

**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
1st Mar	Lent 2				10 am MP
8 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Lent 3		10 am Holy Baptism		
15 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Mothering Sunday			10 am Family Mothering Service	
20 <sup>th</sup> Mar	St Cuthbert (Friday)	6 pm Celtic Evening Prayer			
22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar	Lent 5	3 pm Evensong			
29 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Palm Sunday				10 am Liturgy of the Palms & Passion
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 HC at Stapleton		

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

Prayer for the Month

I offer Thee every cloud that ever swept  
O'er the skies, and broke and wept  
In rain, and with the flowerlets slept,  
My King.

Each communicant praying,  
Every angel staying  
Before Thy throne to sing,  
Adoramus Te!  
Amen.

*Note: 'Adoramus Te' means 'We adore you.'*

Church Notices

**From the Registers - Funerals**

**Malcolm James Beattie** (65) of Shielgreen, Kirklington at Carlisle Crematorium on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February

**Monday 2nd March 7 pm Kirklington with Hethersgill PCC meeting** at Netheronsett Farm

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 7 pm Stapleton PCC Meeting** at Damhead

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 10 am Family Mothering Service at Hethersgill.** This will be a family service, similar in format to our last one at Kirklington, but with a special focus on mothers. All welcome

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 6 pm St Cuthbert's Day patronal service at St Cuthbert Bewcastle.** This will be a short service of Celtic Evening Prayer to celebrate the life of St Cuthbert, inspired by Anglo-Saxon liturgy from the time of the Bewcastle Cross. It is a quiet, contemplative service that focusses on our relation with the whole of creation, a theme that was central to St Cuthbert's life. There will be a reading from Bede's Life of Cuthbert.

**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 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.

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)

## **March 2026 -----Benefice News-----March 2026**

One of my most agonising moments of late was watching Laura Kuenssberg interviewing the ex-Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby about the scandal of John Smyth's abuse of young people. "Can you ever forgive him?" she asked. There was a long silence whilst the Archbishop squirmed in his chair. Eventually he replied.

"Yes I think I can. But of course it's not for me to forgive. What matters is the forgiveness of those he so wickedly abused together with their families." Predictably there was a huge reaction. Quite apart from any possible "Cover Up", how could those who had been so terribly abused ever find it in their heart to forgive Smyth his evil ways?

I want to use that incident to think about two things. First to explore what such Forgiveness might entail. Second to take on board that often many of those who have been so terribly wounded have to live perhaps for years with the additional double legacy of anger and resentment.

My life as a priest has sometimes entailed sharing with people who carry heavy burdens, and they can indeed be heavy, requiring the expertise of professionals. But sometimes to share them within a Christian context can also help. Not for nothing does every Church Service begin with us asking God to help us to carry our burdens, to forgive our weaknesses, to learn to forgive others and so receive that peace which true forgiveness can bring. There's a story which for me goes some way in exploring such things.

Some years ago a man called Eric Lomas wrote a book called *The Railway Man*. As a child he was a fanatical train spotter in Glasgow. Not surprisingly when he grew up he went to work on the Railways. During the last World War he found himself fighting in the Far East. He was captured by the Japanese and sent to work on the infamous Burma Railway. At one point he was discovered to have a map in his possession. He was tortured within an inch of his life by the guards who wanted to know where the map had come from. One particular interrogator was merciless. Lomas survived but never forgot - still less forgave - his tormentor. 50 Years later he discovered by coincidence that the man was still alive, and that He would often speak about the Scotsman with a map whom he had so terribly tortured. Still breathing fury Lomas contacted him and asked if he would be willing to meet. A venue was arranged on a particular Railway Bridge. I quote:

"From about 100 yards away I saw my tormentor approaching. A tiny man in an elegant straw hat, wearing long trousers and a simple Kimono top. From the moment I saw him suddenly I realised I no longer wanted to hurt him. We came face to face, his tiny frame barely reaching my shoulders. I took his hand. "Good Morning, Mr Ngase" He was trembling - in tears - saying over and over again "I'm sorry. So so sorry. Can you ever forgive me?"

