

## April 2026 -----BENEFICE NEWS-----April 2026

**For enquiries please contact Revd Dr Robert Brown**

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

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Please note my parish working days are Mondays and Fridays (plus Sundays)

Date	Sunday	Bewcastle	Stapleton	Hethersgill	Kirklington
3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	Good Friday	4 pm Liturgy of the Rood	2 pm Deanery Good Friday Service at Lanercost		
5 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Easter Day	6 am Sunrise Service	10 am Benefice Easter Service of Light and Holy Communion at Stapleton		
12 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Easter 2			10 am HC	
19 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Easter 3	10 am HC			
26 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Easter 4				10 am HC
3 <sup>rd</sup> May	Easter 5		10 am HC		

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

**Knowe United Reformed Church, Bewcastle: Service on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month at 2.15 pm**

### An Easter Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, as Adam was born from the soil on the Sixth day and rested on the Seventh, so you died on the Sixth day, rested on the Seventh, and were reborn from the womb of the earth on the Eighth, eternal day. And as Adam was called to tend the Garden but abused it, so you were found gardening by Mary after your resurrection. Help us to know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen

### Church Notices

#### From the Registers – Funerals

**Helen Phillips** (65) of Roughsyke, Roadhead at Carlisle Crematorium on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**John Joseph Renwick** (80) formerly of the Roan, Roweltown at St Mary Stapleton on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March 10 am Palm Sunday at Kirklington.** The service will start outside the front gate of the church where we will receive our palm crosses, and then process into the church.

**Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, Walk of Witness from Gilsland Village Hall to Lanercost Priory at 2 pm .** A 6 mile walk along Hadrian's Wall footpath carrying an 8ft wooden cross. Breakfast is available at Gilsland Village. For further details contact Alison Higg [alison.gilsland@gmail.com](mailto:alison.gilsland@gmail.com) or 016977 47409

**Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 4 pm at Bewcastle Cross.** Our own special **Liturgy of the Rood**, designed as a Good Friday meditation held outside around the Bewcastle Cross, includes a reading of the 7<sup>th</sup> Century poem The Dream of the Rood, which may have been written specifically for the Ruthwell and Bewcastle Crosses. It lasts around 35-40 minutes and, for those who wish it, the opportunity to venerate the Cross in whatever way they wish. Please bring your own chair if you wish to sit.

**Easter Morning 5<sup>th</sup> April 6 am, Bewcastle Cross.** Sunrise service to greet our risen Lord around the ancient cross. Includes chocolate Easter eggs.

**Easter Day 5<sup>th</sup> April 10 am, Stapleton.** Our celebration begins outside the church where we light a small bonfire from which we then light the Easter (Paschal) Candles for each of our four churches. We then process into the main church and everybody will receive a beeswax candle which they can then light from one of the main Paschal Candles. This is called the Service of Light and is an ancient Christian tradition. Children are very welcome. The rest of the Easter Communion service continues in church, and includes the renewal of our baptismal vows after which we are sprinkled with holy water.

If you know of someone who would be unable to attend church but would like to receive communion at home, or would appreciate a visit from me, please do let me know. My contact details are below and at the top of the newsletter. [Robert.Brown@BewcastleHouseOfPrayer.org.uk](mailto:Robert.Brown@BewcastleHouseOfPrayer.org.uk)

## **April 2026 -----Benefice News-----April 2026**

Dear Friends,

The great festival of Easter is here, a festival bursting with light and joy, and dancing and singing, and hope and colour and, well, just LIFE! This is the great turning point around which the world revolves, as TS Eliot put it 'At the still point of the turning world/Neither flesh nor fleshless/Neither from nor towards; at the still point/There the dance is...' He is referring to the interweaving and never-ending Dance of joy and love and peace of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in which dance the Three are One and the One is Three, who are filled with so much life and love that it spills over to create the revolving cosmos, our solar system, the Earth, the plants, the animals, and us; a life and a love that nothing can stay, nothing can tame or chain down, not even death. It is the revealing of this Dance of Love in God by Jesus that lies at the heart of Christianity, and that distinguishes it from every other form of faith.

