

The Meeting of the Waters



JUNE 2026

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<https://sites.google.com/view/ntyneredesdalechurches/>



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A PASTORAL LETTER FOR JUNE 2026

Over the past weeks I've been pondering a difficult Bible passage, one that's gripping and a touch grisly (Acts 5:1-11). I hope you're not too squeamish to come exploring with me.

We're offered a glimpse into daily life among Jesus' first century followers and we see how those first Christians lived communally. That meant sharing everything that each person owned. There was no coercion to be generous, yet the overall culture was one of mutual support as well as deep trust in God's purposes. Together, community members discerned the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

How different from our corner of the world nowadays. Money, or lack of it, is a very private affair.

Some two thousand years ago, one Ananias and Sapphira, his wife, brought their offering to Peter. Together they pretended that this gift amounted to the entire proceeds from their property sale. Peter saw straight into that couple's hearts.

Summoning Ananias separately, Peter highlights the voluntary nature of giving. So why pretend to be super generous? Later that day, Peter asks Sapphira also is your gift the full amount you got from selling your land? Sapphira refuses to reveal the deceit. Loyalty to her husband trumps integrity.

The dreadful thing about this incident is that lying costs Ananias and Sapphira their lives. Three hours apart each of them dropped down dead in Peter's presence. Both times, being caught red-handed appears to be utterly unbearable. Ananias is buried immediately, without his wife even being informed and by the end of the day, the pair have been laid to rest side by side.

Twice we are told that "great fear gripped the whole church."

How do we begin to get our heads round this tragic tale? As far as Ananias and Sapphira were concerned, self-deception went hand in hand with wilful ignorance of divine grace. They had no inkling of whole-hearted giving being beautiful in God's sight and could not see how honest selfishness is preferable to a flamboyant but empty gesture.

Thinking about the fate of Ananias and Sapphira, I am appalled by the lack of love at their respective burials. I also shudder to think of any church using fear as an instrument to influence personal decisions, particularly when accusations of satanic influence are made.

At the same time, I wonder how far our own handling of money is underpinned by spiritual maturity. Is there harmony between action and professed faith? Food for thought indeed.

What might you distil from the Bible passages that rattle you? Let's keep the conversation open!

Roberta (Local Ecumenical Partnership Minister, North Tyne)

SERVICES IN THE DEANERY IN JUNE 2026

7th June: 1st Sunday after Trinity (Proper 5)

Readings: Hosea 5: 15-6: 6; Romans 4: 13-end; Matthew 9: 9-13; 18-26

8.30am Holy Communion (BCP) at Wark

9.00am Holy Communion at Bellingham

9.30am Holy Communion at Birtley

10.30am MURC Service at Wark

11.00am Holy Communion at Otterburn

11.00am Holy Communion at Simonburn

11.00am Service of the Word at Falstone

3.00pm **Service of Celebration and Dedication of new window at Thockrington**

(NB: No Service at Bingfield)

5.00pm Holy Communion at Corsenside

7.00pm Refresh Contemporary Worship at Humshaugh

9th June

St Columba and 800th Anniversary of Link with Thockrington and York Minster

7.00pm Compline at Thockrington

14th June: 2nd Sunday after Trinity (Proper 6)

Readings: Exodus 19: 2-8a; Romans 5: 1-8; Matthew 9: 35-10:8

9.00am Holy Communion at Thockrington

9.00am Holy Communion at Thorneyburn

10.00am Service of the Word at Chollerton

11.15am Holy Communion at Elsdon (Note change)

11.00am Holy Communion at Wall

6.00pm Holy Communion at Wark

6.00pm Evensong at Bellingham

21st June: 3rd Sunday after Trinity (Proper 7)

Readings: Jeremiah 20: 7-13; Romans 6: 1-11; Matthew 1024-39

9.00am Holy Communion at Gunnerton

10.00am Service of the Word at Birtley

10.00am Service of the Word at Bellingham

10.30am MURC at Wark

11.00am Holy Communion at Falstone

11.00am Holy Communion at Humshaugh
 11.00am Service of the Word at Otterburn
 11.30 am Service of the Word at Bingfield
 3.00pm Holy Communion at Horsley
 6.00pm Taizé Service at Simonburn

