



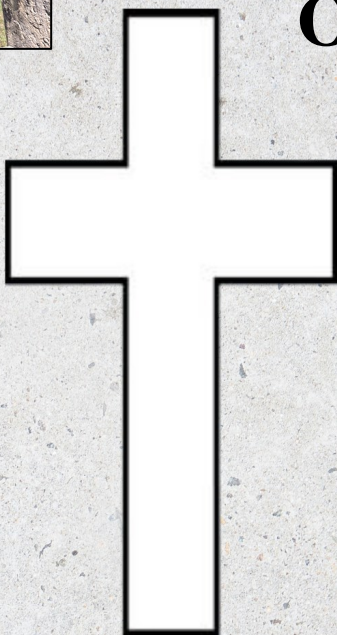
St. Alban's Earsdon

CHURCH VIEWS

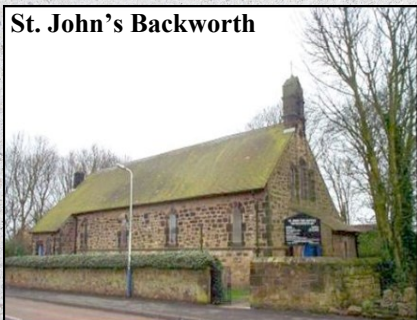
October

2026

£1.00



St. John's Backworth



**Immaculate Heart of Mary,
Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea**



THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

OCTOBER 2026

Dear All,

The team that put together 'Towards a Better World' (our course on climate change) wanted to sound a positive note where possible. We're battered by bad news stories about climate change. So we wanted to give the good news where we could.

Each of the three sessions of the course has a section 'And Now The Good News'. So for you, dear Reader, we've gathered all this good news into one place...

1. Renewable energy overtook coal as the world's leading source of electricity in the first half of 2025. This is a historic first.

Electricity demand is growing around the world. But the growth in solar and wind was so strong it met 100% of the extra electricity demand, even helping drive a slight decline in coal and gas use. However, the headlines mask a mixed global picture. Developing countries, especially China, led the clean energy charge but richer nations including the US and EU relied more than before on planet-warming fossil fuels for electricity generation.

2. Air Pollution is Falling

World-wide, seven million people a year die because of pollution from tiny particles and noxious gases. Children, whose lungs are still developing, are at greatest risk and deprived communities, especially in poor countries, are worst affected. The good news is that these numbers are sharply down. Since 1990, total deaths from air pollution have halved and deaths from indoor particulate pollution have dropped by two-thirds.

3. Some animal populations are bouncing back

These figures were presented in 'Towards a Better World' as a 'Benedicite' – a song praise to God...

Brown bears, praise ye the Lord!

Up 44% between 1960 and 2016

Loggerhead turtles praise ye the Lord!

Up 68% between 1984 and 2016

Eurasian badgers, praise ye the Lord!

Up 110% between 1960 and 2016

Eurasian otters, praise ye the Lord!

Up 294% between 1977 and 2016

Red deer, praise ye the Lord!

Up 331% between 1960 and 2016

Golden jackals, praise ye the Lord!

Up 886% between 2001 and 2015

Grey wolves, praise ye the Lord!

Up 1,871% between 1965 and 2016

Iberian wild goats, praise ye the Lord!

Up 3,502% between 1966 and 2012

Grey seals, praise ye the Lord!

Up 6,273% between 1978 and 2016

Eurasian beavers, praise ye the Lord!

Up 16,705% between 1960 and 2016

4. Enormous global progress in solar power

In just a decade, solar and wind energy have gone from the most to the least expensive. The price of electricity from solar has declined by 89%, and the price of onshore wind has declined by 70%. They are now cheaper than coal. Leaders no longer have to make the difficult choice between climate action and providing energy for their people. The low-carbon choice has suddenly become the economic one. It's staggering how quickly this change has happened. In 2025, the world installed a record 664 gigawatts of new solar capacity, a 12% increase over the previous year. Once again, solar was by far the largest contributor to new renewable power generation worldwide.

