

outreach

APRIL 2024

From the Parish Church of St Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham



***Lord, the
Light of
Your Love
is shining***

Paul Judson

Dates for your Diary - APRIL 2024

APRIL 2024

Day	Time	Event/Place
Wed 3rd	1.00 pm - 3.00 pm	Drop In - Holyoakes, South Pelaw
Thur 4th	6.00 pm	Baptism Preparation - Parish Centre
Sat 6th	10.00 am - 2.00 pm	Church Table Top Sale & Café in Parish Centre
Mon 8th	2.00 pm	Mothers' Union - Kevan Jones MP
Sat 20th	10.00 am - 1.00 pm	Coffee Morning in aid of ReNEw - see page 11
Sun 21st	2.00 pm & 3.00 pm	Baptisms in Church
Mon 22nd	2.00 pm	Mothers' Union
	7.30 pm	Annual Parochial Church Meeting - in Church
Wed 24th	1.30 - 3.00 pm	Bereavement support Group drop in - see page 5
Tuesday and Friday	2.00 pm - 4.00 pm	Warm Spaces
Tuesday's	9.30 am - 10.30 am	Toddler Group - Rhyme Time - Parish Centre (Term time only)

Please note - there is no Messy Church this month

Pastoral Visits

If anyone inside or outside the church requires a pastoral visit please contact Jan in the Parish office so that she can feed requests forward to the Pastoral Ministry Team.

The Pastoral Ministry Team respectfully ask that if you are requesting a visit for someone other than yourself that you have their permission to make a request on their behalf.



Rector's Letter

Dear Friends

Our lawn has had its first cut of the year, our boys have entered the annual school egg decorating competition and there are signs of new life popping up in gardens and public spaces all over Chester le Street. Spring has sprung!

With Easter being so early this year, it has felt like we have only just finished celebrating Christmas and it is almost Easter Sunday. Most local schools break up for their Easter holidays on Maundy Thursday, which is very unusual. Whilst spring has sprung and there are signs of new life and hope everywhere, I am in the unusual situation of writing at a time when we are still journeying through Holy Week. But by the time you read this, Easter Sunday may well have already been celebrated and we will be in the Easter Season – the time the church celebrates between Easter Sunday and Pentecost.

With the spring, comes (hopefully!) warmer weather. This means a return to church is now a more comfortable prospect for the services that temporarily moved to the Parish Centre during the colder months of the year. The warmer weather and longer days also allow for more time spent outside and enjoying nature.

During this past month, the Church of England celebrated the 30th anniversary of the ordination of women to the Priesthood. This church played a significant role in this, as a number of these first women to be ordained priest had strong connections with Chester le Street – including Mary Judson. In this Diocese, the ordinations took place on Trinity Sunday, which this year is on 26th May. We will be sharing in with these celebrations in May and hearing the stories and journeys of these faithful women.

This is also the time of year when we look back at the previous year, with our upcoming annual meeting on 22nd April at 7.30 pm. We will of course be celebrating all the wonderful things that God has been doing amongst us, giving thanks for the hard work of so many faithful people in our parish, as well as conducting the usual elections.

As we celebrate Easter together, journey through this season and celebrate the new life Jesus brought to the world, we share in this joy with the church around the world. May this story that we participate in, and the new life we see all around us, inspire us afresh this season.

