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Spire Newsletter



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

Issue no.16 : December 2026 & January 2027



Christ Church
CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL
12th December – 5th January



Launch Event Saturday 12th December
10 am – 12 noon
Coffee, Mince Pies and Christmas Music

The church will be open daily for everyone to visit and see the trees beautifully decorated by local businesses & community groups.

Rev Sarah offers us ways during ADVENT to prepare for CHRISTMAS:

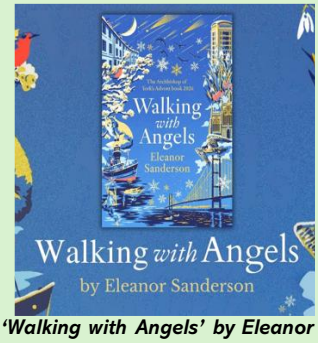
Dear Friends and Neighbours

Well, I have doubled checked on my calendar and diary and it is true, as I write this letter straight after Remembrance Day, Advent and Christmas are hurtling toward us at speed.

People say as we get older Birthdays and Christmas seem to come round faster and I think it's true. Certainly, in parish life we are always planning (because diaries and rotas need to be in place so services can happen) The flip side of this is we sometimes don't get chance to be in the moment, to dwell and sit in the present. I think this is especially true of Advent. Advent is that glorious season of four weeks (well certainly four Sundays if not actually 28 days) where we wait, ponder, pray, we have advent hymns and readings that prompt us to dwell on the true meaning of Christmas – where is Jesus in the preparations and business?

My own habit, like many others, is to read an Advent book to help us focus our hearts and minds on the coming of Jesus our Messiah. I have been organised and already have my copy of this year's book, written by our very own Bishop of Hull, ***'Walking with Angels.'***

Through the spiritual practice of prayer walking, this reflective guide encourages readers to slow down, step outside and engage both body and spirit as you journey through the Advent season. Drawing on the words spoken by angels in Scripture, it explores how these messengers of God reveal the good news at the heart of the Christian story.



'Walking with Angels' by Eleanor Sanderson, Bishop of Hull, is the Archbishop of York's recommended Advent Book for 2026.

'*Walking with Angels'* invites us to pray as we walk our own streets, to notice God's presence in ordinary places. What difference could we make for ourselves and others if we walk with prayerful minds in our communities? Perhaps we might recognise the image of God in those we see, I'm going to try to do some prayer walking each day in Advent to try to balance the rushing about.

Another way to prepare for Christmas (that does not include shopping or baking) is completely free – online resources from the Church of England. ***The Everyday Faith app*** gives reflections, prayers and stories to help you find and follow God in everyday life. *Everyday Faith* is the daily devotional app from the Church of England. It is designed to inspire, equip and encourage you in your faith every day of the week. *Everyday Faith* is about asking, 'Where is God in our daily lives?' and 'How do we find God in the fullness of everyday life?' Each day in the app, you will find a selected Bible reading and a simple prayer to prepare you for the day ahead. Each reflection is available to read on screen as text, or to listen as audio. The audio usually includes a short extract from a piece of music.

During Advent, there will also be daily reflections exploring *'Advent from A to Z'*. These reflections explore 24 key terms we are likely to encounter as we prepare to celebrate Christ's coming among us.

Whether you stay snuggled up a home reading an Advent Book, pop out for a time of prayer walking, or pop the audio on ***The Everyday Faith app*** as you wrap presents, write cards or do the housework, why not make some time this Advent for dwelling in the sure knowledge of the coming of Jesus as our Saviour. All he wants for Christmas is you.

Blessings Sarah

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DO PLEASE COME AND JOIN US AT ONE OF OUR CHRISTMAS SERVICES.

SPECIAL SERVICES & EVENTS in DECEMBER

FRI 27th Nov at 6.00 pm Advent TAIZE service at St Oswald's
SUN 29th Nov at 4.00 pm Christingle Service and Posada, Christ Church
WED 2nd Dec at 6.00 pm A BLUE Service for those who find Christmas difficult.
SAT 5th Dec at 7.30 pm Angrove Singers Christmas Concert
SUN 6th Dec *onwards* Memory Tree in Christ Church
MON 7th Dec at 2.00 pm Coffee Lounge Carol Service (*with refreshments)*
SUN 13th Dec at 4.00 pm Cafe Church, Carols and Communion
TUES 15th Dec at 9.45 am Little Fishes/Marwood School Nativity & Party
at 7.30 pm Candlelit Carol Service in All Saints
THUR 17th Dec at 7.30 pm St Oswald's Carol Service *(with refreshments)*
FRI 18th Dec at 10.00 am Schools' Carol Service at Christ Church
at 7.00 pm Carols on High Green
SUN 20th Dec at 11.00am All Age Christmas Nativity, St Oswald's
at 6.00 pm Service of Lessons & Carols, Christ Church

