



good St Mary's/news

Easter 2013

Vicars come and go

Rev'd Canon Robin Greenwood, Vicar of St Mary's, looks ahead to his retirement in May and expresses his hopes for the future at St Mary's.

In February 2013 Justin Welby was elected 105th Archbishop of Canterbury. A great honour and an impossible burden. As I get older, I see that in whatever roles we are proud to occupy, in work or society, we make our contribution and then move on. Closer to home, observers of St Mary's Church Monkseaton will know that we aim to be a Christian community in which the Vicar is both important and not important.

Yes, the Vicar sets a tone, encourages the entire congregation into a deepening Christian journey, supports people in their tasks, reminds everyone of our connection to the entire parish and is a tangible link between this church and the wider church. But also, all the baptized people are called to experience God's love and to be church together, often in untidy, chaotic ways and always facing outwards, never content with what we did yesterday.

I vividly remember arriving here in 2005 full of hopes and ideas. Seven and a half years later, I'm looking towards my final service at St Mary's – to which all are welcome – at **10.00 am on Trinity Sunday, 26 May**. I'm almost preparing for the close of almost 43 years of ordained ministry which have taken me to parishes, cathedrals, diocesan advisory roles and many parts of the world church. Although I'm 'retiring' from a public role, the Holy Spirit



will open new doors of which I'm not yet even aware. An essential part of my work over the years has been writing books to encourage and challenge churches. I'm sure that in some form I will continue writing.

As I reflect on my time at St Mary's, my hope for the future of this vibrant church is the continued journeying in Christian faith that I have watched over and encouraged as vicar. I will know that I have made a significant contribution here if God continues to be spoken of without embarrassment, worship and prayer in many forms remain central, new disciples are drawn in through hospitality and care, all ages and parts of society are evident, the congregation is able to disagree within the maturity of Christian courtesy and it is plain to all that nothing happens in Monkseaton and the world in general that's without concern to the people of St Mary's.

Robin, Vicar of St Mary's

You'll be very welcome to come and join our worship and see Robin before he retires! See page 5 for our Easter services.

Working with homeless young people and DePaul UK



The churches of Whitley Bay have been working with homeless young people for nearly 20 years. It's a complex business, since finding somewhere to live is only part of what most young people need if they're to unravel and get control of what can be a daunting package of issues which pushed them into homelessness in the first place. The original work of Churches Acting Together is now managed by De Paul UK, a national Christian charity with wide experience of managing and raising funds for homelessness projects. They operate from the Young People's Resource Centre, in the former Oxford Street Methodist Church, Whitley Bay.

But there's still a place for churches to help. Here, two members of the St Mary's community write about their experiences.

You can find out more about the full range of DePaul's work, and how you might be able to help, from their website www.depauluk.org

Nightstop

I'd like to share with you my experience as a volunteer host for Nightstop, a service run by DePaul UK which offers a warm, safe place to stay the night to young people (16 to 25) facing a housing crisis. As a host I also provide an evening meal and breakfast, will wash and dry clothes and offer a listening ear if wanted. Hosts might be families or couples or people living on their own like me! A host is given introductory training sessions and is CRB checked. The young person's circumstances will also be checked by the DePaul workers at the Youth Resource Centre, who look into their situation and try to find more permanent accommodation for them.

I've found it most rewarding and interesting hosting young people who are in difficulties for a variety of reasons, often connected with family breakdown. Some have been 'sofa surfing' with friends and relatives, while others have slept out which put them at risk of attack and theft as well as being at the mercy of the elements. There are rules and responsibilities for both hosts and young people, which work well as you can tell from the fact that I have hosted 40 of these young people who have stayed over 100 nights with no trouble from any of them and only one I didn't enjoy hosting.

One lad had slept under a bridge, one girl

had slept out in Newcastle, another lad came along to our Jubilee street party. Some of the lads could eat you out of house and home, one girl would eat hardly anything, some need a quiet space in their own room, most like to watch the soaps on TV.

One lad chatted till midnight, others are quiet. Recently a girl who stayed with me was depressed and anxious and scared about having to sleep out. After a few nights staying with Nightstop hosts, the DePaul workers found her accommodation in a shared flat – she is now so happy and relieved and said she didn't know what she would have done without Nightstop.

It's really enjoyable and rewarding to be part of the process of helping these young people get their lives back on track again. I do hope others will consider volunteering and I would be happy to talk to anyone interested in Nightstop (ring the Parish Office on 0191 251 4216).