Yours in Christ,

Matt

Quiet Corner

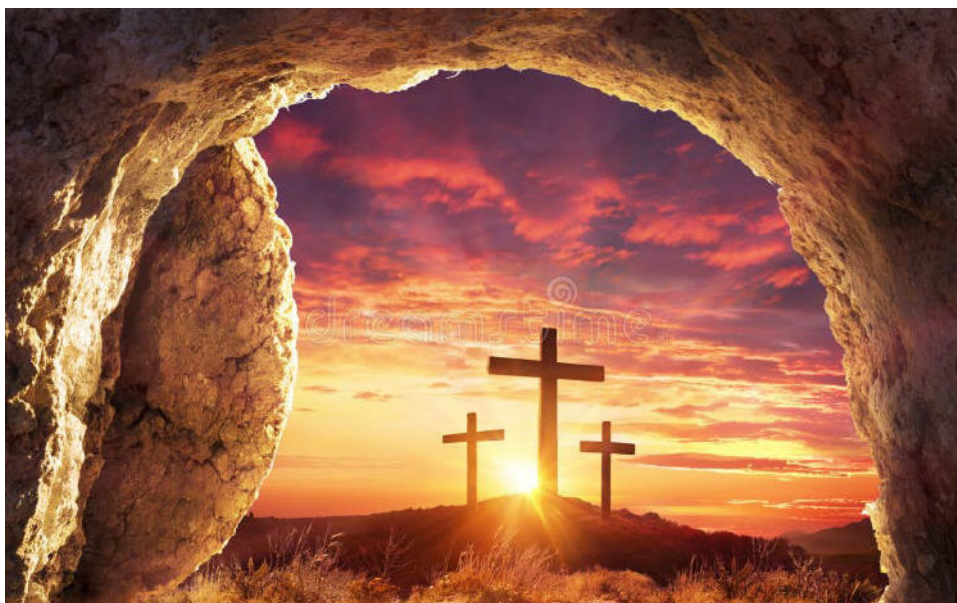
The Quiet Corner has been a bit neglected of late owing to a flurry of activity outside doing essential jobs of various kinds. Despite the weather being a touch on the damp side (or “dreich” as they say in Scotland), some jobs are vital, such as preparing the garden for the coming Spring growing season. Mind you, the seasons are now so mixed up due to climate change, the daffodils were well through the ground before Christmas and the May blossom in the locality, was showing in early February. Anything can now be expected from downpour to deluge of rain through Spring and Summer with the odd snow shower in between followed by anything at all. Whatever happened to April showers and “flaming” June I wonder? It's not just the garden plants and shrubs however, even the Trout show altered behaviour when water temperatures vary so wildly. Ah well, it's no good trying to second guess the weather. I suppose it's just about living in hope that all will turn out well in the end.

As it turned out, when I did get to my Quiet Corner, I got to thinking about that small 4 letter word “Hope”. My small, compact Oxford Dictionary defines “Hope” as a feeling of expectation. I guess that just about sums it up really, living in Hope, not just in the present but also for the future, however long or short that might be. My Bible concordance has 36 mainly positive references to Hope, from Job 7:6 through to 1 John 3:3. For such a small word, that's some going as they say. There is a pitfall to be avoided however and that is confusing Hope with that other small word “Wish”. No doubt we're all familiar with the old saying “be careful what you wish for.”

As we make our progress from Lent into Holy Week and the weeks of Easter that follow, a good starting point might be with King David's words in his *Psalms* 39:7 “*And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You.*” To the Disciples and followers, the waiting would have been very difficult if not downright terrifying, living for a short while out of sight, expecting imminent arrest and also possibly crucifixion. It must have seemed that all hope had evaporated with the death of Jesus. For Peter especially so, given his denial of ever having known Jesus. But “hope springs eternal” is another age old saying and that really is where the importance of Hope lies, in the eternal. St. Paul in his letter to *Titus* 1 verse 2 after introducing himself says: “in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began”. Even the writer of the letter to the Hebrews says something very similar in *Hebrews* 6:18: “*it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.*”

So from the darkness of the crucifixion, we are led into the light of the resurrection and from which our “Hope” does spring eternal; the life eternal with Jesus, when he comes to gather us up to be with Him, at the end of time, promised to us by God before time began.

John Hopper
Lay Reader



MOTHERS' UNION



In March we had two celebration services. The first a Celebration of Women and our mothers in particular. Rev. Miriam joined us for this service and gave a very interesting talk about the strength of women in the church. She also admitted a new member - Jean Coyles to membership of our branch.

