



St Mary's Newsletter

St Mary's – at the Heart of Your Community

Justice and Peace

You can't be a Christian in isolation. We're all part of one humanity, and how we relate to one another and the planet is at the heart of our faith. But if we have to pursue social justice and human rights at local, national and international levels, that's what sports commentators call 'a big ask'!

So St Mary's Justice and Peace group is trying to help all of us, in the church and in the parish, to focus on a few issues at a time, with a bit of awareness raising, a bit of prayerful support, and a bit of practical help.



We knew that two members of our congregation, Judith and Nigel Robinson, collected old spectacles at their optometrists' practice in Monkseaton, but weren't really sure what it was all about.

Judith told us: "We have a link with a charity called Vision Aid Overseas. We collect unused spectacles and every now and then a box-load goes off to their offices in Crawley, for re-use in parts of the world where people desperately need spectacles but can't afford them."

All spectacles in good condition are potentially useful, but cases are too heavy to transport, and loose lenses are not usable. There are all sorts of good reasons why you should look out that old pair of specs you never use and pop them into Judith and Nigel at their practice, 64 Front Street, Monkseaton.



In July 2002, a Vision Aid Overseas team in Zambia came across a boy named Derek, who was attending a school for blind children at Ndola, 400 miles from his home.

An eye examination revealed that he would be able to see with the help of strong spectacles.

Fortunately, the team had an appropriate pair with them which gave Derek almost normal vision. He returned to live with his parents and brothers and went back to his local school. Most blind schools in Africa contain children who would not be there if they had spectacles.

Please drop off usable spectacles, either to the Robinsons, or to our Parish Office.

News from St Mary's

Health and Healing

On Sunday 18 October we'll be marking the feast of St Luke the Physician with a theme of health and healing at both our 8.00 am and 10.00 am Eucharist services. We hope, with the help of people from our congregation, to look at how Christian values influence and motivate health care – from the perspective of a health professional, a volunteer and a representative of all of us, that is, of people with healing powers. (Remember – healing and curing aren't necessarily the same thing.) At the same time, we'll be thinking about how our views of what makes for good health and health care contrast with the experience of people living in poorer countries.



Blessing the Communities of Northumberland

Our picture shows young people from St Mary's with others from around the diocese, at the diocesan youth camp held in Seahouses this summer. Some 90 teenagers and group leaders, including Val Cowan from St Mary's, took part in the event – called Staying Alive 09 - and all became involved in community projects in the surrounding villages. There was worship, a Christian rock band, lots of picnics and a grand water fight at the end. Safe to say that a good time was had by all!

Mexico mission

Fiona Tate recently visited Mexico with Youth for Christ, North-East, working with children and helping build a house for a family of four who were living in "a place the size of a garden shed". It was, she says, "the most amazing 10 days of my life."

Fiona is pictured with two children who attended a Christian "skate festival" – she helped out on the refreshments stall – and she says that not only did the trip change her life, she believes it changed the lives of those children whom the Youth for Christ team encountered.



"We were working for God, and although we can also work for God back here in England, I would still like to encourage anyone considering going out into the world to help disadvantaged people to get up and go. They can make such a difference."

Rotary Club gives top award to St Mary's man

Being a Christian entails being an active member of the community, and one of St Mary's members, Rotarian Richard Hart, has been honoured by the Rotary Club of Whitley Bay for "outstanding work" in establishing contacts with the voluntary sector in North Tyneside and beyond.

Richard (on the left in photo) has been presented with a 'Paul Harris Fellowship', an award created in memory of the founder of the Rotary movement, and the highest honour any Rotary Club can offer.

Richard, who has been Community Service Committee chairman for over four years, has helped the Rotary Club make substantial contributions to many organisations, including Whitley Bay Community Allotment Association, junior sporting clubs and teams, the North Tyneside Fostering Network, McMillan



Nurses Cancer Support, Whitley Bay Air Cadets, St Mark's Community Centre Shiremoor, Cullercoats Community Centre, North Tyneside Disability Forum, Washington Disabled Riding School, Moebius Syndrome Society, North Shields, and most recently, the purchase and presentation of a minibus to North Tyneside Mencap.

Our warmest congratulations go to Richard, and our thanks to Rotary for their many acts of support and friendship.

Money from mobiles

You've probably seen adverts about how your old mobile phone is worth money. Charities also realise the scrap value of phones, and we'd like you to think about giving your old mobile to Christian Aid, to help them fund work with the poorest people on the planet, much of it aimed at raising enough food to avoid starvation.