THUR 24th DEC at 2.00pm Christ Church COFFEE LOUNGE COMMUNION
at 4.00 pm Christ Church CRIB SERVICE
at 9.00 pm St Oswald's CHRISTMAS COMMUNION
at 11.00 pm Christ Church MIDNIGHT MASS

FRI 25th DEC at 9.15 am PARISH COMMUNION Christ Church
SUN 27th Dec at 9:15 am Parish Communion Christ Church
(27th Dec there is NO 8 o'clock Holy Communion)
WED 30th Dec at 10.00 am BCP Holy Communion Christ Church



'POSADA' *(Spanish for 'inn') has been a tradition in Mexican villages for over 400 years; there they welcome into their homes for one night actors taking on the role of Mary and Joseph.*

Will *you* welcome Mary & Joseph to stay overnight in *your* home? For several years we've organised a Posada in our village where small figures of Mary and Joseph travel around different households and stay for one night.

Their journey begins at our Christingle service and ends at our Crib service. It's open to everyone, and lots of families find it's a great way to be involved in the Christmas story. Sign up on the form in church.

EVENTS IN 2027 will include

3rd Jan when we will celebrate the **Epiphany**
16th Jan at 2 pm; there will be an Auction of surplus presents, in Christ Church
24th Jan at 9:15, welcoming to Christ Church the Methodist Minister Rev Rob Weir as our preacher during the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**.
14th Mar Bishop Barry will lead our **150th Anniversary Celebratory Service**
25th Apr Confirmation Service conducted by Barry, Bishop of Whitby.



OUR MEMORY TREE will be in Christ Church from 6th December throughout the Christmas season for everyone to add a prayer in memory of a loved one.

Tags will be available for you to write your loved one's names and a few words if you wish. After Christmas we will have a simple gathering to pray together when the tree is taken down.

Friday November 27th at 6.00pm

ADVENT TAIZÉ SERVICE at St Oswald's

A warm setting for 40 minutes of peace and tranquillity, an opportunity for contemplation, prayer and, if wished, to join in some gentle chants.

OUR REGULAR CHURCH SERVICES

Christ Church, Great Ayton
Sunday 8:00am Holy Communion
9:15am Parish Communion with choir
4:30pm Café Church *(2nd & 4th Sundays)*
Monday 2:00pm Coffee Lounge Communion *(1st Monday)*
Tuesday 9:45am Little Fishes *(not during school holidays)*
Wednesday 10:00 Holy Communion (BCP) or Morning Prayer

St Oswald's, Newton under Roseberry
Sunday 11:00 Holy Communion with hymns *(1st&5th Sundays)*
11:00 All Age Service *(3rd Sunday)*



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A very big *THANK YOU*

FROM ALL IN GREAT AYTON TO THOSE WHO CREATED – AS USUAL – A SUPERB AND VERY FITTING DISPLAY OF POPPIES ROUND OUR WAR MEMORIAL THIS YEAR...AND THEN DRIED THEM ALL TO CLEAR AWAY! Guisborough Road was closed for the ceremony and hundreds of people stood to watch and remember, whilst Channel 4 filmed it for their documentary *War Detectives*.



Before....



...displaying the poppies





....and after! The less pleasant job of drying and storing them all!





Churchwarden Alison Collins also sends her thanks to everyone who helped with the wonderful poppy display this year.

We have already had ideas for next year and would like to get ahead by attaching some of those poppies not on sticks to a large net for ease of display. Therefore we would like to set up a group in the new year to do this. If this sounds like something you would like to be involved in, please let me know so that we can continue to create a beautiful village poppy display.