Our second celebration service was Mothers' Union Lady Day service for our Deanery. We were joined by members from other branches in the Deanery - St Andrews Chilton Moor, St Michael's and All Angels Houghton le Spring, Christ Church Lumley and Holy Trinity Washington. Rev. Mary Judson was our speaker on this occasion gave a very refreshing and inspiring insight into Mary the mother of Jesus and how this relates to our lives today.

The afternoon finished with refreshments - tea, coffee and Hot Cross Buns in the Parish Centre.

April 2024

April 6th - Kevan Jones MP

April 22nd - Branch Activity

Norma Hedley
MU Member

If you would like to find out more about Mothers' Union (we meet on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month in the Parish Centre at 2.00 pm) please get in touch with one of our committee members via the Parish Office.

Bereavement Support Group

Hope

for anyone living with loss,
Whether recently or longer ago.

Everyone has lost someone.

An opportunity to enjoy hospitality; to receive hope; to share stories, with people to listen.

**Parish Centre - Eardulph Room -
Wednesday 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm on the following dates:**

24th April

8th May

22nd May

5th June

19th June

3rd July

If you would like to come along please let Jan in the Parish Office know.

jrowlandclsparish@gmail.com

0191 3883295



Small Groups

The small groups in St Mary and St Cuthbert's have been a huge part of the church's life for many years.

Our small groups meet to study the Bible, pray and worship. They are supportive, safe environments where you can ask questions to grow and deepen your faith.

The groups are often instrumental in deepening people's faith and supporting fellow Christians in their journeys but they are so much more than that. The small groups can lead to long lasting and important friendships.

In 2007 I joined my first small group, it was on Tuesday mornings. I did not know what to expect but it turned out to be one of the highlights of my time in North London. It was so much fun being part of the group. I also enjoyed getting to know people from different backgrounds with a variety of experiences. I formed deep friendships and made a lifelong friendship in that first small group. Since then I have been part of other groups which pray and study the Bible together. It is rich time well spent.

Some of our small groups meet in peoples homes, others make use of the Parish Centre. There are times and days which suit everyone please get in touch with the church office or contact Miriam - revdmiriamwakefield@gmail.com and she will find a group which suits you.



How does litter picking honour the Glory of God?



We have been on a real journey over the past 3 years, It all started during Covid as a home group. We studied a Lent course focused on God's Creation, back at the time when meeting over Zoom was especially popular and necessary! By the end of the course we were challenged on doing something to look after God's (Our) Earth? So on the 23rd May 2021 there were 6 of the group who set an example, respecting God's Creation, serving our community through stewardship as we met, at The Hermitage School and collected 10 bags of litter in just 1 hour.

Since that time the group has welcomed many people who want to make a difference and stop litter reaching our rivers and seas. It is great as a witness for God, where we are alongside so many in our community, and the group has grown. There is now alongside the Sunday group, also one on Tuesday led by Norman and Julie Shave and more recently one led Joe Waterston on a Wednesday at Pelaw Square. The group has over this time supported other fledgling groups and supported other community picks as part of our discipleship.

It was really encouraging to have the group be nominated twice at the Durham Environment Awards held at Hardwick Hotel in March and along with winning the volunteer group of the year, the group was highly commended in the Environmental Community Action category.

Overall we are closing in on 3000 bags collected in total although 2000 of these have been in the last year from 1200 people hours. We are so thankful for the ongoing support and commitment from so many, honouring the Glory of God.

We would love prayer that others will see what is happening and want to get involved and that those who drop litter stop. Please also pray that our witness will lead to new life long disciples.

Ian Houl

Art & Photography holiday at Shepherds Dene

with Paul and Mary Judson - August 2024

Many of you will know Shepherds Dene but for those who don't:

Shepherds Dene is a beautiful Arts & Crafts house set in acres of grounds at Riding Mill, just a few miles from Corbridge. It's our Diocesan Retreat Centre and provides rooms and accommodation for individuals and groups. It also hosts several special interest holidays and courses each year.



