



Keeping in touch



St Hugh's Church Gosforth

Welcome

As we emerge from 'lockdown', many of us are still trying to get to grips with the 'new normal'.

It has been a frightening time. Many have felt isolated, especially when shielding means a simple trip to the shops, a walk or coffee with friends have suddenly become impossible. Others have faced challenges such as home working—or not having a job—working on the front line and home schooling.

We hope this newsletter will be a means of helping the people of St Hugh's and All Saints' keep in touch with each other as we get through the challenges of the next weeks and months. We hope that it will provide a bit of light entertainment as well as a means of sharing your news, how you have been dealing with the challenges, sharing photographs and generally keeping in touch. Have you learnt new skills, how have you fared if you don't use IT to link with other people, how is your garden looking?

We aim to publish at least monthly, more often if we have the contributions, so please do get writing.

If you would like to contribute to the next edition please email us at Allsaintsintouch@outlook.com, hand your article to one of us or post it to the Parish office. It is recommended that articles should be no more than about **400-500** words long.

We look forward to hearing from you.

**Christine Willoughby, Dermot Killingley,
Lesley Atkinson**

Looking Back and Inching? Forward

Looking back over previous months I have aimed to keep things simple and sustainable. Our church services have been mostly pre-recorded but more recently it has been necessary to experiment with livestreaming. During the lockdown period, attempts at maintaining services online rapidly developed. Firstly the 'Cast Box' app was tried and then this swiftly moved on to YouTube. In April, when even I was not allowed to go into church, the Eucharist was filmed at the vicarage. There were many frustrations – not only was



Preparing for the first Eucharist after lockdown 1st August.
Picture Enid Mitchell

grappling with the demands of filming and recording a challenge (with basic equipment) but also immense elation when something finally worked – progress! It was Beverley who created weekly power point presentations (incorporating Bible readings, prayers, addresses and music) for the 40 minute services appearing on our website. I have been so grateful to Diana Lavin for her work on preludes, postludes and hymns in these services and also very thankful for the help of Peter Mitchell in making the Sunday evening prayer services consistently accessible and

Church contacts

Vicar: Andrew Shipton 2845540
andrew.shipton@allsaints-gosforth.org.uk

Assistant Curate: Beverley Davies
07989145610 bev.davies@allsaints-gosforth.org.uk

Assistant Priest: Ruth Birnie 2841393
ruth.birnie@allsaints-gosforth.org.uk

Parish Office: West Avenue, Gosforth,
NE3 4ES

now making livestream services available on Facebook. (Louise Waugh and Tricia Maylia have been a great miss since they joined the government furlough scheme at the end of April; Louise's absence directly resulted in Beverley and myself absorbing extra administrative tasks.)

Countless new ideas have been tried which, as you'd expect, produced mixed responses, for example, reaching out to dozens of young families with an electronic Easter activity Card. There followed a limerick competition, quizzes and an overwhelming response to the request for photos of beautiful spring flowers. A 'Tik Tok' competition was offered to our teenagers, and who can forget the poem 'Coronavirus Spring' by Dermot Killingley that featured on our website?

Sadly, we have conducted a number of funerals (10) some of which were Covid-related. Many weddings have been postponed, as have baptisms. Memorial Services previously arranged for the autumn are now unfortunately being delayed until next year.

I have been conscious that there are many of us who have neither the access nor the confidence to engage with technology and so have felt cut off. Many letters were sent and phone calls made to the St Hugh's congregation. Although no real substitute for actually being together, the ZOOM platform has afforded many opportunities for conversation, sharing and being able to see each other such as at parish breakfast, morning coffee events, at the 'Just Sing' sessions on Friday morning, in a study group, and for the young people in their 'Evolution' sessions.

So, apart from regular and more centralised activities, there has been much effort made to keep in touch and to help stay engaged with as many as possible. Ruth, Beverley and I have a long list of people we have regularly attempted to phone. Weekday afternoon phone sessions have been offered to those of us feeling lonely and in need of practical help. Members of All Saints' have actively supported members of St Hugh's. In June, when restrictions were first lifted, great effort went into being ready for the opening of the Church (initially just for private prayer) and even more preparation was necessary for our first public service on July 12, the first since March. My thanks go to Ros Place, Paul Wilkinson and Charlie Mussett for their meticulous work.