Continued from previous page

4. Progress, too, in wind capacity

Offshore wind has several attractions. The UK has exceptionally good natural resources for it: a long coastline, a wide continental shelf with shallow seas, and winds from the North Sea. The government invested in research and development, supported its first commercialisation, gave it access to the continental shelf and connections to the electricity grid, and created a market for it using subsidised fixed-price contracts.

The results were a huge success. The cost of offshore wind power has fallen by over two-thirds within the past decade. The most recently agreed contracts are leading to offshore wind plants selling electricity at below the market price. This means that instead of the industry receiving a subsidy from the government, the government will be receiving a subsidy from the industry.

As the costs of offshore wind have come down, its market has grown, and so have its industry and supply chains, which now support over 30,000 jobs in the UK. Many of these high-productivity jobs are located in less wealthy parts of the country.

Let's celebrate all the good news when we can!

Revd Tim Mayfield.

Seeds of Life

Environmental Champion and Working Group

St Alban's screened the People's Emergency Briefing on Wednesday September 9th. This was followed by a three part in-person course 'Towards a Better World'. It is hoped that an Environmental Working Group will emerge from this course. Meanwhile Debs McEachan, who is co-leading the course with Tim, is considering serving as our Environmental Champion.

Boosting the choir

On Sunday September 13th, choirmaster Nick Graham spoke to the congregation asking if anyone would like to 'Boost the choir for Christmas'. The first 'boosted choir practice' was on September 24th.

Hartley Pit Memorial Service

The first annual Hartley Pit Memorial Service will be held on Saturday January 16th 2027.

We need to draw together a working group. Joan Armstrong, Rob Gowdy, Jennifer Lambert and Tim Mayfield volunteered.

St Alban's Harvest Festival collection.

Thank you Cathryn, for the picture.



Around our buildings

St Alban's

The roof repairs will be carried out in November by Stone Technical at a cost of £20,387 inc VAT.

Note the strong El Nino effect of 2026 is predicted to visit wet and stormy weather on the UK in the autumn of 2026.

Eccles Hall

Guy Morgan of SHED emailed us in July to say 'We do not believe there are any critical issues with the floor with the current use as a scouting/ gym/dance venue other than concern regarding vibration (ie it is unpleasant to use in some cases). The floor should be repaired in the near future to prevent the current issues being compounded over time'. The Grant Applications Team continues to work on raising the necessary funds.

St John's

Storm damage was repaired at the end of August, by Stone Technical. When they looked at the roof they found the chimney was falling apart. This has been repointed. The wood they were nailing tiles onto is rotten. The altar end of the church will need to be reroofed at some point. On the inside of the church they found that the plaster all around the chancel arch is in a bad condition. This will also need to be addressed.



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News from the September PCC

Money

We're really concerned about the finances at Earsdon and Backworth. Treasurer Rob Swindells indicated that our total loss so far this year is £6,280.37. He urged us somehow to find more income.

The Events Committee has done very well, but this has all gone towards the roof fund. Our preaching team has put together a three-Sunday series on giving for October.

This has had a knock-on effect on what we can offer the Diocese of Newcastle. The diocese had asked us to increase our Parish Share offer to £39,536. With a very heavy heart we agreed that we actually needed to *reduce* our Parish Share offer for 2027. We will put in a figure of £24,000. There was general agreement that we would look to give more if we had a windfall.

Caretaker

For several years, Richard Hill has acted as caretaker at the Eccles Hall. Provision is made in a new Role Description for Richard to work in St Alban's church as well.

Uncoupling St John's and St Alban's

Following representation from Earsdon and Backworth, the Deanery Development Group has now reconsidered. The option to uncouple St Alban's and St John's is now off the table. Area Dean Revd Nigel Taylor will be in touch with future thinking.



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Scarecrow Festival and Heritage Open Days 12/13th September 2026

Friday 11th September was spent setting up the scarecrow in the porch with Yvonne, who with Pauline and Liz had spent many happy hours stuffing and creating our new friend.