**Paul is leading the Art and Photography week -
Monday 5th August to Friday 9th August**

It is a *HOLIDAY* so not an intensive teaching time but perhaps a time to dust off those watercolours, pencils, pencil crayons or felt pens that you've been meaning to use but haven't got round to! Or a time to try drawing or painting for the first time – with Paul on hand to help.

There are also lots of photo opportunities, even when the weather isn't so good and Paul will also suggest a few ideas for themes which you may like to try.

Mary will be acting as chaplain so will be around should anybody need to talk and will lead Morning and Evening Prayer in the chapel.

The food is good and there is a bar too! There are lots of places to sit outside and walks around the grounds. It's a lovely quiet place to enjoy a break and it's also a good base for exploring the local area.

To book your place or for more information contact Shepherds Dene at:

<https://www.facebook.com/ShepherdsDene/events>

or phone: 01434 682212



Serving Africa Mission:

1st March 2024: SECOND UPDATE

Beautiful eyes

It's a hot Saturday afternoon on our base. There's thunder in the background. Some children are playing football on the grass and I've just finished a time of prayer on the prayer floor. Walking back I see Samuel, one of our gate staff sheltering from the heat under a palm tree. With him is a beautiful little African girl - four or five years old. She has tiny crystal earrings flashing in the sun. I go up to her, bend down close and say "Hello. How are you?" Back comes the faintest whisper "I am fine."

Her eyes are like deep pools of beautiful water shining from her African face. Those eyes, so beautiful and so full of longing would melt any heart. I say to her "Do you know you are very beautiful?" She gazes at me and then a little whisper comes back - "Yes!" These African children are precious beyond words - so beautiful and graceful. What a blessing to God's creation.

One week gone

We have been here for a week now. Our Sunday in Beloved church was wonderful. Beautiful praise, testimonies and a powerful message on the power of God. We need to hear this in Africa. So many things work against us - the climate, the transport, food supply, illness. We need a powerful Lord who will act for us and do it now! Mary is busy setting up teaching for our young people and the women of our Mission. She begins visiting people at home next week. She will work with George - our school chaplain. I am preparing the next series of teaching for our churches and planning our new church - Bethel.

It's unseasonably hot and dry. This makes sleeping more difficult. The broken road into Accra is extending our journey times and is very uncomfortable. We might have to adjust our visiting plans. School is on half term until Tuesday.

All is well.

8th March 2024: THIRD UPDATE

The lower school is having assembly and I am listening from my office which is just above them. First they recited the Lord's prayer which sounded beautiful. Then they sang the Ghana national anthem - "God bless our homeland Ghana, and make our nation great and strong." They are a young nation and they are very proud of it. Head teacher Naomi made announcements and then off the children go to class. What would the song be for them to sing as they danced away? Imagine my amazement when I heard these words - "My grandfather's clock was too large for the shelf So it stood ninety years on the floor. It was taller by half than the old man himself, though it weighed not a pennyweight more!"

I couldn't stop smiling for the rest of the day, and from the shower that night Mary heard me singing - yes you've guessed it - "My grandfather's clock!"

Week 2

It's been very hot this week - "Feels like 38" has been the forecast. But we've been able to start our home groups network. We've been trying to do this for a long time. Mary's been visiting homes and George the school chaplain has been going with her. People seem keen to do something more in this area and so we're planning on. Independence Day was Wednesday and so the school vacated either side of that Celebration. The base has been very quiet.

Jim has spoken at the Full Gospel Airport chapter meeting, and we visited our friends at Dodoa, where they're building a small conference centre. We are spiritual partners with them in this project. Jim will be starting a series on ministries in Beloved Church on Sunday. Mary is now teaching three groups of young people along with George. As well as this and the women's group her Sunday is very busy.

But from these groups will come our new leaders and that's why we're launching a series on the ministry gifts.

Cont. on page 10

Cont. from page 9

Mother's Day is drawing near for western churches but Ghana follows the American dates and so it will not appear here until May.

On we go!