Hazel Howliston

Supported Lodgings Scheme



There's a Yiddish proverb 'Man plans, God laughs'. That's how it felt in 2001, when I was felled by pneumonia which triggered ME and I had to give up almost everything – relationship, job, career, social life. I even thought I'd lose the home around which I'd planned so much including the adoption of a child. Lying on the sofa, it was hard not to be scared or to trust that something positive would develop out of so much loss.

One day, however, a friend helped me to Whitley Bay Library where I spotted a flyer about the Supported Lodgings Scheme run by De Paul UK. This scheme offers homeless young people between 16 and 25 the chance to live in a safe, comfortable home for long enough (usually 12-18 months) to learn independence skills and be supported in education and/or training. One of the main aims is to prepare young people to live independently in their own home, after a period of continuing support from a De Paul worker.

The Scheme relies on a small group of people ('householders') who are willing to give young people the use of a spare room, time to listen to them, space to help them learn to cook and care for themselves and the capacity to keep an unobtrusive eye on how things are going generally. All of this is supported by a worker from De Paul who helps the young person set and monitor goals, and has regular meetings/phone calls with the householder, too.

To my surprise, De Paul reckoned my precarious health was no barrier to the role. I did their training and my first young person moved in early in 2009. Since then, six young people have stayed with me – some of them shorter term placements, some of them long. Each has been unique and challenging in his or her own way. Some have seemed more successful than others but, really, I never know what a young person has taken from their time in my home.

For my part, I aim to create a calm, peaceful place where she/he can relax and perhaps begin to get some perspective on the things that have happened in her/his life. Many of the young people haven't experienced an adult who is consistently interested in them and willing both to encourage and challenge them. It can take a while, but usually the young person responds very positively and begins to flourish.

I haven't enough space here to describe everything I get back from the young people, but I'll finish with a rather remarkable twist in this tale. You see, the first long-term young person who came to live with me has stayed on and, over the years, I have come to think of him as my son. So the plans I had to adopt weren't wasted, just transformed into something far richer and more fulfilling than I could ever have imagined. God is good.

"...usually the young person responds very positively and begins to flourish."

Clare Connors

MenZone

It's ten years now since St Mary's set up a men's group. The aim was to offer local men, irrespective of whether they had any connection with (or interest in!) St Mary's a chance to get together once a month. Interest was shown mainly by men who were retired or not working, and the model that evolved was a meeting at lunch time, to hear a speaker, and have a bite to eat and a chat. We'd consider evening events as well if there was enough interest.

In the mean time, we invite men of any age to come along and give us a try. There's no formal membership or subscription. You can come regularly or just now and again. We just ask you to pay for a buffet lunch.

If you'd like to come to any event you'll be very welcome. All we ask is that you give the Parish Office a ring the previous week so we can order the appropriate number of lunches (0191 251 4216)

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month, 12 noon at Whitley Bay Golf Club.

3 April	Denis Scadeng	The Irish & Yukon Gold Rush
1 May	Liz Hayes	Education in the 21st Century
5 June	Anthony Susman	Asperger's Syndrome & Spirituality
3 July	Dr Stan Chapman	Evangelism
4 Sept	Peter Sowerby Collective Legal Solutions	Tax, Care & Toy Boys
2 Oct	Fr Adrian Hughes	Ministry of Deliverance
6 Nov	Jeff Pickering & Michael Matthews	Art and Music Presentation The Four Seasons

Completing the refurbishment of the Church

With a new kitchen, toilets, boiler and heating system, St Mary's is well on the way to meeting the changing needs of a modern church.

The new heating system is doubly welcome – the warmth is obvious and we're expecting to save money too. The original boiler had been incredibly well looked after during 80 years of service, but old boilers simply aren't efficient. Less than half the £6,000 worth of gas burned each year was actually being converted into heat in church. Our new boilers (we have two as a safeguard against breakdown) are 95% heat-efficient. Several additional radiators allow us to 'turbo-charge' the heating – we can now warm up the church in one hour instead of three.

What does that leave to be done? New lighting and sound system, renewal of plaster work, redecoration, heat insulation, intruder alarm, some modernisation work (new flooring layout, new baptistery screen), at a further cost of £340,000. Of that we already have assets of nearly £75,000, church members and other friends have pledged a further £56,000 by April 2015, and we have a house we can sell. The shortfall is around £66,000.