ST OSWALD'S SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

Churchwarden Christine Stinson writes: On Sunday November 8th two members of the British Legion came to St. Oswald's, together with Luke Mayer MP, the Chair of Guisborough Town Council and local Councillor Bill Suthers. They each laid a wreath on the grave of Thomas Donkin, killed in the Second World War (*photos above and right*). A grave remembering Willie Mills has been found only recently in the graveyard; he was killed in the First World War. A plaque is also in the church commemorating Ingram Edward Pease, a fighter pilot killed in the Second World War. The local dignitaries continued to remember those killed during the wars by visiting the War Memorials in Upleatham and Dunsdale before joining the Remembrance Service in Guisborough.

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THINKING OF OTHERS THIS CHRISTMAS

St Oswald's *Christmas Appeal* this year will be for TEESSIDE HOSPICE in Linthorpe, which offers support and specialist care and guidance to people and their families who are or have been affected by terminal illness.

Christ Church will be dedicating their *Appeal* to the GENESIS PROJECT in Grove Hill in Middlesborough, which seeks to provide a safe place for children away from their chaotic homes where their families often have major problems. The work is crucial all year long but, at Christmas, many things we take for granted are, for others, far out of reach.

CONFIRMATION ?

Bishop of Whitby, Barry Hill, will lead our Confirmation Service on Sunday 25th April. Would you like to be confirmed? Please contact the vicar or other minister. Preparation will begin in the New Year.

CHRIST CHURCH TREASURER, KEN TAYLOR, BRINGS US UP TO DATE ON OUR NEW NAVE ALTAR ..... AND NOW ALSO A CREDENCE TABLE!

As Sarah explained back in September, it was felt that a new Nave Altar would be a fitting way to celebrate our **150th anniversary**. We then received a very generous donation from a church member to cover the cost… the Nave Altar shown here *(right)* was approved by the PCC and has now been ordered from Treske of Thirsk.





And there is more good news! Mike Nash has very kindly donated the cost of the credence table (*left)* in memory of his late wife Jenny who gave many years' service to our church as Hall Manager, Churchwarden and much more!

This has also been ordered from Treske.

With very many thanks to our generous donors!

Both items of furniture will be dedicated by Bishop Barry when he officiates at the 150th anniversary of the Church's consecration service on 14th March next year.

THE BIBLE

Rev Geoff writes:



Our ***Bible Courses*** and ***Bible Conversations*** have been really successful over the past three months. Whilst the numbers participating haven't been large, the feedback from those who've been is very positive. We will be organising more **Bible Conversations** and another **Bible Course** next year. Look out for more details later.



We had a little glimpse of Heaven on Sunday November 1st when the Church of Teesside gathered at Eaglescliffe *(left)* to give thanks for the ***Bible Conversations/Bible Course*** mission. Bishop Barry was the principal speaker.

As in Revelation 7, when 'a great multitude... from every nation, tribe, people and language' stood before the throne and worshipped God. It was an incredible night!

NEWS FROM ST. OSWALD'S

Our Harvest Collection raised £256 for the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institute as well as a large collection for food for the **Genesis Project Foodbank**.

Our Christmas Appeal this year will be for **Teesside Hospice.**

Please do join us for our Special Services:

Friday	November 27th	6.00 pm	TAIZE ADVENT SERVICE.
Thursday	December 17th	7.30 pm	CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE
Sunday	December 20th	11.00 am	ALL AGE CHRISTMAS SERVICE
Thursday	December 24th	9.00 pm	CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION



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On Sunday 1st November CHRIST CHURCH members were delighted to be able to appoint a second churchwarden when LESLEY MILLER agreed to stand for election and join ALISON COLLINS, who has been our sole warden for many months.

FRANCES BROWN has also volunteered to support her in an unofficial assistant role and Rev Sarah has invited approaches from anyone else willing to become an assistant warden.



(Above) Rev Sarah congratulates and thanks new churchwarden Lesley Miller and assistant Frances Brown alongside (left) warden Alison



***Spire* invited Lesley to pen us a few words to introduce herself to those who do not yet know her:**

Hello and thank you for electing me as Church Warden.

Along with assistance from Frances, I will try to share some of the workload Alison has been carrying single handed.

Originally from Middlesbrough, I have lived in Great Ayton for over 20 years. Most of my working life has been spent in teaching, both in Primary School and with Young Apprentices. After leaving teaching I worked in the very different world of retail fragrance and cosmetics.

In the time I've been worshipping at Christ Church I have helped run *Little Fishes* and the *Come & Praise* family worship service and I will continue to be a part of the Server Team.

The role of Church Warden is new to me so I will be asking lots of questions and will appreciate your help and support.

