

(1) Short service led by Revd Ben Phillips, vicar of Lanercost; (2) Led by Revd Liz Gough

Knowe United Reformed Church, Bewcastle: Service on 1st Sunday of the month at 2.15 pm

Prayer of the Month

God be in my head, and in my understanding; God be in my eyes, and in my looking; God be in my mouth, and in my speaking; God be in my heart, and in my thinking; God be at my end, and at my departing. Amen

Church Notices

Kirklington with Hethersgill PCC meeting: Monday 20th July at 7pm at Grainhead Farm (home of Alison Sisson).

Baptism and Confirmation 2026. A few folk have expressed an interest in being baptised or confirmed this year, so I will be running a course of five baptism/confirmation preparation classes at Greenholme, Bewcastle on Fridays (4.30-6pm) commencing on **25th September for five weeks**. The course is also open to those who would just like a refresher about the Christian faith. If you, or someone you know, might be interested, I warmly encourage you to drop me an email (robert.brown@bewcastlehouseofprayer.org.uk), or give me a call (016977 48438). There is absolutely no obligation or expectation to attend just by getting in touch, so do please feel free to ask any questions. For younger folk, the only criteria is to be ready to decide for yourself, so you are probably likely to be ten years old or more (Year 5 upwards), but more mature adults are especially invited. More details are available online on the Bewcastle House of Prayer website (www.BewcastleHouseOfPrayer.org.uk).

Organist Needed. Very sadly, our organist at Kirklington and Hethersgill churches, Eileen Robinson, is temporarily unable to play for us due to a recently sustained hip injury. If there is anyone who is willing to help lead our worship on Sunday mornings for a few months by playing the organ, that would be much appreciated. The requirement would be for two Sundays a month at 10am, once at each church, playing four hymns at each service. If you are able and willing to help, please get in touch with me (Robert Brown) at the contact details above.

If you know of someone who would be unable to attend church but would like to receive communion or at home, or would appreciate a visit from me, please do let me know. My contact details are at the top of the newsletter.

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Dear Friends,

I love rivers. I have always found them fascinating. Something about the never-ending movement of water means they are always changing, always new. As a young child, I guess like many, I loved to play in them. I remember my grandmother in Coventry used to take my sister and me to a secret glade in the local woods where, if we were quiet, we might catch a glimpse of the fairies dancing among the bluebells. A small brook ran through it and we would take off our socks and shoes, paddle and explore, lifting pebbles to see what was under them. It was a truly magical place. At university this developed into a love of white-water kayaking, where you become one with the river, reading it, sensing its movement, flowing with it, being submerged in its excitement and energy. And sometimes capsizing in the process. Actually, we capsized so often we developed a club motto, 'better a wally than a wimp' – in other words, its better to have a go and make a fool of yourself than never to try at all.

Since those days, I have spent my life studying rivers professionally as a hydrologist. Not in the way a fisherman might, who comes to intimately know the moods and character of a particular river, but from a more scientific perspective. I have travelled around the country looking at rivers of all sizes, measuring their flows. Each one is different. I try to understand why and how they behave during both floods and droughts, how the underlying geology shapes their response to rainfall, how the steepness and breadth of the catchment concentrates or attenuates the flows, what kind of ecology it supports, what effect different types of land use have on the baseflow and the water quality. And, of course, trying to quantify the effects of climate change on their behaviour.

As I've said before, one of the things that unites us as a benefice is that all our parishes lie within the River Lyne catchment. But the Lyne and its tributaries have many different characters. The upper part of the river comprises the two main tributaries of the Black and the White Lynes, the latter of which I gauge as it passes Greenholme. The Black Lyne is the larger, but both rise high up in the Bewcastle Fells, just metres from the headwaters of the North Tyne. These are the rugged moorland peat bogs with rough grazing and forestry plantations, of deep cleughs and waterfalls, of gills, sikes, grains and burns, where the river is young. This is where the migratory sea trout used to find their spawning gravels in days of yore. But the forestry practice of ploughing straight up the hillslope has a drastic effect on the response of this part of the catchment to rainfall, increasing both the speed of runoff, and hence flood peaks, and the sedimentation load, while reducing the amount of water held back to sustain lower flows in the summer. Gradually over the years as the saplings start to grow runoff slowly diminishes, both in response to heavy rainfall, and in dry conditions where the soil now dries out. When the trees are clear-felled, again a dramatic change occurs with flashier responses to rainfall in the winter but still drier in the summer.