15th March: FOURTH UPDATE

So here I am. It's 3:30 in the morning and by the light of my tiny torch I have managed to get into the generator room. The generator needs filling up because the power's been off for so long. So I take off the filler which is above the now red hot functioning generator and I begin to pour explosive fuel into this tiny hole. I wonder what will happen if it splashes over onto the machine. Fortunately it didn't but it was an uncomfortable 10 minutes in a virtually dark space. Back upstairs I want to wash petrol from my hands only to find we have no water because the pump can't run. So off I go with my bucket to try and find a tap which is working on the base, fighting my way through the mosquitoes who see me as an early breakfast.

This is what life is like in Ghana. 50% of our time is spent dealing with this kind of thing and that's for all Ghanaians, not just for me. The missionary environment is exciting but we have to be tough to live it.

Week 3

We had a brilliant Sunday here on the base. We are beginning to teach on ministries and giftings and it is going very well. After service Mary's women's group and the two young people's groups went very well. Our new chaplain George is a great help in this ministry. We are hoping on our Wednesday live stream to have him with us so that the our supporters can get to know him better. Mary and George are setting up a home groups network and we're pleased with the progress so far. We will use this network in the summer as a small evangelistic outreach.

It is extremely hot at the moment and like many we are staying in during the heat of the day. The doorbell has just rung - someone bringing us a gift of bread. Isn't that nice! One week to go.

Blessings

Mary and Jim

jimsmithghana@yahoo.co.uk

The Late Miss Evelyn Wroe - previously "Link Missionary" with St Mary & St Cuthbert

I am writing to let you know that my sister **Evelyn Wroe** passed away recently, and I'm sure a number of current Parishioners will remember her.

I know that retired Bishop, Rt Rev Frank White, remembered her from his time years ago at Chester le Street - as he mentioned that on a visit to J&M a few days ago.

Evelyn was in Japan with CMS for 34 years, and during that time was "formally linked" with a number of Parishes in the UK (*though I think Chester le Street was only an informal "Link" when she was in the area on furlough, due to various family connections – our mother having lived in Chester le Street for several years*).

Evelyn's funeral is to take place on Wednesday 3rd April at 1.00 pm at Durham Crematorium – and will be taken by my son Mark, Evelyn's nephew (currently Bishop of Berwick) who is still well known to many people in Chester-le-Street, where he lived for many years.

Because Evelyn spent most of her working life in Japan, and after retirement lived in York – the feeling is that there will not be many of her former colleagues and friends able to make the journey to be at the Service in person. However, the Service will be "streamed" from the Crematorium – and I wonder if you might have a means of letting people in your Congregation know the details, in case they might like to "join in" on-line?

The details are are :- <https://www.wesleymedia.co.uk/webcast-view>

Webcast Login PIN 498-4439 - available for a couple of weeks before the date, and hopefully for a few days after the event.

Many thanks in advance for any help you might be able to offer.

Stephen Wroe

Noticeboard

The deadline for the May Edition of OUTREACH is
Tuesday 16th April 2024

Parish Vision

To be “a multi-generational church, that makes life-long disciples of Jesus, where everyone flourishes”.

Parish Centre Café

The Parish Centre Cafe continues to be a place to catch up with friends old and new and is an important part of our Parish life.

Please continue to support this important ministry and if you haven't already called in, please do, to sample the amazing cakes, scones and fresh home cooked lunches which are on offer. Many thanks to all our volunteers who continue to support us.

The coffee lounge is open Monday to Friday
10.00 am – 1.00 pm.

We look forward to seeing you.

(If you would like to help and be a volunteer - please get in touch with Jan in the Parish Office or Sharon in the Kitchen - We need people to cover for illness and holidays.)



St Mary and St Cuthbert New Toddler Group

Tuesday Rhyme Time

Tuesday Mornings at 9:30

For Nursery Rhymes, a Story and free play
At the Parish Centre DH3 3QB

Voluntary donation of £1.50 per family, includes drink for adults and snacks for children

For more info contact
dptedmondson@gmail.com
07592136421
or scan the QR code



COFFEE MORNING

We are hosting a coffee morning to raise funds for ReNEw Summer Holidays.