Saturday dawned: it was cool, wet and overcast. This is not what we had hoped for, especially today. However, by 10.00am, opening time, the weather was brighter and we waited for guests. After a slow start the number of people gradually rose as the wind also rose and those on the door had problems keeping sign-in papers on the table. It was warm in the sun and the visitors kept coming, all 786 of them, until we closed our doors after 4.00.

Sunday was sunny and bright all day with little or no wind for a change. After a thought provoking sermon at our Eucharist, Tracey and Peter served coffee. That seemed to be the cue for more visitors to look at our beautiful church. They came in large numbers yet again and this time the total was 753 people, making a grand total of 1539 visitors over two days. People came from “just round the corner” and from as far afield as Cambois, Swansea, Huddersfield, Sheffield and Adelaide in Australia. So many visitors expressed thanks for the warm welcome, friendliness of the stewards and how lovely it was to be told the history of St Alban’s with stewards who were knowledgeable.

Many thanks to all the stewards who helped to make this weekend a success:- Sylvia Turnbull, Liz York, Barbara Rhoades, Colin Gallantine, Dianne Morgan, Judith Jenkins, Janet Dobson, Jo McEvedy, Mark Stobbs, Pam Tomlinson, Kathleen Gowdy, Linda Reynolds, Jill Armstrong, Melanie White and of course Tim.

Joan Armstrong



Weather Outlook for the month of October 2026.

General overview.

September 22nd at 01:06 hrs (BST) marked the official astronomical start of Autumn, during this time the sun crossed directly over the earth's celestial equator heading in a relative geographical southerly direction making day and night nearly equal.

The month of October is forecast to start with changeable & more cooler conditions then slowly changing toward a normal or above-average autumn temperatures, interspersed with frequent wind and rain.

Early to mid-October.

High pressure will be in place over the southern UK for the beginning of the month giving rise to plenty of dry weather, expect lower temperatures through the evening and overnight including fog patches.

Our area will see a changeable pattern continuing as the month progresses with occasional rain and windy conditions continuing through to the mid-month. There will be ridges of high pressure extending from the southwest, interspersed with Atlantic frontal systems that are associated with deep and fast-moving depressions. These will increase the chance for windier weather overall especially in the north and east of the UK. Temperatures are likely to be slightly above normal for the northeast and elsewhere, however expect some daily variations.

In conclusion: - There is a north and south split to this weather theme; high pressure will keep the south dry whereas the north will experience changeable conditions bringing occasional rain and variable strength winds.

Mid to late October.

The second half of October will probably maintain a changeable pattern overall causing wetter and windier weather in the west and northwest, the northeast being affected to a lesser extent in my opinion. Westerly winds will dominate throughout this period. Forecasting confidence remains low. Temperatures are expected to remain close to or slightly above the seasonal average with day-to-day variations.

David Gibson.
30th September 2026.

Living Water:

A Quiet Day



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Saturday October 10th 2026

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To book contact Revd Tim Mayfield

tim.mayfield@btinternet.com

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CHURCH VIEWS FOR OCTOBER 2026 FROM THE PARISH OF OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA

And essential works must continue....



Essential
building



preservation has been carried out for several years now at St Edward's as these pictures show. Maintenance of the brickwork was carried out in 2021 and the weather deterioration of the east facing facade was tackled earlier this year. Internally the Health and Safety regulations were met



when the toilets were installed. The new main doors have been a great improvement in terms of appearance and security. However, these do not end the works essential to preserve the building.

The Parish Pastoral Council informed the Open Meeting at Immaculate Heart of Mary last month that consultation and inspections have had to be carried out in several other areas. Parishioners have

long been aware that the heating system is very 20th Century, sending much of its expensive heat up to the high roof. A submission has been made to the Diocese to replace the current system with heaters on the support pillars which will direct heat downwards instead of it going up to the rafters. The current electrical installation will need improvement to accept the extra load.

Following an inspection of the church structure, work is also required to stop the ingress of water and address the consequent damp in the upper walls. Obviously the heater installations and remedial work to the upper building will require extensive scaffolding inside the church which will cause unavoidable disruption and inconvenience.