Then the rivers start maturing and enter more in-by land, eventually uniting at Low Luckens to become one – the Lyne, joined later by the Hether Burn draining Bolton Fell peat moss. Here the gradients aren't so steep, but there are still plenty of drops and rapids. The rivers widen and develop flood plains. Banks are wooded with alder, ash, rowan, beech and bird cherry. Farming practices here have a different kind of impact. Field drains lead water that was once held on the land quickly to the rivers, again increasing response times to rainfall, giving higher flood flows and lower baseflows. But perhaps less obviously, heavy machinery used in spreading slurry and cutting silage compacts the soils over the years, allowing less infiltration and increasing overland flow and soil erosion. Coupled with the application of fertiliser and slurry to improve sward growth, and glyphosates to control reshers, this in turn means higher nitrate and glyphosate-related chemical concentrations, and persistent pollutants (such as PBDEs) found in slurry, entering the rivers with devastating consequences on aquatic ecology, especially fish. These have all but disappeared from our river, as any old-time fisherman will tell you, and the White Lyne river bed, for one, is now covered in grey filamentous algae. Farmers are not to blame, we are; a theme I hope to expand on in future.

Now the Lyne fully matures and meanders through the low-lying land and gentle gradients west of Cliff Bridge. There are fewer riffles here, just the occasional weir. Flat fields proliferate with less grazing and more cultivation due to richer soils and drier weather. Nitrate concentrations again increase. Eventually it flows into the Border Esk upstream of the M6 crossing, before entering the Solway Firth to become part of the wide Atlantic Ocean.

The River Lyne comprises all these different tributaries, aspects and characters. The river's life, as a whole, is defined by each part of it; what happens in one stage affect the others, be that water quantity, quality, or ecology. Far from having just a 'passing interest', they all interact with, and depend on, each other. Indeed, we couldn't understand the river, and it couldn't exist, without each of them – they are all part of the one river. Much like the church, really. We could say 'we are one river because we all share in the one water.'

Your friend and priest,

Robert.

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Monday 25th May 8pm Folk tunes sessions at the Black Lion, Hethersgill. All welcome to come along and play or listen.

Friday 29th May 7pm Stapleton PCC Pudding Night at Stapleton Hall. £10 a head, under 12s free. Come and enjoy a bowl of soup and a wonderful range of puddings, to help raise funds for the repairs to St Mary's Church. There will also be a raffle, plant stall and produce table. Any contributions very welcome.

Tuesday 2nd June 11 am – 2 pm Bewcastle Mini Hub at Roadhead Hall. Come for a chat and free coffee in the supper room; scones and cakes for sale.

Saturday 6th June 7.30 pm Stapleton Public Hall Dance. Details Mary Thompson 016977 48379

Sunday 7th June 10 am – 1 pm Car Boot Sale at the Priory Garth, Lanercost. £1 entrance. Tables £8 pre-booked, £10 on the day. Contact: Elizabeth.harding@btinternet.com

Tuesday 9th June Kirklington & District WI

Wednesday 10th June 7.30 pm Stapleton WI at Stapleton Public Hall

Tuesday 16th June 2 pm The Knowe URC Poetry Group at Roadhead Hall. Theme: Midsummer. Please feel free to bring a poem to read, or perhaps to share a memory, an interesting article or recording or simply come along and listen and enjoy some conversation, tea and cake. All welcome. Free entry but small donation to hall hire is appreciated. Details: lisa.wilson@nwsynod.org.uk

Saturday 20th June 2 – 4 pm at Hethersgill Parish Hall - Kirklington with Hethersgill PCC 'Strawberry Tea'. All welcome.

Sunday 21st June 10.30 am – 2 pm Bewcastle Hub at Roadhead Hall. Community drop in event, free entry and refreshments. Cakes, bacon rolls, crafts and produce for sale. All welcome.

Sunday 21st June 11 am Bewcastle Heritage Society. Walk with John and Sylvia. Meet at Roadhead Hall.

Monday 29th June 8 pm Folk tunes sessions at the Black Lion, Hethersgill. All welcome to come along and play or listen.

Claiming Dates

The Platinum Anniversary Stapleton and Solport Parish Show will be held on 5th September. There are a few new classes to look out for and we are introducing a class for men only in the industrial section, so gents get your bake on! Also, this year's show children's section will be open to all children who live within the benefice, or who attend Bewcastle, Fir Ends or Shankhill CE Primary schools. Schedules will be available nearer the time, updates on where they are will be posted later in the Spring. In the meantime, if you've any questions please get in touch with me, Catherine Lawson on 07746286311.

Saturday 19th September Hethersgill Parish Hall Dance with Gordon Brown

Line Dancing Classes: Every Monday 7.30 - 9 pm at Stapleton Public Hall. Ann Robb 07855 919368 Anyone who can't attend please let Ann know.