Our aim is to complete all the remaining work in one go, in the middle of 2015. If you'd like to contribute to our fundraising, we would, of course, be delighted to hear from you.

Easter services

There are plenty of opportunities to accompany Jesus from his triumphal welcome into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, to the last supper on Maundy Thursday, his arrest and trial and his crucifixion on Good Friday, to his glorious resurrection from the dead on Easter Day.

Sunday 24 March: Palm Sunday

8.00 am Eucharist
10.00 am Eucharist & procession for Palm Sunday
6.00 pm Contemplative Prayer

Monday 25 March

7.30 pm Eucharist and address

Tuesday 26 March

7.30 pm Eucharist and address

Wednesday 27 March

9.30 am Eucharist and address
7.30 pm Eucharist and address

Thursday 28 March: Maundy Thursday

11.00 am Eucharist with renewal of discipleship and blessing of oils (at St Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle upon Tyne)
6.45 pm 'The Last Supper' followed by the watch until midnight

Friday 29 March: Good Friday

9.00 am The Communion of Good Friday
11.00 am All-ages worship for Good Friday
2.00 pm 'Love set free: thoughts from the foot of the Cross'

Saturday 30 March: Holy Saturday

9.30 am Remembering Jesus: a time of mourning

Sunday 31 March: Easter Sunday

Note: Clocks go forward one hour at 2am
5.30 am The Great Vigil of Easter
8.00 am Eucharist with hymns
10.00 am Eucharist followed by Easter Bonnet and Easter Egg Competitions

Sunday 28 April

3.00 'Fast forward to Easter': A family event of fun and worship for the Easter season

And after Easter ...

Sunday 19 May: Pentecost

8.00 am Eucharist
10.00 am Eucharist

Sunday 26 May: Trinity Sunday

10.00 am Robin's final service, followed by a shared lunch

You will be very welcome to come along to any or all of the following services.



The Flying Strouds

Like many church congregations, we're regularly asked to sponsor colleagues doing something a bit special to raise money for a cause close to their hearts. Here's one that deserves mention because it's so outrageous!

In April Alison Stroud and her mother, somewhere over Wiltshire, will be jumping out of an aeroplane to raise money for Parkinson's UK. Alison tells us that this Skydive, by mother and daughter with a total age of 130, involves falling out of a plane strapped to instructors for an exhilarating freefall after which the parachutes will be released and they will 'gently drift down to land'. Anyone interested in supporting this adventure can do so at www.justgiving.com/Dawn-Alison-Stroud

Snippets From The Liturgy

In this new feature we offer a glimpse of the extraordinarily rich and powerful language we use week by week in our church services.

'We have come together in this quiet space to reflect upon our lives in the light of the Gospel, and to deepen the affection and understanding we have for one another and for the whole world.'

From A Prayer of Preparation, The Eucharist

What St Mary's means to The Morgans...

Grace and Bryan

Our journey with St Mary's has been a long one, not always smooth but a place to find encouragement and support.

In 1967, we were married, moved to Whitley Bay and became communicants at St Mary's Church. However, at a low point in our lives when our twins were born 3 months prematurely, our son dying soon after birth and Sue losing her sight during the fight to survive, we faced many challenges. Unfortunately, our faith was not strong enough to help us face the future and we turned away from Church. We felt that we couldn't praise God when things went well and not show our anger when things went wrong. David Smith, our Vicar at that time, said, "You have left Church because of Sue and one day, I hope you return because of Sue". This is exactly what happened, when she was in the Brownie pack at St Mary's and took part in the Sunday morning service. We reflect on those words now, when we hear Sue playing the organ at our various Church Services.

Our three children were baptised at St Mary's and our younger son and his wife returned from the USA to have their marriage blessed there.

When we felt the desire to return regularly to Church, the door at St Mary's was still open for us, with a warm welcome when we stepped inside. It's a place where we can share friendship, enjoy social events, support

others, ask searching questions, talk about our beliefs and doubts, worship, spend time in quiet contemplation, ask for God's healing and be involved in the work and mission of the Church.

Now as members of Parochial Church Council, we feel we can give back some of the help we have received. St Mary's is a special place at the heart of our community, providing care, companionship and understanding for all. We are so grateful it kept its door open for us!

Sue

St Mary's Monkseaton has been part of my life 'for ever'. I was involved with the Church as a child, being a member of Brownies, then Jenny's Guides and for the past three and a half years, have been involved on the music side.