The coffee morning is:

20
April
10:00-13:00*

Why not come along and join us?
Parish Centre, Church Lane, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3QB

Would you like some more information?
Contact Will - 07359062546

Find Out More



reNEw North East

*Hot meals served from 11:30

Will and Abbie are holding 4 Saturday Coffee Mornings to raise funds for ReNEw holidays. Leaflets are available in the Parish Centre with all four dates and more information.



ST MARY AND ST CUTHBERT INVITES YOU TO

MESSY CHURCH

2nd Sunday of Every Month

4pm

Parish Centre

For Crafts, Bible Stories, Songs
Family Meal Together
This is for all the family

More Information contact
07592136421 or scan



Messy Church

April- there is no Messy Church this month
Sunday 12th May

The Parish Register

Funerals

March

- 1 John Wilson (89)
- 20 Joseph Butters (88)
Stanley Thompson (95)
Sylvia Wilkinson (82)



Baptisms

17 March

Ralphie Paul Charlton
Lottie June Jackson
Rohan Daniel Malloy



Thanksgiving

3 March

Rory Hill

Coffee Mornings

**Saturdays, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm
in the Parish Centre**

April 2024

- 6 Church Table Top Sale & Café
- 13 Intergrating Children
- 20 ReNEw
- 27 No Coffee Morning

Please note: Charities are now able to book Saturday mornings. To book please get in touch with Jan in the Parish Office.



Flowers:

In memory of:

Easter Eunice Florence Hopper John (Jack) Hopper Derrick Earnshaw
Karen Earnshaw Peter Walker



Donations for flowers to be sent to the Parish Office

COME

Come and join our pleasant band,
We are in need of voices.
Brothers and sisters in harmony,
Come, make your vocal choices.
There is no dissent, no quarrelling,
Inside our music land,
We sing all kinds of melodies,
Some old and some quite new
But founded on the same eight notes,
As all musicians do.
Pitch and scales may be different,
Each note a character, an emotion.
All here will help you sing along,
Until you get a notion - of what our music is all about
What makes our harmony,
Don't think you can't sing, we all have a voice.
Give singing a chance
Come and try out your voice.

Katharine Brown

3.3.24

Join the choir, ask at the Parish Office

WAR/PEACE

When a dictator's call
Leaves people oppressed,
To serve their sole purpose,
Until all that's left
Is hate and danger,
Mass subjugation,
The complete violation of a nation,
Reduced to silence, unforgiven,
Lost in hatred,
Poverty and starvation –
Which waits at its gate,
As war rolls on in its endless furrow,
Dimming future days, in endless sorrow
Why remain in misery?
Why staying unforgiven?
All of us are human,
Trying to remain living.
Do the hard thing, on both sides,
Discuss fair ways to work together,
Step back,
Lay down your weapons.
DO NOT advance.
Work together,
Give Peace a chance.

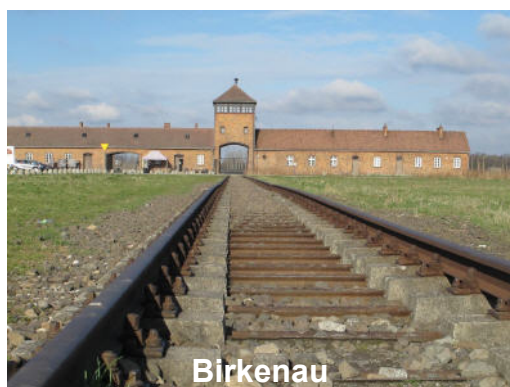
Katharine Brown

1.3.24

Old shoes.....