John Mc Carthy, the journalist whom you may remember was imprisoned some 30 years ago alongside Terry Waite wrote of this encounter "when I read of their meeting I just wept tears of sorrow, pride and gratitude."

Stories like that don't instantly solve the problems we have been sharing, but somehow (like so many of Our Lord's masterful parables) they can encourage us to take them home and work out what they might have to say to us now. In particular to discover that perhaps one of the deepest truths of the Christian Faith is that whoever we are and whatever we have done, (or not done) not only are we for ever deeply loved by God, but that as He forgives us, so He can help us to forgive others and discover the peace and healing that this can bring.

Indeed - if it doesn't sound too facetious I can even picture our Lord saying to Eric about his story "Nice one Eric. I Like it!"

Perhaps you too have a similar tale to tell? And if so, you will know from experience how letting go and forgiving has helped you to find that peace which passes all understanding.

Bishop John

## **March 2026-----BENEFICE NEWS-----March 2026**

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 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.

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March 8 pm Stapleton Public Hall Dance .** Details Mary Thompson 016977 48379

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2 pm The Knowe URC Poetry Group at Roadhead Hall.** Theme: Lambing, Spring farming. 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 fire is appreciated. Details: [lisa.wilson@nwsynod.org.uk](mailto:lisa.wilson@nwsynod.org.uk)

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March Kirklington WI**

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 7.30 pm Stapleton WI at Stapleton Hall.** Speaker Robert Armstrong: Stories from his life experiences. All welcome. For more details about WI contact the President Tel 07398 130363

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 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 17<sup>th</sup> March 7.30 pm Bewcastle Heritage Society at Roadhead Hall.** Susan Rands MA: Illustrated talk – Roman Cavalry on the Northern Frontier. All welcome

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 7.30 – 11 pm Hethersgill Parish Hall Dance** with John & Bobby. £6 includes tea/coffee & biscuits. Raffle. Bar. Contact Irene 01228 675389. All welcome

**Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 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](#) website. Music can be found by searching for them on [TheSession.org](#) website.

### **Claiming Dates**

**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 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

**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

**Stapleton WI: 2nd Wednesday of every month 7.30 pm** at Stapleton Hall

**Yoga: Every Thursday 6 pm** in Hethersgill Parish Hall

**Carpet Bowling: Every Thursday** in Stapleton Hall

**Badminton: Every Thursday 7.30 – 9.30 pm** at Hethersgill Parish Hall. Contact Andy Little 07765 244071

## **March 2026 NEWS AND THANKS----- March 2026**

**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.

**Recently some of the headstones in the churchyard at St Cuthbert's Church, Bewcastle appear to** have been damaged by the grass cutting equipment used by Cumberland Council. Although the churchyard is closed for new burials, and still owned by the church, its management has been taken over by the Council who are now legally responsible for it. Headstones, however, remain the responsibility of the relevant families or their descendants.

Following the damage, the PCC has secured assurance from the Council that their large motorised cutting decks will no longer be used to cut the grass. They have additionally approached their insurers who advise anyone responsible for a family or ancestors' headstone that appears to have been damaged recently to submit a form they have supplied. Copies of this form are available from the noticeboard in the church vestibule. Alternatively, you can email [info@bewcastle.com](mailto:info@bewcastle.com) to ask for one to be emailed back to you. If you want to consult a specialist monumental mason who might be able to effect repairs to a damaged headstone you'll find some business cards from a restorer beside the claim forms.

The council have also conducted a full assessment of the safety of every headstone, a survey they are required to carry out every five years and have reported that only one had to be laid flat as it was deemed unsafe. They have commissioned another survey of the trees in the churchyard and are formulating a plan to manage them.

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

**Hethersgill Parish Hall 100 Club. February winners: 1st** Willie Wilson, 52; **2nd** Marie Bone, 20; **3rd** Fiona Wilkinson, 46. 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 **April 2026** issue is **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March** to Tricia Coombe, Damhead, Lyneholmeform, Roweltown, CA6 6LQ. 016977 48833 or [triciacoombe@damhead.me](mailto:triciacoombe@damhead.me)