28th June 4th Sunday after Trinity (Proper 8)

Readings: Jeremiah 28: 5-9; Romans 6: 12-end; Matthew 10: 40-end

9.30am Deanery Zoom
 11.00am Holy Communion at Bellingham BCP

11.00am Holy Communion at Chollerton
 11.00am Service of the Word at Wall
 11.15am Service of the Word at Elsdon
 3.00pm Holy Communion at Byrness
 6.00pm Evensong at Humshaugh (For the Feast of St Peter)
 6.00pm Evening Service at Thorneyburn
 6.00pm Service of the Word at Wark

NOTICEBOARD



FALSTONE COFFEE MORNINGS: Thank you to everyone who came along to the Coffee morning in April, in aid of Age UK. We were missing many of our Bellingham friends, due to the bridge closure, so we were a little quieter (!!), but we still enjoyed meeting and raised £116 for Age UK Northumberland.

Thank you, also to everyone who came along to the “*Make May Purple*” coffee morning in support of the Stroke Association - and especially to those who dressed up in purple and wore purple wigs! Thank you Katrine, we all enjoyed your delicious purple cake. We enjoyed a “purple quiz” and raised £155.25 for the Stroke Association, (see photo).



As well as donations to support stroke survivors and for research it is about raising awareness of the signs of a stroke and the Stroke Association website gives really useful advice about how to identify a stroke.

The **FAST** acronym (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) is a test to quickly identify the three most common signs of stroke.

- **Face weakness:** Can the person smile? Has their mouth or eye drooped?
- **Arm weakness:** Can the person raise both arms fully and keep them there?
- **Speech problems:** Can the person speak clearly and understand what you say? Is their speech slurred?
- **Time to call 999:** if you see **any one** of these signs.

Remember: Face *or* Arm *or* Speech - at the first sign, it's Time to call 999. Acting FAST will give the person having a stroke the best chance of survival and recovery. Even if it doesn't seem like much, any one of these signs of stroke is an emergency, so always call 999 immediately.

Future Coffee Morning dates for your diary (sessions start at 10.30am in Falstone Village Hall):

- **Tuesday 16th June:** in aid of *Smalls for All* - a charity that collects underwear for people in Africa and the UK who can't afford, or can't get, any smalls. During the last couple of months, we have been collecting for *Smalls for All* in St. Peter's Church and we will send donations raised at the coffee morning in June too.
- **Tuesday 21st July:** "Summer Party"— we will be serving meringues with strawberries and cream in aid of "Daft as a Brush" charity
- We're taking a break in August but will be back on **Wednesday 16th September** - to coincide with the Great North Air Ambulance Service collection.

Finally, a huge Thank You for your support for the coffee mornings, and for the coach trip to Pooley Bridge, which is now full. Watch out for photos in the next magazine!

Marie Ness.

NORTH TYNE ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIPS: You are warmly invited to the Annual Review of North Tyne Ecumenical Partnerships on Thursday 4th June at 10:30am in the Methodist-United Reformed Church (MURC), Fountain Terrace, Bellingham.

While these partnerships are officially formed between Methodist and United Reformed people, church members are very willing to work closely with many other congregations up and down the valley.

There will be a short time for opening devotions, followed by a slide show of 2025/26 highlights in our life together. To close the session, there is a time for questions, followed by refreshments in the hall.

It is usually a joyous morning of celebration, and of exploring possibilities. All are welcome, whether directly involved or simply curious.

With best wishes and blessings from Roberta.

THE COMMUNITY OF CHRIST'S BODY IN THIS PLACE, THE CHURCH: St Aidan's Church, Thockrington celebrates 800 years of its relationship with York Minster on 9th June 2026, the Anniversary of the First Prebend of Tockerington, Laurence de St Nicholas, who was installed on 9 June 1226.

On **June 7th 2026**, there will be a Service of Celebration at Thockrington at 3.00pm at which the current Tockerington Prebend Canon Tim Goode, 68th in line since the first Prebend, will preach.

