

Spire Newsletter *FREE*



**NEWS FROM THE PARISHES OF
GREAT AYTON WITH EASBY &
NEWTON UNDER ROSEBERRY**

**Issue no.13 :
September 2026**



OUR VICAR WRITES:

Dear Friends and Neighbours Last time I wrote I was bemoaning the lack of summer. I had barely pressed send on the email when the sun came out, the rain stopped and it's been a scorcher. Empty water-buts, dry fields, tinder box moors mean that it feels less like a Yorkshire summer and more like the southern Mediterranean. Just the other day while I was in my study, I sat transfixed as a

Hummingbird Hawk Moth (*photo*) danced and hovered over the lavender outside the window. These are very rare in the UK and especially in North Yorkshire, but climate change has brought them into our gardens. I wish I had grabbed my phone, but I was transfixed at its beauty and blessed by its appearance in my fledgling garden.



As well as the daily appearance of the sun, we have also had the eclipse in August. Most of us got out colanders and cereal boxes to make DIY safe viewers to see the moon pass by the sun on the evening of the 12th. The birds thought it was bedtime, the light dimmed and you could get nowhere near Roseberry Topping! The 1999 full eclipse was earlier in the day, and I remember what a weird feeling it was as I stood in the carpark at work; the birds were even more confused that day. I have always been transfixed about the moon and the night sky. I had a great birthday a few years ago at the Grassholme Observatory in Teesdale. The dark skies there are ideal for looking at celestial objects; the Milky Way (not the chocolate bar) can be seen even without the aid of a telescope. At the recent York Diocesan Conference (more will be shared later) we were treated to a lecture by the Papal Astronomer. Brother Guy J. Consolmagno is a fascinating Jesuit Priest who is an Astrophysicist; he speaks about science and faith with huge knowledge and gentle humour. He shared with us amazing images from both the Hubble and Jame Webb telescopes.

All this thinking about the moon, sun and stars reminds me of a favourite Psalm – Psalm 8. I have a visual representation of it on the wall of my study.

*O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.....
When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?
Yet you have made them a little lower than angels,
and crowned them with glory and honour.
You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet,
all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.
O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!*



He who made the sun, moon, beasts of the field and the exquisite Hummingbird Hawk Moth loves us beyond measure and sent his Son so that we can know we are as important to God as everything we can see in the sky. God's first covenant was written in the sky as a rainbow (*Genesis 9:13*) - so look up and see his wonders, and look at your own image and that of others to see His image in all who share this planet.

Blessings - Sarah

Spire Newsletter **FREE**

A VERY SPECIAL PROJECT UNDERWAY FOR OUR 150TH ANNIVERSARY.....

For very many years we have been using a solid fronted piece of furniture as a Nave Altar in Christ Church. This has enabled Holy Communion to be celebrated close to the congregation. It can be turned around for the Nativity Scene to be placed inside and it is on wheels to help us move it. But it is very heavy and cumbersome to move, so it takes two people who are fit and without dodgy backs and shoulders! It also forms a visual barrier up to the Sanctuary where the 'Mousey Thompson high altar' is positioned.

We have received a very generous anonymous donation to cover the cost of a new purpose-designed and manufactured Nave Altar to mark the 150th anniversary; thus looking forward to many more centuries of Holy Communion in Christ Church.

Treske in Thirsk, who are experienced church furnishers, visited and spoke to several of us and they sent through three designs. Following a prayerful voting process the PCC selected one design that stood out above the others.....

A lovely altar with chamfer profiled legs and a chamfered edged top. The design has a feature front and back arch set within the altar legs to complement the church's architecture. This design incorporates a removable shelf to give some flexibility for the Nativity Scene and/or Easter Garden; it will also make the altar lighter for moving. This shelf has been shaped with a subtle curve to make it look more elegant.



We are currently waiting to hear if we have approval from the Diocesan Advisory Committee to go ahead with its commission. (This Committee makes sure things that are put in in churches are suitable for worship and purpose.) If all goes to plan, we hope to have it made and in situ to be consecrated by the Bishop of Whitby on March 14th next year, as we remember 150 years since the church building was consecrated.

Can you help?

We would love at the same time to commission a *Credence Table* to match the altar. This is the smaller side table that the bread, wine, silverware and linens are placed on before they are needed, and after the completion of Holy Communion. We have asked for permission for this too, but do not have the funds for it (the work on the spire cost us £5k in VAT we did not have the budget for!) If we order it at the same time, it would be slightly cheaper and it would be great to have them both for Bishop Barry to consecrate.

We also know we need to look at our *vestibule entrance* to make the church more accessible and our flooring which is uneven.

If you wish to speak to me or our treasurer Ken about any of these projects we can give you some more details.