Yet this is also where we are faced with the extraordinary event that so many folk struggle to accept – that God could overcome death through the power of his Love. And sometimes it is difficult to believe, when we look at the world, that there is a God of love. Our news bulletins are filled with stories of the hubris, arrogance, stupidity, cruelty and violence of 'leaders', of people being bombed, or shot, or mutilated, or violated. Or stories of how greedy corporations oppress farmers, destroy landscapes, leave pollution and poison behind in pursuit of profits, and try to cover it up. Or social media, politicians, and parts of the Press that tell about 'invasions of foreigners', stirring us towards anger, hatred and bitterness, even if we've never met a 'foreigner', let alone been personally aggrieved by one. Or perhaps it's much more personal. Someone we love or know well has suffered through a fatal illness and died. Perhaps it was a child. Perhaps it was your child. And the pain is still as raw as the day it happened.

I met a lady a few weeks ago who said she had lost her faith in God. I will call her Dawn. How could there be a God of love, Dawn said, that would allow her daughter to suffer a terminal disease in her early teens. She carried the pain as if it was yesterday, still mourning, some fifty years later. She was waiting to die; 'anything has to be better than this living hell', she said. Her other children, now all grown up, sat around, listening. My heart nearly broke.

Dawn is not alone in the world. Hers is the story of myriads of others around the world, and through the ages. And it seems there is a great wave of sadness, pain and hurt that people carry, some silently, others loudly and abrasively, trying to find a way to cope. The injustice of suffering, particularly of the young and innocent, the seemingly pointless deaths of those who have been robbed of the chance to live, wells up and spills over, creating an aching sense of loss and anger in those left behind. And we long for justice and rightness to be restored, for suffering and pain to end. We long for LIFE, not just for ourselves, but perhaps even more for those we have loved.

The great paradox is that this pain, itself, is only there BECAUSE of love. We feel the pain because we love. The heart that hurts does so because it was joined to another by love. And when it is ripped apart, the rawness of the wound is intense – the greater the love, the greater the pain. And we are angered by the injustice because we care. But love and compassion only exist, only matter, because God is. If there was no God, nothing would matter for everything would just be accidents of chemistry and biology. There is no place for love in world without God, a merely mechanical world where nothing matters, no such thing as 'free will', 'right' or 'wrong', 'justice' or 'cruelty' or 'beauty' or 'love' or 'pain', only chemical reactions. There is no such thing as evil if all that exists is atoms and molecules. All our anger, frustration, brokenness, all our joy, delight and sense of freedom and love, can only exist, can only have meaning, in a universe created by God. Otherwise there is nothing but the blind force of chemistry.

There are no easy answers as to the 'why' of pain. Pretending God does not exist is certainly not one of them, and doesn't solve anything at all. It's like burying your head in the sand and thinking you've found safety. But what the Easter story tells us is that God is intimately involved with us in the midst of our pain. Because God exists, love exists, is real. It is really real. But more than this, our love for each other actually derives from the source of all Love, God himself. And that means that when we feel the pain of loss, it is felt in the heart of God too. So Dawn is not alone. Neither are any of us. All our suffering and the injustice we experience are taken up into the great Dance of the God of Love, and healed. Healed. That is why, at the heart of the Dance, the Risen Christ still bears the healed wounds of the Cross in his hands, his side, and his dancing feet. And so the Easter story is actually the ONLY one that can give us real hope that 'all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.'

Have a blessed Easter.

Your friend and priest, Robert.

## **April 2026-----BENEFICE NEWS-----April 2026**

**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 7.30 pm A free 90 basic Life Support Awareness Training Session at Hethersgill Parish Hall.** This will cover CPR and defibrillator use. All parishioners welcome. Light refreshments will be provided. It would be useful for numbers if you could let Alison Sisson (675378) or Christine Falder (07790 302016) know if you would like to attend.

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April 10 am – 5 pm Easter Craft Fair at Dacre Hall, Lanercost.** Admission £1 Details 07875 954285

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April 8 pm Stapleton Public Hall Dance .** Details Mary Thompson 016977 48379

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April 7 pm Quiz Night with Arthur at the black Lion Teams of 5 £2 each.** Money raised shared with our charity of the month.

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 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.