The price of all this is estimated to be in excess of £100,000, and various trusts are to be approached for financial support to defray the costs in view of the church's local importance and Grade 2 Listing.

St Edward's Centenary 2028

Forward planning is continuing and I am pleased to note that Bishop Stephen has agreed to celebrate the Centenary Mass on the evening of Wednesday 28 April 2028.

Progress at Our Lady's and St Edmund's

After the church was closed in 2024 Northumberland Estates, which have the benefit of a restrictive covenant on the use of the site, were approached to see if they were interested in repurchasing it. They met several times with the Diocese, but eventually decided not to proceed. The Diocese then engaged Savills, an Estate Agent specialising in commercial sites. They appraised the site in June and reported in July. Subsequent advertising generated responses from several



interested parties, some of whom made widely differing offers. All those exceeding £500,000, mainly from house builders, are being considered by the Diocese. The eventual sale of the site will be subject to the removal of the covenant I mentioned earlier, and the approval for residential housing by the local authority. At least there are some welcome signs of progress.

Health and Safety and Safeguarding

The annual Health and Safety inspection has been completed satisfactorily in St Edward's and Immaculate Heart of Mary. Also, in accordance with our own Safeguarding policy, all public areas in both churches are now monitored and recorded on closed circuit tv.

Thanks

Literally and metaphorically, this month I have hung up my boots after many years enjoying gardening at Immaculate Heart of Mary. A new vision and enthusiasm were needed, and my sincere thanks to Michael and Maria O'Brien who are already bringing both. I'm equally glad to say that Adrian and Doreen Hall are continuing their years of generous seasonal planting which is so admired by everyone. A big thank you from the whole parish to them and our other often-overlooked volunteers.

Gerry Latimer, Parish of Our Lady, Star of the Sea

Parish Mass Times

St Edward's: Sunday 9.30am, Tuesday & Friday 10.00am.

Immaculate Heart of Mary: Saturday Vigil 6.00pm, Wednesday Mass at 10.00am.

St Mary's: Sunday 11.00am, Thursday 10.00am, Saturday 10.00am.

Burradon Mining Disaster Commemorated

With special thanks to Peter McEvedy and Anne Pooley, a new memorial has been installed in the churchyard at St Alban's. This memorial (pictured) commemorates a mining disaster at Burradon on March 2nd 1860. This is a little under two years before the Hartley Pit Disaster. You might like to note that a small working group is currently making plans for an event to mark the anniversary of the catastrophe at Hartley Pit. This will be held on Saturday January 16th 2027. At this event we will dedicate the new stone remembering the victims of the disaster at Burradon.



Stocking up for winter.

The Environment Secretary recently advised households to stock up for the winter. This is in the light of the fragile world situation. Also, because of climate change, harvests in the UK are expected to be down. This helpful article appeared on the BBC website...

What should I keep in my cupboard?

Senior nutrition scientist Dr Sammie Gill, from the British Nutrition Foundation, says you should prioritise certain food groups:

Complex carbohydrates such as wheat biscuits, wholegrain cereals, crackers and breads, plus oats, rice and pasta

Proteins such as canned chickpeas, lentils, kidney beans, unsalted nuts, peanut butter and canned oily fish such as tuna, mackerel and sardines.

Rebecca McManamon, a consultant dietitian, lists the following essentials:

Tinned fruit as you can drink its juice for added fluids, vitamins and fibre

Pickled foods such as vegetables and eggs.

Both experts also recommend keeping **long-life milk** found in the non-refrigerated aisle for protein, calcium and as a source of fluid.