Sarah



GraveTalk Café ... held in our Coffee Lounge

15 people came to be served tea and cake by happy volunteers at our first ever **GraveTalk Café** on Friday 7th August. They chatted to and listened to friendly local Funeral Directors, priests and a solicitor about planning and having conversations about death, dying and funerals. For big questions about tricky stuff, talking to others is invaluable. Here are some soundbites from those who came along...

'It wasn't morbid or depressing. With a solicitor, priests and funeral directors there it was very helpful.'

'It was a surprisingly sociable hour or so, with lots of laughter and plenty of cake!'

'I thought it was great to talk about this subject. I have been thinking about my funeral choices for a while; what hymns, music, readings etc... I don't want anyone to wear black; I want bright colours!'

'I found it very helpful to talk about just how many things my family will need to consider after my death. I want to make it easier for them by making some decisions already.'

'It was brilliant to have a really friendly solicitor there who was happy to answer all sorts of questions.'

'I found the session very helpful, good discussions in an informal setting. The input from experts was invaluable.'

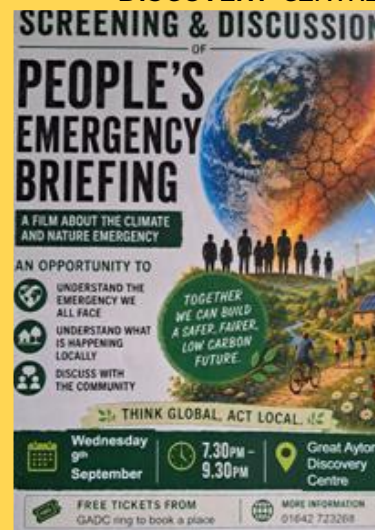
'It all felt quite relaxed.'

We will hold another **GraveTalk Café** next year but if you want to speak to us or to send you some helpful information please do contact us. The Christian faith holds that death is not the end so if this is something you'd like to talk about do get in contact. Both Rev Jon and I feel helping families in times of bereavement is an honour and never a burden; it is precious and a privilege to accompany families and friends during and after a loss of a loved one.

Sarah

CLIMATE & NATURE THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL

WED 9 SEPT - 7.30 pm
DISCOVERY CENTRE



Tickets are free but you need to
book your place by ringing
01642 723268

Spire Newsletter **FREE**



St Oswald's Day in Newton

Steve Fellowes writes: On Sunday 2nd August we once again celebrated our patronal saint, St Oswald. As is tradition the service was followed by an ever-popular bring-and-share picnic in Church grounds. The sun shone for Sarah's first St Oswald Sunday and picnic. Good friends, good food and good weather - what a perfect combination. On Wednesday 5 August there was a short service on what was St Oswald's Day. A great northern King was well remembered. **Our next bring-and-share lunch will be at our Harvest Festival which is on 4th October.**

St Oswald's is a Pilgrim Church. Four of us thought it would be a good idea to walk to St Cuthbert's Church in Kildale which is also a Pilgrim Church. By Saturday 8th August the idea had spread, and 28



people met at St Oswald's to walk the five(ish) miles to Kildale. Our youngest walker was 3 and our eldest was! (Let's just say 'of more mature years'). The sky was blue and the sun was shining as Geoff led us in prayer before we started.

The Day promised to be sunny and hot - not ideal for walking but much better than rain. The terrain was, in places, more challenging than expected. At one stage we walked through bracken which was about 6 ft high.

However everyone battled through. A few people joined us along the way, so it was a group of 33 pilgrims who made their way to St Cuthbert's. They were expecting us and, even though our walk took longer than planned, they kept their monthly cafe open so that we could enjoy their refreshments. It's fair to say that we have new friends at St Cuthbert's. Thanks to John Stinson for leading the walk and to Geoff for leading us in prayer at three prayer stations on the way.



As part of the
PILGRIM PLACES
network,
St. Oswald's will
be open every
Friday, Saturday,
and Sunday in
September.



LITTLE FISHES in Christ Church

Come and decorate a little fish to go in our net on **Tuesday September 8th**. Little Fishes (babies, toddlers, pre-schoolers and their grownups) meet on Tuesdays during term time 0945 to 1100. Come and join us for very informal worship in church with action songs, a story and child friendly prayers. This is followed by refreshments in the coffee lounge, usually with play dough, a craft activity and an assortment of toys. Or sometimes we do different activities like planting seeds - did you see our sunflowers pots outside the Church? We are always looking for helpers so if you are interested, come along and see us!



SPECIAL SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER

Sunday 6th 4pm **HYMNS & PIMM'S in Christ Church:** Sing your favourite hymns and finish off with a delicious summer fruit drink. Propose your own favourite by writing it down at the back of church as soon as possible.

Sunday 6th 6pm **TAIZÉ STYLE EVENING PRAYER in All Saints:** 40 minutes of peace and tranquillity.