We will also dedicate a new Stained-Glass Window to commemorate that link, and also the immense contribution to Society of Lord Beveridge, who is buried there, together with the legacy of the Patron Saint, Aidan, and his ministry among the whole community of the Body of Christ.

The church is a short walk up the field from the roadside, perched on the Whin Sill. All are welcome to come to the service and to give thanks for this beautiful church and its witness over many generations.

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ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL: A concert by Antiphon Chamber Choir, conducted by John Roper, will be taking place on Saturday 27th June at Humshaugh Village Hall. The programme is a Celebration of the Natural World and includes folk songs and music by Gibbons, Haydn, Rutter and Geilo.

Saturday 27th June at Humshaugh Village Hall. The concert will start at 7.30pm. Tickets are £10 and can be reserved online at www.antiphonchoir.co.uk or can be bought on the door on the night.

GOD'S WORLD - OUR WORLD

NATIONAL EMERGENCY BRIEFING: We are witnessing, with growing concern, the many changes to our environment. Increasing temperature and heat energy within our oceans and the atmosphere are already devastating communities around the world. The consensus amongst scientists couldn't be clearer; climate change is happening and it is caused primarily by the burning of oil, gas, and coal. If we do nothing, the world will become significantly less habitable with huge consequences for all humankind, and particularly the poor.

We have lost precious time, but if we act now, decisively and dramatically, we still have a chance at avoiding climate change's most catastrophic impacts. However, time is running out.

In this time of emergency, then, how does God, Creator of our beautiful world, desire us to act? One way is to educate ourselves on the problem and the issues.

The National Emergency Briefing is a result of leading experts and concerned citizens joining forces to encourage UK decision makers to step up their response to the escalating climate and nature crisis. It is supported by a wide range of well-known organisations. This link will take you to more information: <https://www.nebriefing.org/about-us>.

Their aim is that the government should deliver a prime-time film to brief the nation on the problems and challenges that face us. The government has not responded so far, but in the meantime, the experts have produced a film that will be shown all over the country in the next couple of months.

The Emergency Briefing film is **free** and will be shown on **10th June, in Hexham Abbey at 7.45pm**. Tickets are available here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/national-emergency-briefing-film-tickets-1987541244365?msocid=295d87c3c0316612350a93c3c11667fb>

Do put it in your diary and let's make sure we are all briefed on the up to the minute situation!!

With best wishes from Cathy Smith

NEWS FROM BYRNES AND HORSLEY

NEWS FROM BYRNES: Our wild and wonderful churchyard at St. Francis is now looking somewhat tamed, thanks to the grandson of Susan Chapman the Chair of our Parish Council. Ben has cut down at least 95% of the matted sedge, an amazing and difficult job. Ben did this work without even being asked and will not accept any payment (except his Gran's cooking). This Wednesday (20th) the National Parks Volunteers are coming to help cut down the willow herb and some of the sycamore self-seeders. Soup and sandwich lunch at the village hall for the volunteers from the National Park and the Parish. It won't be manicured but it will be less wild. The Churchyard at St. Francis was a burial ground long before the church was built in the 1700's and we are grateful for all the help we can get

We have also had help through Jill Thomas the second Church Warden at Holy Trinity, Jill is the landlady at the Redesdale Arms and has

arranged for some small repairs at St. Francis with her regular handyman.

Jill and her girls have worked hard at Holy Trinity and the Church is looking great (see photo). We are all working as a team across the Parish to the benefit of both our Churches. A great example set by St. Peter's in Falstone, and St. Aiden's, Greenhaugh.

We look forward to the Deanery Sunday on 31st May and a visit later that day by a party from St. Francis Church in High Heaton.

NEWS FROM HORSLEY: We start with a warm welcome to our new Churchwarden at Horsley, Jill Thomas. Jill is a very welcome addition to the team and has this to say:

“Hello, my name is Jill Thomas and I have recently been appointed Church Warden at Holy Trinity, Horsley. Stepping into this role is both a privilege and a responsibility, and I am very much looking forward to working with you all as we care for our church and the community it serves. In the months ahead, I hope to work closely with St Francis in Byrness as we organise fundraising events for both churches. I’m really looking forward to meeting more of you - to chat, say hello, and share ideas.