* If you have any suggestions, comments or requests *
* regarding the magazine, or for anyone thinking of *
* sending in their contribution for publication, please *
* email it to **magazine@StAlbansEarsdon.org.uk** *
* or call **Jean** on **0191 2377273**. *

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St. Alban's and St. John's

Diary Page for October 2026

Sunday	4th	<u>The 18th Sunday after Trinity</u>		
		9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	11th	<u>The 19th Sunday after Trinity</u>		
		9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	15th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	18th	<u>The 20th Sunday after Trinity</u>		
		9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	25th	<u>The Last Sunday after Trinity</u>		
		9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	29th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's

Memorial Service 6pm Sunday November 1st

On Sunday November 1st at 6pm St Alban's is to host a special Memorial Service. During the service we shall light candles in memory of all whose funerals have been held through St Alban's Earsdon and St John's Backworth in the last twelve months, naming them as we do so. Please consider yourself warmly invited to this service, as we will also remember in the same way anyone you would like us to remember. If there's someone special to you and you'd like their name to be included, please email tim.mayfield@btinternet.com

St. Alban's and St. John's

Sunday Gospel Readings for October 2026 :

4th

11th

20th

Matthew 21.33-end

Matthew 22.15-22

Luke 12.13-21

25th

Matthew 22.34-46

Sneak Previews...

By popular demand, Max will again be co-leading a **Reformation Sunday** service. Using the communion service from the Book of Common Prayer, this service will be at 10.30am on Sunday November 1st

Remembrance Sunday falls on November 8th this year. Gather in the Eccles Hall for a short act of worship at 10.30am, before processing down to Earsdon War Memorial

Celebrate Advent is a brand-new event with young families in mind. A working group will plan the event on October 14th before delivering it in St Alban's on Saturday November 28th.

Please note - all material for next month's magazine (November 2026) will need to be in before Wednesday 28th October. Thank you, *Jean*.

Scarecrow Festival and Heritage Open Days

The weekend of September 12th and 13th was again special for Earsdon Village. Hundreds of people came to enjoy the scarecrows on display, and hundreds made their way through the doors of St Alban's.

Here's just one representative sample of the scarecrows. Waldorf and Stadler from The Muppets peer over a hedge on Front Street.

We are – as ever – very grateful to Joan Armstrong for her work on the Heritage Open Days. Joan writes: 'Thank you all so much for giving your time to help to make this weekend so successful. So many visitors said how much they had enjoyed their experience visiting to our beautiful church. They remarked on the friendliness and interesting chat of the stewards and the warm welcome they received in church. We had 1,539 people through the doors in two days, and together they donated £436.45'.



MOTHERS UNION

The Earsdon with Backworth branch of the Mothers Union met in the Eccles Hall to hold their September meeting on September 16th.

This meeting was the Harvest lunch.

Twenty five members and one helper sat down at a prettily decorated table to enjoy their lunch. Grace was said by Sarah. There were two types of soup, ham broth and sweet potato & butter bean, both made by Christine. Both were delicious.

Accompanied by buns, one with ham and pease pudding and one with cheese savoury. Thanks go to Sandy and Joan P. The desert was meringue nests with autumn fruits and cream, another delicious course. Followed by tea and coffee.

Christine gave the notices, then led everyone in prayers. She thanked everyone for their donations of groceries and cosmetics for Walking With.

The meeting closed with the Grace.

The next meeting is in the Eccles Hall on Wednesday October 21st at 1.45pm when it will be First Aid with Sarah.

Thank you, Liz.

GET IN THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT!

What better way than by packing a shoebox of delights for a little boy or girl, somewhere in the world? I usually do mine in late October and it really gets me feeling Christmassy.

St Alban's is reviving our custom of acting as a collection point for boxes, and we will be sending them off on 17th November. Last collection day in church will be 15th November, when the hopefully substantial pile will be blessed for its journey.

Operation Christmas Child are sending us some helpful resources but in the meantime you can get more information at <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child>



Many thanks to Jo for this news.

Donate & Follow Your Box

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A refurbished door

Any who haven't been to St Alban's recently might not know that the main door has had a bit of a birthday. With grateful thanks to an anonymous donor, the door has been renovated and painted to match the blue of the church clock. Here it is in close-up, and a wider view shows how the new door completes work on the entrance begun by the beautiful ramp.



Special thanks to decorator Callum Cook for his application, hard work and good humour.



Church Contacts

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Church warden

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Tracey Gray. Tel: 07767 382 744

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Priest in Charge

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