Much time has been spent investigating the best equipment for live streaming with several

companies being approached and quotes obtained for our specific requirements. The PCC recently agreed that streaming is now a priority. Our recent experience has led to a review of our internal and external communications and question how a wider range of music and a greater variety of services can be incorporated into our worshipping life as we move forward. The experience of 'lockdown' has brought home to me the importance of being adaptable, improvisatory and agile as we look to the future.

Andrew Shipton

Surviving Lockdown

Suddenly in mid-march everyone found themselves with all their activities being cancelled and their worlds shrinking, which was all quite scary. Discussions with friends revolved around how to get through each day and the consensus seemed to be to establish a routine. In the Willoughby household we came up with:

- An early walk—usually calling in at one of the local shops where distancing was easy. We also felt privileged to have the Town Moor near at hand



Even the cows on the Moor were distancing!

- Jobs, especially gardening—it has never looked so good!
- Lunch
- Jobs again and phone calls to friends
- Watching Pointless before dinner
- Board game before bedtime

Looking back the days have become a blur, but it was definitely wonderful friends- and local traders- who got us through. Oh and the coffee kiosk we discovered in Gosforth Central Park, who stayed open even when everywhere else was closing down and despite early hassle from Police.

Thank you all.

Christine Willoughby

It isn't all bad - is it?

Our young people were asked to share their views on lockdown.

Here are some of their **best things** and **worst things** about the past six months:

Kallum: **best thing** *more sleep!*
worst thing *all my activities stopping.*

Sophie (aged 8yrs): **best thing** *spending time with family and more time to play*
worst thing *not being able to see friends*

Elli (aged 3yrs): **best thing** *our (family) hamster*
worst thing *the rubbish in the bin* (says Elli, laughing)

What are your best/worst memories? Please let us know.

Banned songs?

Now that Social Distancing is on everybody's lips it is maybe time to revisit the words of a few old favourites:

- I want to hold your hand should maybe become 'You want to scrub those hands...'
- 'I would walk 500 miles'... but depending what your plans are when you get there!
- 'Lets spend the night together' ..but only if you are in my bubble!



Say cheese

Which cheese do you use to coax a bear out of a tree? **A: Camembert**

How do you handle angry Welsh cheese? **A: Caerphilly**

What cheese would you use to disguise a horse? **A: Mascarpone**

What did the cheese say when it looked in the mirror? **A: Halloumi !**

Haiku

Haiku is a form of poetry which originated in Japan. It uses very few words to try to talk about a subject and paint a clear picture for the reader, through three short lines which leave a strong impression. Church members have been using Haiku as a means of capturing their thoughts of lockdown. More next time.

Twenty twenty one
Lockdown coming home to roost
Newborns named Covid.

Enid Mitchell

Worshipping in lockdown

No church on Sunday! My initial reaction was panic. Then gradually new opportunities opened up. I found myself sitting in a supermarket car park on Maundy Thursday joining a clergy friend 300 miles away in her Maundy Thursday meditation—the first time I had shared worship with her since her days at theological college 40 years ago, an amazing and warming experience.

On Good Friday I joined Bishop Christine and others, before establishing my Sunday morning routine at home with our own clergy. Sharing services in their living rooms and seeing the pictures of their local areas made the services more intimate with a feeling of all being in strange times together. Another clergy friend in Dorset was able to join in too, keeping us in touch in a completely different way.

Thanks go to everyone involved in keeping services going and discovering new ways of reaching out to us. The first week back in church was still a wonderful experience!

Christine Willoughby

To ZOOM or not to ZOOM....

That indeed was the question. It was mid-March and the government had decreed that we must stay at home for the foreseeable future and stop the activities we loved. All live music came to a halt and choirs and orchestras were denied the chance to practise together. What were we all going to do with our time?

Then Zoom was discovered as a means to get a lot of people together at once so that they could see each other. Of course, many people in the world of business were used to holding conference calls and were familiar with Zoom and the many other similar platforms. The Sage Gateshead Chamber Choir of which I am a member, ever up for a challenge, musical or otherwise decided to have a go. With a gulp, I set about downloading Zoom and trying to navigate my way around it, intrepid explorer that I am (!!). The first night I started half an hour before the meeting was due to begin and fumbled my way round the site. I finally arrived at the moment of truth, and, lo and behold, there were my fellow choristers looking as delighted as I was. Some were decidedly fuzzy, others were upside down, some were wildly gesticulating but unable to be heard, while others could be heard but not seen. Finally everyone was more or less visible and more or less audible and we were ready to start singing.