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March Kirklington WI**

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 7.30 pm Stapleton WI at Stapleton Hall.** Chapmans bags .Competition W. All welcome to join. For more details about WI contact the President Tel 07398 130363

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April 9 am Clay pigeon shoot competition.** Meet at the Black Lion. Please sign up with Marti

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2 pm The Knowe URC Poetry Group at Roadhead Hall.** Theme: Easter and Spring Celebrations. 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](mailto:lisa.wilson@nwsynod.org.uk)

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 8 pm Ladies Darts Reunion at the Black Lion.** Come for a game of darts or just a natter.

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April 7.30 – 11 pm Hethersgill Parish Hall Dance** with Denis Westmorland. £6 includes tea/coffee & biscuits. Enquiries to Irene 01228 675389. All welcome

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 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.

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 7.30 pm Bewcastle Heritage Society at Roadhead Hall.** Chester Forster: the firm that dyed for Britain. All welcome.

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April 10 am Monthly coffee morning at the Black Lion.** £2.50 for a bottomless cuppa and games of bingo, only £1 with prizes

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 7.30 pm Open mic/jam session at the Black Lion.** All welcome

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 8pm Folk Tunes Sessions at the Black Lion, Hethersgill.** All welcome to come along and play or listen. Some tunes to ensure we have something in common to play can be found on the [Bewcastle House of Prayer](http://Bewcastle House of Prayer) website. Music can be found by searching for them on [TheSession.org](http://TheSession.org) website.

### **Claiming Dates**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 7.30 pm** Graham Brown, rock guitarist at the Black Lion

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May 1 pm Hethersgill Social Committee Family Funday and Scarecrow Competition** at Hethersgill Village Hall. Dog show, races/games,bouncy castle ,craft/baking /preserve competitions, Rigghead sausage/burgers to purchase between 4-6pm Scarecrow display from 2<sup>nd</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> May. Enquiries 07790302016

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 7.30 – 11pm Hethersgill Parish Hall dance** with Keith Robertson.

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> 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 plant stall and produce table. Any contributions very welcome.

**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.

**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](mailto:ros.campbell@naturalengland.org.uk) 07570 370775

**Stapleton Knit and Natter Group: Every Tuesday 7 pm** in Stapleton Hall. **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: Every Thursday 7.30 – 9.30 pm** at Hethersgill Parish Hall. Contact Andy Little 07765 244071

## **April 2026 NEWS AND THANKS----- April 2026**

**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.**

**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. A free 90 basic life support awareness training session will be held in Hethersgill Parish Hall at 7.30pm on Tuesday, 31st March. This will cover CPR and defibrillator use. All parishioners welcome. Light refreshments will be provided. It would be useful for numbers if you could let Alison Sisson (675378) or Christine Falder (07790 302016) know if you would like to attend.

**Hethersgill's Christmas Committee** extend their heartfelt thanks to all who donated toys to their Christmas toy appeal. More than 200 toys were donated, which meant that every child whose family is supported by the Brampton food bank got at least three presents and we were able to donate around 100 further toys and presents to Mission Christmas who also support local families. Everyone's kindness was overwhelming and has made a real difference to local families who need a little support. The committee are now looking at an appeal to support families in the run up to Easter. The families that are supported struggle with the cost of toiletries and cleaning products as well as food. The appeal will be asking for people to donate TLC – Toiletries – Larder food – Cleaning products. Thank you.

**The Black Lion at Hethersgill has been shortlisted to win a Countryside Alliance Award in the Pub Category**, the winners are chosen by a public vote so they need your help. Voting is open until midnight on the 6<sup>th</sup> April. To vote go to <https://www.research.net/r/CAA26NBiz>

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

**Hethersgill Parish Hall 100 Club. March winners: 1st** Willie Telfer, 89; **2nd** Pamela Alston, 33; **3<sup>rd</sup>** Graham Taylor 74. Drawn at Social Committee Meeting. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.Bewcastle.com/news-events), [www.BewcastleHouseOfPrayer.org.uk/parish-notice](http://www.BewcastleHouseOfPrayer.org.uk/parish-notice)

Deadline for the **May** issue is **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April** to Tricia Coombe, Damhead, Lyneholmford, Roweltown, CA6 6LQ. 016977 48833 or [triciacoombe@damhead.me](mailto:triciacoombe@damhead.me)