It would be lovely to see you at our monthly service at Horsley, held on the third Sunday of every month at 3pm - with tea, coffee and cake afterwards.”



NEWS FROM CORSENSIDE

On Wednesday 29th April, members of the Friends of Corsenside (FOC) met at St Cuthbert's Churchyard to hold their AGM and at the same time (though unrelated, I promise!), to sharpen and oil their scythes, and to maintain any other necessary equipment ready for the Summer Months. Those who attended were blessed with a beautiful day and because we were seated outside, some even got sunburnt. The members of the core team were all re-elected en masse and some

future events and actions were discussed. Another day of poetry, songs and stories was proposed and agreed – with the date yet to be confirmed (watch this space). A close eye will also be kept on the weather for a window of opportunity for the summer scything and baling. It was also happily noted that one of the bird boxes has a nest in it.

On 1st May, a thoroughly enjoyable guitar recital, featuring Richard Durrant, was held at All Saints, Corsenside. It was a huge success, with around 70 people attending and the evening raised £650, which will be shared between the churches in Corsenside for their upkeep. Huge thanks must go to Hugo and Annabelle Remnant and also to Gary Southwell (who makes guitars!) for arranging the recital with Richard Durrant. The cascading flower arrangement was beautiful, as were the window displays, which were positioned by Jeanette.

On 10th-16th May, Christian Aid Week envelopes were distributed in Corsenside. We had hoped for a good response in these uncertain times, and the people of Corsenside did not let us down! A total of £404.77 was raised, which will be used to help Third World projects around the world. Thank you to all who distributed the envelopes and to all those who generously donated.

The 'Soup and Sandwich' day is going well at the Village Hall and we have set a different day aside for our weekly 'Cuppa and Chat' sessions. From mid-May to mid-June, there will be various plants available to buy on the verge outside Middle Woodburn House. All proceeds will go to the church and there will be an honesty box outside should you wish to buy any of the plants.

Please note that on Saturday, 6th June at 6.30pm, Graham Dick has organised another Northumbrian Evening event at Corsenside Village Hall. Most of the money raised will be donated to the Northumberland Mountain Rescue Team, with a smaller percentage going towards upkeep of the Village Hall. Tickets are £10 each and are available by either calling Graham on 07969 961473, or via the West Woodburn Village Shop. You are welcome to bring your own alcohol, should you wish to do so.

With all best wishes from Diana.

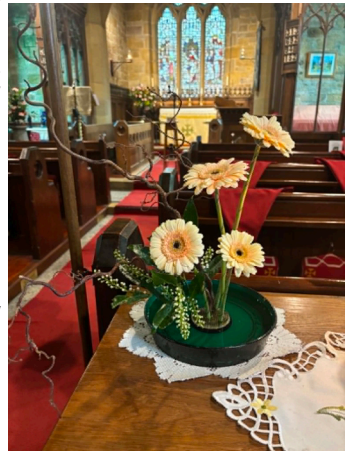
NEWS FROM FALSTONE

We are very blessed at St Peter's to have many folks who volunteer in all aspects of church life and as a church warden that is truly a blessing. One such group are our very talented flower arrangers namely Jenny Swaile, Katrine Anderson, Fiona Symons and Christine Robson who are all members of at least one flower club in the area. This month,



the flowers have been especially spectacular - very modern designs mixed with more traditional arrangements – see photos. The arrangements would certainly win *Best in Show* at the Chelsea Flower show in my opinion; they are more like works of art than simple flower arrangements.

Nature in the churchyard has been spectacular too. As the carpet of snow drops faded, the cowslips, cuckoo flowers, cow parsley, birds eye speedwell, bluebells and *pink* bluebells burst into life. I have since read that pink bluebells are rare, they are a beautiful variation of the traditional bluebell flower and typically belong to the Spanish Bluebell variety (*Hyacinthoides hispanica*), although they can appear as natural, genetic colour mutations in native English bluebells. Mike Bell, who maintains the grass in the churchyard, is always careful not to cut the wild flowers. There is a dedicated area which is left uncut where wildlife (both plant, insect and animal) can thrive. Churchyards are by nature quiet, undisturbed spaces, often providing a green oasis of calm amongst the hustle and bustle of modern living, St Peter's has two seating areas in its churchyard which



can be used for quiet prayer and contemplation, surrounded by the beauty of God's nature.