Bolton Fell Moss Volunteer Work Parties: First Tuesday of the month 10 am – 2 pm. Contact Ros Campbell ros.campbell@naturalengland.org.uk 07570 370775

Stapleton Knit and Natter Group: Every Tuesday 7 pm in Stapleton Hall. (last one is 26th May, it will start again on 8th September) Carol 01697 543094

Beading Classes: Wednesday 1.30 – 3.30 pm fortnightly. Details Christine Batey 01228 791348

Craft & Natter Afternoon: Every Wednesday afternoon at the Black Lion

Stapleton WI: 2nd Wednesday of every month 7.30 pm at Stapleton Hall

Yoga: Every Thursday 6 pm in Hethersgill Parish Hall

Carpet Bowling: will resume in September

Badminton & Table Tennis: Every Thursday 7.30 – 9 pm at Hethersgill Parish Hall. Contact Andy Little 07765 244071

June 2026 NEWS AND THANKS----- June 2026

Hethersgill Church would like to thank everyone who helps keep Hethersgill Church & churchyard so tidy. If you have any spare time to help with grass cutting/strimming/cleaning please contact Irene 01228 675389 or Madge 01228 675568

Kirklington Church PCC - would like to express their appreciation and grateful thanks to Mr Willie Wilson who has for many years tended to the grass-cutting of Kirklington Church churchyard and its immediate setting.

The Bewcastle Cancer Research UK Committee would like to thank everyone who supported their fundraising efforts in 2025. The annual donation letters have raised £2206.19 and a further £718.03 has been raised with the kind help from donations made by Mr J Bouch, Mrs L Sunley, collection boxes in the local area and donations from funeral directors in memory of loved ones. The committee was started in 1971 following the death of a local lady Mrs Stokoe who had raised money by holding a Whist drive every year. The North Cumberland area secretary for Cancer Research, Mr Handy suggested forming a Bewcastle committee to continue her good work. This idea was met by a good response and the annual whist drive and grand drawing began. The first year raised £153.49. We have an incredible team of volunteers over the years two of our longest serving members have been on the committee for 51 and 45 years. Sadly 2025 will be our last year of fundraising. It is with heavy hearts that we have decided to stop due to the increasing hoops we have to jump through getting licences, health and safety, bank charges plus we would now need to amalgamate with another committee. It has been with the incredible support locally from residents and businesses that we have raised well over £102,000 in the years 1989-2025 which for a small community is an amazing achievement. People can still donate on line if they wish to continue supporting Cancer Research UK. We would sincerely like to thank everyone for their wonderful support over the last 54 years.

A new defibrillator has been installed on the wall of Hethersgill Parish Hall by kind permission of the hall committee. In case of emergency if you dial 999 you will be given the code to open the cabinet to access the defibrillator

Hethersgill Village Hall All enquiries/bookings please contact Elsie Elliott 01228 675336 or Christine Falder 07790 302016

Hethersgill Parish Hall 100 Club. May winners: 1st Elaine Irving, 44; **2nd** Carol Armstrong, 5; **3rd** Linda Little, 93. Drawn at Stapleton WI. If you would like to renew or join for 2026 please contact Irene on 01228 675389 or a Committee Member. £11 per year. Thank you for all your support

Stapleton Public Hall can be booked or enquiries made by email bookings@stapletonpublichall.co.uk or calling Eileen on 016977 3196.

Shankhill C of E Primary School and Nursery - We have places throughout school for children aged 3 - 11, with free 15 & 30 hours places for children aged 3+ Mon-Fri 8.45-3.30 pm, with the option of Breakfast Club for everyone from 07:45 to 8:45, and After-School Clubs/extended childcare from 3:30 to 5:30. Please call 01228 577264 or email office@shankhill.cumbria.sch.uk for more information

Shankhill Parent & Toddler Group every Tues 1:30 –3:20pm during term time. 01228 577264 Updates on our Facebook page

Bewcastle Primary School and Nursery – places available throughout school for children aged 3 – 11. We now offer wrap around care, 8am -5pm. For further information please call 016977 48662 or email admin@bewcastle.cumbria.sch.uk

Bewcastle School Nursery – Nursery places available for children aged 3+, full and part time places available. For further information please call 016977 48662 or emailadmin@bewcastle.cumbria.sch.uk

Newsletters can be picked up from: Kirklington Church porch, Hethersgill Church porch, Stapleton Church, Bewcastle Church, Stapleton Public Hall Porch, Smithfield Garage office, Garry Phillip's Garage. Or downloaded : www.Bewcastle.com/news-events, www.BewcastleHouseOfPrayer.org.uk/parish-notice

Deadline for the **July** issue is **Saturday 13th June** to Tricia Coombe, Damhead, LyneholmeFord, Roweltown, CA6 6LQ. 016977 48833 or triciacoombe@damhead.me