Sunday 20th 6pm **COME AND SING CHORAL EVENSONG in Christ Church:** As part of our 150th anniversary celebration an opportunity to join singers from our choir and further afield in settings by Charles Wood, S.S.Wesley and contemporary Joanna Forbes L'Estange. Please let Andrew Blair (blair37@btinternet.com) know if you are interested in singing; rehearsal for choir 4pm.

Spire Newsletter **FREE**

LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MY CHURCH - THE CHURCH OF TEESSIDE



Recognise the view? Some of you will have seen the video we made in 2018. If you haven't, then visit the *Transforming Teesside Together* website.

We have more than 130 campuses! Of every conceivable shape and form.

We organised Festival Teesside in Stewart Park in June 2024 - enjoyed by thousands. It was no surprise in August of the same year to see Bishop Paul & Archdeacon Amanda alongside Christians from across Teesside clearing up after a riot in Middlesbrough.

Because we have shown how closely the churches in Teesside are working together, the **Bible Society** is investing £400k in a campaign this autumn to reach out to those who are 'wondering why we're here', who are 'searching for meaning or a sense of purpose'. The Church of Teesside (including us!) is working with them to provide opportunities for **Bible Conversations** and teaching using a brand-new video-based **Bible Course** (see below).



THE ALL NEW **BIBLE COURSE** EXPLORES GOD'S STORY - ONE STEP AT A TIME



In his introductory video, author Andrew Ollerton explains that after 8 weeks we will "feel more confident in reading the Bible for ourselves, understand how it all fits together and see how to apply it to daily life". Each session is freely available on video. Several members of Christ Church have already experienced the full Course, giving feedback such as:

- [It gave me] a structure to follow and has helped me to develop consistent study
- Discussions with group members has helped with broadening my knowledge and understanding.
- The videos have been useful in introducing each area of study.

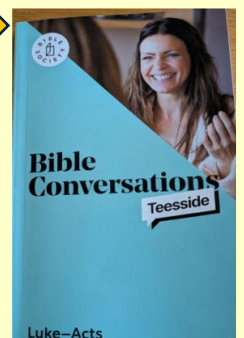
One couple who have just viewed the first video found it 'really interesting and were impressed by the quality of material/presentation'.

We can watch the videos ourselves at home but gathering to discuss and share will add so much more. Therefore we'll be having our first Bible Course discussion in the Coffee Lounge beginning at 7:30 pm on Monday September 28th. If you would like to know more, do have a chat with Carol Bridge, Helen Land, Lesley Miller, Chris Robertson, Helen or John Rowlands, or Rev Geoff Jaques.

WHAT IS THIS BOOK AND WHY SHOULD I READ IT?

If someone has shared this book with you, you might be wondering what it is, what it's about and where to begin. You might have questions about the world, relationships, or spiritual matters. Help is at hand. Come along and **JOIN THE CONVERSATION**.

Beginning at 11 o'clock on Tuesday September 22nd for about 40 minutes in the church Coffee Lounge, a chance to sit around a table with a cuppa and chat. A member of the Little Fishes team will be there to meet you. We'll be there on the following Tuesdays as well (September 29, and October 6 & 13). If those times and dates don't work for you, let us know when would work. Don't worry if nobody's given you a book - come along anyway; we've got more copies available and there's one just for you!



OUR REGULAR CHURCH SERVICES

Christ Church, Great Ayton

Sunday 8.00am Holy Communion
9:15am Parish Communion
4:00 for 4.30pm Café Church (2nd & 4th Sundays)
Monday 2.00pm Coffee Lounge Communion (1st Monday)
Tuesday 9.45am Little Fishes (not school holidays)

All Saints Church, Great Ayton

Wednesday 10.00 Holy Communion (BCP) or Morning Prayer
Sunday 6:00pm Taize worship (Sept 6)

St Oswald's, Newton under Roseberry

Sunday 11.00am Holy Communion with hymns (1st & 5th Sundays)
11.00am All Age Service (3rd Sunday)

CONTACT DETAILS

Rev Sarah Cliff 07355 711010
sarah@christchurchgreatayton.onmicrosoft.com
(Usual day off on Saturdays)

For events and bookings:

Church Office: 01642 722665
gapo1876@outlook.com

For Safeguarding issues:

Mary Mason 07788643930
mary.mason@gmx.co.uk

Church website address:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com>

Facebook Pages

Christ Church,
Great Ayton;
St Oswald's,
Newton under
Roseberry;
All Saints Church,
Great Ayton;
Christ Church
Choir, Great Ayton

Little Fishes and
Adult Discipleship
are Private Groups.

Contributions for the next *Spire Newsletter* for October may be sent to the Editor by 15th Sept at stephen.whitehead1948@gmail.com