It's very easy – you can drop off a phone (not the charger and manual, just the phone) either at the parish office or at 129 Coffee Shop, Park View, Whitley Bay. We'll make sure they get to Christian Aid's regional office.

Calling all parents!

We've always got a pretty diverse range of activities for young people going on, and the young people aren't shy about telling us what they think, and how they'd like new or changed stuff. But what parents think is also important, and if you're a parent we'd be delighted to see you at a discussion about future activities and events. We'll meet in church at 7.30 pm on Thursday 8 October.

Churches get their act together

by Robin Greenwood (Chair) and Colin Raistrick (Secretary)

Whitley Bay and District Churches Together



You sometimes hear people saying: Why don't Christians all belong to the same church? How come there are so many different denominations?

Why can't they all get together?

The good news is that while Christians may differ in their ways of worship, we all know that we belong together and must act as one if we're to do God's work in the world.

In Whitley Bay some 20 churches from different traditions have been acting together for a very long time.

In the early 90's those churches created Churches Acting Together, which led to a



The Young People's Resource Centre in Oxford Street, Whitley Bay

project helping hundreds of homeless young people find somewhere to live. CAT (now under the management of DePaul UK) could count on skilled resources

to help troubled youngsters find their feet and turn their lives around.

Now the churches in Whitley Bay are once again asking: "How can we renew our

commitment to being good neighbours for others?"

One of the basic ideas of the Christian faith is to be there for people in their hour of need, just as God himself is. Jesus said: "Love your neighbour as much as you love yourself," and seeking out our needy neighbours is a constant task for Christian communities.

The Whitley Bay churches have found common ground in being open to children and young people, through church life itself, but also through local schools and among those who bring children for baptism. We're also concerned about the quality of life in Whitley Bay and our 'neighbours' in the two thirds world. Often these matters are left to just a few enthusiasts, or we end up with too many ideas to achieve anything.

Listening to God and world, and learning from one another in small groups may well be part of the next step that could include many. On 7 October we'll be spending the evening at the church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, West Monkseaton, praying and discerning where God may be leading. Do come along - we'd value your contribution.

Coming up...

September

Sat 26th	10 am – 1.30 pm	Autumn Fair
Sun 27th	10 am	Celebration of women's ministry, 15th Anniversary of Rev'd Eileen Noble's ordination as a priest. Preacher at 10.00 am: Ven Sheila Watson, Archdeacon of Canterbury

October

Sun 4th	5 pm	Whitley Bay Churches Together service at Whitley Bay Baptist Church (no evening service at St Mary's)
Wed 7th	7.30 pm	Open meeting of Whitley Bay Churches Together, at Immaculate Heart of Mary, West Monkseaton
Thur 8th	7.30 pm	Meeting of parents interested in young people's activities
Sun 11th	10 am	Harvest; All Age Worship where we will be thanking God for all the good things we have and learning more about a part of the world where Christians have helped a local community to overcome poverty
Sun 18th	8 & 10 am	Feast of St Luke (the physician) with a theme of health and healing
Sun 25th	8 & 10 am	Bible Sunday; Living in the certainty of God's Word – celebrating the Bible and what it means to Christians all over the world
	6 pm	Evening Service and retirement of Bishop Paul, Newcastle Cathedral (no evening service at St Mary's)

November

Sun 1st	4 pm	All Souls and All Saints. Tea and chat followed by service of remembrance for those who have died
Sun 8th		Remembrance Sunday

December

Sat 12th		Priory Singers, Handel's Messiah
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Prayer focus on Afghanistan

As British losses mount in Afghanistan, how best might we pray for the various parties caught up in the complex situation there? Please think about coming along to any or all of the following inter-denominational events to be held at St Mary's, to talk and pray together.

Thursday 8 October	7.30 pm
Thursday 15 October	2.30 pm
Tuesday 20 October	7.30 pm
Wednesday 28 October	10.15 am

Each session will last no longer than hour.



What St Mary's means to me

For over 40 years my family has celebrated baptisms, weddings and funerals here at St Mary's. The family is now widespread, but I'm still a regular worshipper with my husband, Don. Over the years we have made many friends in a congregation that is loving, warm and friendly.



I particularly enjoy the varied services. Some are small, intimate, quiet; others are run by groups leading thoughtful, different ways of worship; while other services are joyful with all kinds of music and singing. It is a thriving place as more of the laity are becoming involved in the running of the Church. As someone recently said, "It's not just what we get out of church, it is also what we put in".

St Mary's certainly has a 'buzz' about it, and I am happy and proud to be a Churchwarden in such a far-seeing church community at this exciting time.