I love to see families involved so much in Church life as they are now. St Mary's is often buzzing on a Sunday morning after the ten o'clock service, which is brilliant and I welcome the opportunity to chat. This is a great way of being with friends and getting to know visitors and newcomers to our Church.

It is my great pleasure to play the organ at St Mary's, so please keep singing as you do now and joining in the sung responses.



Whitley Lodge Community Spirit

Many of you will have been at the Whitley Lodge Shopping Centre for the Christmas Tree lighting in November, braving the weather for our Christmas Fayre in December, or helping celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee last summer.

In order to encourage and develop this community spirit, people representing Churches, businesses, and local residents have now formed themselves into a group called 'Whitley Lodge Community Spirit'. As a formal group we are able to set up a bank account, run a Christmas Raffle, and apply for external funds for our events.

Plans for 2013 include more events this summer and Christmas and the establishment of a website. The group is always looking for new members—businesses, organisations, or individuals – to get involved in any way they can. If you'd like to know more please contact our Curate, The Rev'd Benjamin Carter, Chair of Whitley Lodge Community Spirit, at stmaryscurate@gmail.com or through the Parish Office.



From Mark at Cruz Hair

As a hair salon owner in the Whitley Lodge Centre for the past 23 years, it's wonderful to see the community working together in supporting local events which give a fantastic atmosphere to work in and socialise around. A few traders and residents have tried to get something like The Community Spirit up and running before without much success. It's fantastic now that this has come together and for us to be involved in the events so far. No matter how big or small our part we look forward to helping with each event.

Hopefully with everyone's support The Whitley Lodge Community Spirit will go from strength to strength - all the best for the future.
The team at Cruz.

From John at the Treehouse

At The Treehouse we have found it really encouraging that so many local shop owners and residents are happy to spend their own time trying to rejuvenate Whitley Lodge and provide something for the local community to focus on. At all the events we've been involved in we have been taken aback with the fantastic support we've received from the residents of Whitley Lodge. To have over 1,500 people turn up for the Jubilee event was truly phenomenal and made us all realise the potential support there is for more events. With the support we've had we can look at providing bigger and better events in the future.

'Bite back at hunger' Christian Aid Week, 12-18 May 2013

In the run-up to Christian Aid week (12-18 May) a volunteer from St Mary's or another of the Whitley Bay churches will pop a red Christian Aid envelope through your letter box. Then we'll call to collect the envelope, in the hope that you'll have filled it with a generous donation! All the money we collect goes to Christian Aid to help pay for their work round the world to 'bite back at hunger' through their world-wide programme of brilliant projects, in partnership with trusted local agencies. The aim is to help communities find ways not only to survive but to thrive, with enough food to eat not just today but tomorrow.

Last year St Mary's volunteers visited 53 streets, and collected a total of £3,203.95, not including Gift Aid.

So why should you part with any of your precious cash in the difficult times we're living through? The awful truth is that even though there is enough food in the world to feed everyone, an estimated 870 million people will go to bed hungry tonight – that's one in eight

of the world's population. We know from our own everyday experience that food prices are at a historic high and set to rise further.

Bad news for us, but it's poor people who will be hit hardest, all round the world.

Will you please help 'bite back at hunger'? Please put some money in the envelope – and be as generous as you can. If you're a taxpayer, please complete the Gift Aid section of the envelope.

If you'd like to hear more about what Christian Aid does with the money you give, why not come along to a service at St Mary's, hosted

on behalf of the Whitley Bay churches to launch Christian Aid Week? It's at 3.00 pm on Sunday 12 May.

There'll also be a Christian Aid Week Coffee Morning which we're running jointly with St John's Methodist Church in their Church Hall, Ilfracombe Gardens, Whitley Bay, starting at 10.00 am on Saturday 18 May.



Our weekly services

Sunday: Eucharist 8am and 10am; Evening Prayer (Healing Service on 2nd Sunday of month) 6pm

Monday – Friday: Morning Prayer 9am

Wednesday: Eucharist 9.30am (Book of Common Prayer, first Wednesday of the month)

Each week's services are shown on the parish website.

www.stmarysm Monkseaton.co.uk

St Mary's parish office is open, Monday – Friday 10am - 12 noon.

Tel: 0191 251 4216

Email: newsletter@stmarysm Monkseaton.org.uk

We're at the junction of Claremont Gardens and Davison Ave.

Registered Charity no. 1131532

You are always welcome!