..... are old friends, grown old with me,
Mutually moulded.
More familiar than the back of my hand,
And they know me.
Battleship grey uppers, with portholes of rusty
eyelets
Outworn heels, once white soles, for the soles of
decks.
As a trinity, we
Sailed seas, tolled bells, wandered byways.
By sea, land and air:
 From Mull to Moscow,
 From Rhum to Romania,
 From Eigg to Ethiopia
Until under the dreadful gate we passed:
Birkenau.
Then, stepping quietly along steely tracks
On which cattle trucks brought the innocent and
despairing.
Then we stood on vast a plain of Abaddon.
All around the horizon gave no relief from
The brooding of watch towers.
Here stood disrobing rooms, foul chambers,
furnaces, flues
Desolate masonry now.
Here ended the hopes and lives of multitudes
Of wrong creed or culture
Of Hebrews and more
Of generations, genders, or the simply despised.
“And to think,” said a nearby friend,
“That the pale ash from the perished
Made righteous, white, through suffering
Is settled here on the grass; their cinders
On which we tread become the very tread of our
soles.
Thus entwined, our shoes their souls,
For you cannot move but step on the murdered.
Then I wept for the absent multitude, condemned by
Satan's brood
For simply being themselves.
Now these souls
Accompany me.
So then, since we may not be parted, let us
Travel worlds together.
As I remember you.

Paul Vincent



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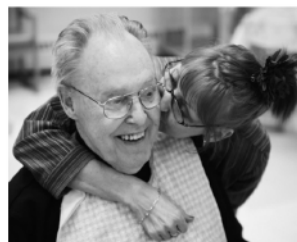
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outreach

Average monthly circulation in 2022 was 250 copies.

Contributions to the Parish Office or by e-mail to:

jrowlandclsparish@gmail.com

**May 2024
Edition Deadline**

Tuesday 16th April 2024

Editor:

We reserve the right to shorten articles and cannot guarantee publication of everything sent to us.

Reg. Charity No: 1130847

Parish Centre Office:

Church Chare
Chester-le-Street
Co Durham
DH3 3QB
Tel: 0191 388 3295
Monday - Friday 9.00 am - 1.00 pm

E- mail:

jrowlandclsparish@gmail.com

Church Opening Hours

The church building is **open for:**

Services on a Thursday morning and Sundays.

Also Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings 10.00 am - 12.30 pm (unless there are funerals) when stewards are available to 'man' the church.

Who's Who?

Clergy

Rector

Rev Matt Strand (07507 647847)
revdmattstrand@icloud.com

Associate Rector

Rev Dave Edmondson
(07592 136421)
dptedmondson@gmail.com

Curate

Rev. Miriam Wakefield
(07454 541629)
revdmiriamwakefield@gmail.com

Retired Clergy with permission to officiate

Rev Mary Judson (0191 3880512/
07930209944)
maryjudson7@gmail.com

Rev Paul Judson (0191 3880512/
07808 362247)
pwjudson@gmail.com

Rev Norman Shave
nshave60@gmail.com

Church Secretary:

Jan Rowland
Parish Centre Office (388 3295)

Safeguarding Team Leader

Sarah Hindle-Green

Treasurer:

Malcolm Austin

Organist:

Stephen Smith

Pastoral Assistants

Sue Begg
Sharon Dodds
Louise Vincent

Verging Team:

Tom Appleby, Edna Sanderson.
Alexander Armstrong, Terry Culkin

Readers:

John Hopper
Paul Vincent

Parish Centre Kitchen Manager:

Sharon Phillips (01325 467 806)

Churchwardens:

Brian Armstrong Sue Begg Elaine Rayner

Weekly Worship

in the Parish of St Mary and St Cuthbert

SUNDAYS

8.00 am BCP Holy Communion in the Parish Church

9.30 am Morning Service in Parish Church
(Holy Communion 1st and 3rd Sundays)

11.00 am Morning Service in Parish Centre
Informal service with provision for children.
(1st Sunday - Cafe Style intergenerational service
3rd Sunday - Holy Communion)

6.00 pm Evensong in the Parish Church
(Holy Communion 1st Sunday)

WEEKDAYS

Thursday 10.45 am Holy Communion

Staff Days Off

Please note
Matt's day off is a Friday
Dave's day off is a Friday
Miriam is off Thursday - Saturday