Sylvia McDougale

My father taught me to pray as a boy. The Boys' Brigade introduced me to church. The baptism of our first child led to my being confirmed. Membership of a tiny rural church bound me into a group of Christians who depended on one another.

Upon returning to my native North-east, I disliked the large, modern St Mary's. Yet it suited me. I was fully engaged with work and family so being semi-detached kept me in touch with worship and fellow Christians without being too demanding.

But it's difficult to keep apart from welcoming people. I have found that the full acts of worship and celebration are balanced by small group learning and shared activities. These groups have helped me to make friends and learn about Christianity. Gradually, I have found my niche amongst others here who are curious about life, puzzled by our place in creation, bound up in the example of Jesus of



Stuart Hickson

Nazareth and who find hope, consolation and joy in the Spirit which leads us.

St Mary's is the place where I feel 'at home'. It's the place that holds special memories – family baptisms, confirmations, a funeral and two weddings. It's also the place where I can worship, pray, meet friends and enjoy the company of people of all ages - and where I now work as a Parish Administrator.



I first arrived at St Mary's in 1975 with a young family, and was welcomed straight away. Very soon I was helping with groups for young people including the traditional church youth club – though I seem to remember ours being not so traditional, with riotous games and lots of fun and laughter! Central to it all was the church and its Christian teaching, something that continues in the present and hopefully into the future.

Working in the Parish Office has been a great way of meeting new people and also a way of reaching out into the community. I look forward, in this time of change and redevelopment at St Mary's, to helping out in these exciting times.

Dot Clarke

St Mary's – at the Heart of Your Community

Church is at the heart of what we do at St Mary's, and these are our weekly services:

Day and time	Worship
Sunday 8.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 10.00am	Parish Communion with children's church and crèche, followed by breakfast
Sunday 6.00pm	Evening Prayer (Healing Service on 2nd Sunday of month)
Monday-Friday 9.00am	Morning Prayer
Tuesday & Wednesday 9.30am	Eucharist (Book of Common Prayer on Tuesday; coffee after service on Wednesday)

If any of the many other activities at St Mary's interest you, please ring the office, and we'll put you in touch with the right person:

- baptisms and weddings,
- Bible Study Groups,
- prayer cells,
- Mothers Union,
- choir singing,
- the Praise Band,
- Menzone (a group for men to share fellowship and to learn more about the faith),
- COGS (a young people's group offering the opportunity for teenagers to explore more deeply issues of faith and life),
- a lunch club,
- Badminton Club,
- Church Hall for group events or parties.

Family-friendly weddings for couples with children

The Church of England has produced new guidelines which merge the marriage service with thanksgiving for the gift of a child, or with baptism, and St Mary's welcomes couples who already have children, offering to make their combined wedding service a special occasion for all the family. We have already taken steps to encourage more couples — with or without children — to marry in church, making it easier for them to choose where they get married. The fees for a wedding or baptism remain the same: £254 costs for the marriage, £3.50 for a certificate, £36 for the banns and £12 for a baptism certificate, even if the two services are performed as one.



Canon Robin Greenwood, vicar of St Mary's

Information about all these activities is available from St Mary's Parish Office (open Mon – Fri 10.00am – 12.00 noon)

Telephone: (0191) 251 4216 (answerphone outside office hours).
Email: newsletter@stmarysm Monkseaton.org.uk
Web: www.stmarysm Monkseaton.co.uk

You'll find us at the junction of Clarendon Gardens and Davison Avenue, Whitley Bay.



st Mary

**THE VIRGIN
MONKSEATON**

AUTUMN FAIR

Claremont Gardens, Whitley Bay
10.00am to 1.30pm
Saturday 26th September 2009

Fantastic Raffle Prizes:
Linden Hall B&B
Whitley Bay Theatre Tickets
Food Hamper
Dinner for 2 at Picasso's
Family Portrait

**Admission only 50p
Children FREE**

Doors open 9.45am
Official opening 10.00am
See Whitley Bay Football
Club and FA Vase

Bouncy Castle • Photo Portraits
Face Painter • Competitions • Coconut Shy
Big Band Sounds • Lots of fun to be had...

Lots of Stalls...
Christmas Gifts
and Toiletries
Home Produce,
Cakes, Plants, Books
Toys, Nearly New
Jewellery, Tombola
Traidcraft
Tomorrow's Antiques
and lots more...

REFRESHMENTS
Morning Coffee
Freshly made lunches
Italian Ice Cream

FREE Prize Draw - Bring this with you!

Name:.....

Address:.....

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Telephone:.....