Sometimes, being outside St Peter's when the sun is shining is warmer than being in church despite our under-pew heating. However, we have recently purchased some heated pew cushions which been tried and tested at two services (and also in my house)! They work wonderfully, so you will now be warm in church. They are energy saving, with rechargeable batteries, you can choose any colour of material and even have the logo of your church embroidered on if you wish (at extra cost of course, so we decided to keep them plain!). The cushions are made in the Netherlands by a company called Sit & Heat (please contact me if you would like more information). Just a top tip: if you stand up for too long, they automatically turn off to save the battery, but it only takes a flick of the switch on these individual cushions to turn them back on to ensure your "bot remains hot"!!



It is with great sadness that St Peter's heard of the passing of Laura Chadwin who had lived in village for many years. Amongst other things, she used to play the organ in church when she first moved to the area. Her funeral will be held at St Peter's on Friday the 29th of May at 10.30. Our thoughts and prayers are with her husband Tom, children Alys and Barnaby and all of her family. May she rest in peace and rise in glory with the saints.

Best wishes

Jill Swaile, Churchwarden

Tel: 01434 240168 Email: alanswaile@aol.com

NEWS FROM OTTERBURN

The Coffee Morning at St John's raised an impressive £559.25, thanks to great support all round from everyone in Otterburn Village and the surrounding area. A huge Thank you must go to everyone who came along and who helped behind the scenes. Each of you helped to make the event special.

We are also lucky enough to have an exceptional organist who has joined our services and it's well worth attending to hear her play our hymns during the service.

We are now welcoming anyone who wishes to come along after the service to join us for tea, coffee, biscuits and a chat. Even if you don't feel able to attend the service itself, please do feel free to come and join us afterwards. You will be very welcome. Services are held at 11am on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, with the refreshments afterwards at 12 noon. We would love to see you either at the service or afterwards for refreshments - or both!

Moira (Authorised Lay Minister)

NEWS FROM TARSET

Entries for Tarsset Village Hall's '*100 Word Challenge*' are now being accepted, so why not get writing and when you've completed your story, please email your entry and any queries to: digitalip@btinternet.com

Tarsset Village Hall will be holding a community barbecue on Saturday 13th June. The hall will be open from 11am, with an exhibition of local archive material on display and later in the afternoon the barbecues will be fired up, so everyone can cook whatever they care to bring for themselves. The hall will provide salads and there will be a licensed bar. The day will finish with popular folk duo Fool's Gold (Carol and Steve Robson) who will be performing their show '*The Blaydon Races*'. Please contact John Holland for further details.

A BRIEF WORD FROM THE EDITOR

This month's cover photo was provided by Jill Swaile, and shows St Peter's Church, Falstone.

If you have anything 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

The copy deadline for next month's issue, is
MONDAY 15TH JUNE 2026

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

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A monthly electronic version of the magazine (in full colour) is also available and if you would like to be added to the online subscription list, please email sarahmotw@btinternet.com directly, and she will add you to the list.

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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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National helpline 0800 8088141

FUEL POVERTY

Home Heat helpline 0800 336699

FARMING COMMUNITY

ARC-Addington Fund (*Housing*) 02476 690587
Farm Crisis Network 08453 679990
Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (*Welfare & Financial*) 01865 727888
RSPCA 08707 538333
Samaritans 116 123

VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS

Bellingham Town Hall 01434 220471
Byrness 07860 671442
01830 520773
Corsenside Parish Hall 01434 270360 or 07704 730909
Elsdon Village Hall 07542 903611
Falstone Village Hall 07583 929353
Otterburn Memorial Hall 07879 992175
Reed Hall Bellingham 01434 220631
Rochester Village Hall 01830 520589 or 07761 735887
Tarslet Village Hall 07498 522683

MEDICAL

Bellingham Surgery 01434 220203
Urgent (**not** life-threatening) 111
Urgent (life-threatening) 999

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

Non-emergency 101
Emergency 999

INTERNET SECURITY

www.getsafeonline.org/

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