"Let's start with something simple - Tallis's 'If ye love me'. Off we go. One, two three four....." Three bars in and the looks of horror on all the faces said it all. No one had realised that everyone's broadband speed was different and the time delays were significant. Poor Thomas Tallis must have been spinning (or zooming?) round in his grave at the travesty of his sublime music.

After the fiasco of that first rehearsal we managed to find a way of singing which, though we could not hear each other, at least kept our voices in trim, ready for the glorious day when we can at last sing together as a choir. Each week we have a "fun" theme. We all wear the same colour, or sport a feather, a scarf, a leaf, fancy earrings (the men came up with some interesting ideas here), or even a moustache (the ladies loved this one!).

Zoom has now become a part of my weekly routine with many other activities, musical and social. So the answer to the question " To Zoom or not to Zoom" has been a resounding "YES".

Enid Mitchell

Just sing

A few weeks into lockdown Diana Lavin introduced ZOOM singing sessions on a Friday morning open to anyone who fancied a good sing!

I appreciated attending these and only missed one or two, fortunately. It was not singing as we all knew it, as we learned melodies and then, with our own sound and video off, sang separately, following the lead on the piano or keyboards.

What has made it amazing for me is to benefit from someone's musical lifetime's interest and passion to dip into many different great and varied songs from the past. Diana seems to have a bottomless store she can draw on – come and listen, she can't stop herself, who sang the original, when, who also did a version and the film it got sung in.....

We have been sent lyrics and YouTube links – but not any old links, very good versions which I find important as often they can be disappointing. Having danced to songs only knowing a single line of the words it's been a revelation to me realising what they were about – for instance 'I'm Still Standing'! it was great to have Thomas Moorin join us after his degree in contemporary music and he has also brought a whole new range & style. Thank you both!

Ros Place

If you are wondering whether singing-via-zoom is for you, please give it a go!! At first I thought, Oh, NO WAY!!! I couldn't possibly - I can't sing for one - however we turn mics & cameras off, so nobody knows if you're off-key, lyrics all wrong, making faces, dancing about etc. It's been uplifting, liberating, actually a weekly **highlight**, and not just in socially-distanced times... Diana, I would be happy to pay for this kind of experience if it were to continue!

Dawn Yeamans



Self isolating in Gosforth Central Park.

First Walk

(Rev..Malcolm Jones visits us from time to time to update us on his charity PCDC. Here he tells us about his experience emerging from Shielding for the first time.)

Jennie and I reckon we are among the luckiest people really. Because although we locked down before it became mandatory, and although we are classed as “extremely vulnerable”, we have this amazing view from our house.

Every morning we can look out of our bedroom window over two meadows where the foxes and the roe deer are frequently seen, the River Tyne, Wylam and Crawcrook and the woods beyond. Very tempting.

On 1st June we finally got permission to go out for a walk, but I am only allowed out with my carer! Jennie and I went first to the country south of Prudhoe. We walked through a couple of fields—oh the freedom, the smell of the grass and flowers! Up through two fields and over a stile and into the long line of trees. Beyond here, where a tractor driver gave us a cheerful wave as he spread some muck for a new hay crop, we dropped down into a valley.

We got stuck in a farmyard, not seeing where the path went. But a young man from the farm came and rescued us, and showed us where the stile was, hidden in some undergrowth. He was so helpful and polite. He warned us that some dodgy swampy ground lay ahead. Also he warned of an electric fence he had had to put up across the path to keep his cattle in. (Jennie hates cattle on a walk).

Down the hill we soon found the dodgy ground. The cows came to meet us. Jennie kept well back.

We came to the electric fence. Usually I use my ordnance survey map to use as a barrier to cross these fences. But Jennie preferred to crawl underneath. The farmer had showed us how to disconnect the electricity. But of course we knew we didn't need to do that! So we didn't. Half way through, Jennie got a fit of the giggles, and started bouncing up and down a bit so she almost touched the cable. I lifted the cable with my ordnance survey map, and gave Jennie a gentle shove with one boot so that she emerged unscathed beyond the pesky fence and tripped into a damp puddle. I could hear the cows laughing at us.

We relaxed into the buttercups and grass and lay listening to the skylarks. What freedom!! Then into a wonderful woodland. Bluebells and wild garlic were still just about out. Yellow pimpernels shone out from their creeping position on the ground. The canopy of trees

was full of birdsong. We could identify song thrush, chiffchaff, wood warblers, blackbirds, and many others in the music of the trees.