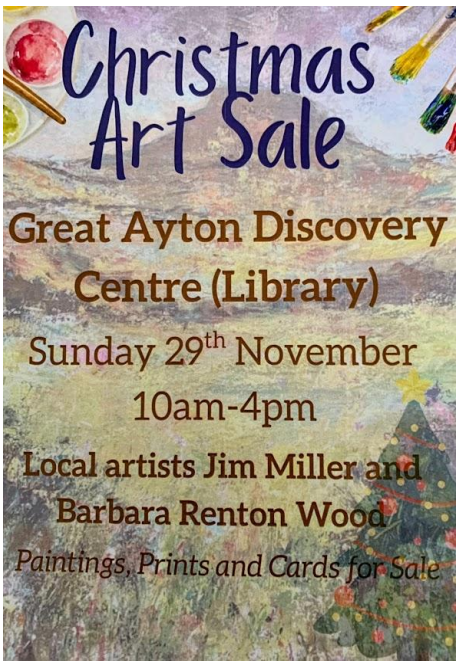


The **Prayer Corner** at Christ Church *(above)* is always available for anyone to visit and spend as much time as wished sitting or kneeling in contemplation, prayer or merely thoughtful silence.



Is there anyone, or anything, you would like us to pray for?

REQUESTS for PRAYER may be placed in the prayer box there, and will be prayed during our Thursday morning "Time to Pray".



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Were you or your children christened in Christ Church ?



Please join a **drawing session on Saturday 21st or 28th November** in the Discovery Centre, anytime between 11am until 1pm and share your ideas for a Christening wall banner for Christ Church's 150th anniversary . The wall banner is for the font area in the church. We want to collect as many ideas as possible from the community and combine them in the design for this banner. Once designed there will be opportunities to take part in helping to make the wall banner .

If you or your children can't make these sessions, please drop any drawings through Tamzin Little's door : 33 Newton Road.

Saturday 5th December 2026 7.30 pm
Christ Church, Gt Ayton, TS96AB

The Angrove Singers Christmas Concert



'On Christmas Night' and
'The Twelve Days of Christmas'
by Bob Chilcott

Musical Director: Jeremy Harbottle
Accompanist: Gillian Ash

Tickets: £12 (Adult) £5 (U18/Student) From Thompson's Hardware, choir members, call Natalie 07812 339950 or on the door (Cash, Cheque or BACS)

Seasonal refreshments included
Donations to Charity from the Proceeds

A MUSICAL CHRISTMAS GIFT

An invitation from Andrew Blair, our organist and choir master



As we turn towards Advent and Christmas, our choir is starting to prepare for the **Services of Lessons and Carols** at Christ Church (Sunday 20th Dec at 6pm) and St Oswald's (Thursday 17th Dec at 7.30pm). We have a tradition of inviting former choir members, family members and friends to join us over Christmas and, if you'd like to join us for a sing for one or both of these special seasonal services, please do come and have a word or drop me an email on blair37@btinternet.com .

Singing as part of a group is hugely rewarding and there's some lovely music to get to know amongst a friendly group of supportive singers. Please also spread the word to anybody you know who may want to give and receive the gift of music.

CONTACT DETAILS (*note new email addresses)*

Rev Sarah Cliff 07355 711010
sarah@cc-gs.org.uk
(Sarah's rest day is normally Saturdays.)

For events and bookings:
Church Office: 01642 722665
gapo@cc-ga.org.uk
(The office is usually staffed on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.)

For Safeguarding issues:
Mary Mason 07788 643930
mary.mason@gmx.co.uk

Church website address:
https://www.achurchnearyou.com

Our Facebook pages

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

Little Fishes have a Private Group on Facebook for parents and carers of pre-school children; you can request to join it. The **Adult Discipleship Group** also has a Private Group.

*Note that the church is gradually moving our information from our former **website** to the above national CoE site.*

Sincere thanks are due to all the contributors of the above articles and to Rodney Wildsmith and our other photographers. The next issue of this *Spire Newsletter* is planned for the end of January in order to anticipate February and the season of Lent. If you would like to submit an article, news or details of events likely to interest our readers, you are welcome to send them to the editor, Stephen Whitehead, at: stephen.whitehead1948@gmail.com. The closing date for the next issue will be **15th January 2027**. In anticipation *Spire* wishes all its readers....***A BLESSED CHRISTMAS!***