Back across the brook in the woods and up the hill again to exit this hidden valley and return to our car. On the top of the hill we could see 55 miles up to the Cheviots. There was Simonside, and beyond it the Cheviot's broad shoulder (happy memories of many climbs up to the summit, including a night spent on the top). There was Dunmoor Hill next to it and Hedgehope too. So many old friends among the hilltops of the Border country.

Before we left our hilltop, we came across some magnificent elder bushes, simply laden



with frothy elderflowers. We picked 30 or so blooms to make into elderflower cordial, which we drink all the time at home. (Can't wait to try this year's brew!). And so back to our car.

We are so lucky. Even in lockdown we can see 32 miles from our bedroom window, to just short of Allendale. And it is all free to enjoy. And we can start from our front door! Now for a glass of wine to celebrate.

CHEERS!!

Malcolm Jones

Places to Visit as Lockdown Eases

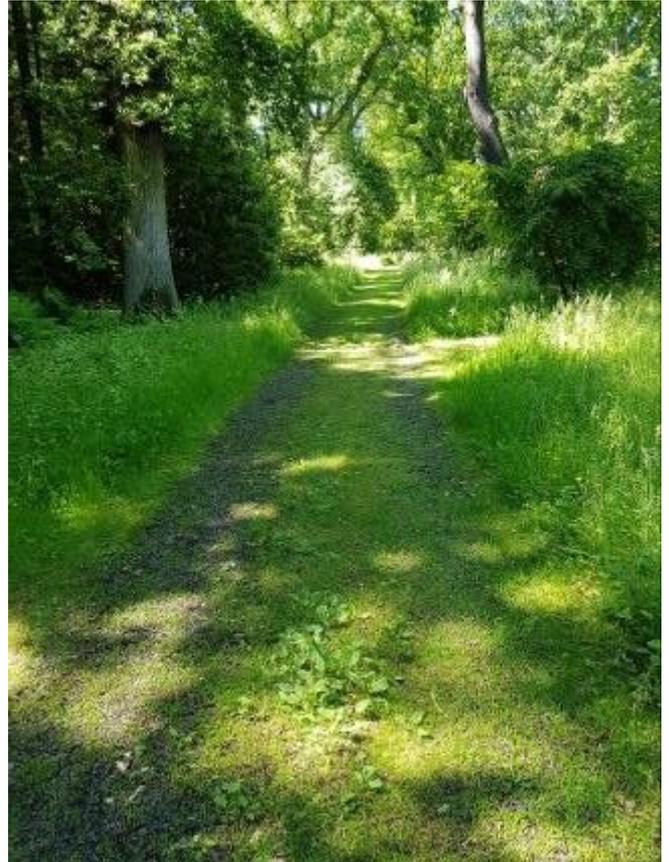


I am not sure how far some of you are travelling, but as lockdown eases, we have been looking for attractive places to visit for walks, but where we can feel safe. We have been to Gibside, Wallington, and Winlaton Mill on the Derwent Walk. The first two are National Trust properties, and you have to apply on-line for limited ticket access to the grounds. To reserve a timed slot you may have to book your space on a Friday for the following week, such is the demand, but they are extremely well organised and queues for toilets and the limited refreshment facilities are superbly managed! It feels very safe. None of these walks are particularly adventurous, but they have got us out of the house and it had been lovely to go somewhere different.

We have also been to Howick Hall, near Craster (pictured above). I hadn't been there for years, and on a warm day, wandering on paths, through leafy glades was gorgeous. Here you can walk down to the shore, should you wish, or just sit and listen to the Stamford Burn. The trees in the arboretum were really

beautiful and provided shade on a very warm day and the new autism garden was beautiful. It was easy to distance from the few people we saw - and the toilets were open!

Jeremy Willoughby



Have you been anywhere you can recommend since lockdown—maybe where you can keep a distance from others/ where toilet facilities are well thought out? Have you been for a coffee yet, or even a meal out? How did it feel?

Stop press?

'BBC News'

Next week's leaked COVID guidance.

You can't meet with another person from outside your family with an A or an R in their name unless it's a Wednesday. Family members are OK unless it's the third Monday after pancake Tuesday.

People under 5 ft 11 aren't allowed to go to a pub unless they have brown hair.

Cat owners are exempt from the above unless the cat is ginger. Obviously.

Can you identify these pictures?



All are taken on Andrew's walks around All Saints' parish. Answers next time. Andrew's next walk will be around St Hugh's parish.