

Keeping
in
Touch

All Saints
Gosforth



St Hugh's Church, Gosforth

17th April 2022

Happy Easter!

From the Vicar

Dear All,

Easter is the greatest celebration in the Christian calendar, but how do we rejoice this year with unspeakable cruelty and destruction taking place in Ukraine? This time must seem to thousands like a perpetual Good Friday. Millions have had their lives turned upside down, dreams shattered and worse. Can there be hope for those who were simply getting on with their lives and could never imagine the horror of what was to come at the beginning of the year? We Christians would want to say there is hope, but the future is still going to be very difficult.

Reading through the Gospel accounts, I see that Easter doesn't hide from the hard realities of Good Friday, but witnesses to God mysteriously bringing life out of death, transforming darkness into light, turning fear into tomorrow's hope and longing. On Easter morning the news that God defeated the power of death took some time to "sink in". The first words to the women were "Do not be afraid," but there remained fear, for the disciples had been traumatised. The disciples were first hesitant to believe that Jesus had triumphed. They had to break bread with him, touch his body and share breakfast to gain confidence. They only gradually discovered that he keeps his promises. Hope began with that small group of women and men who had lived alongside Jesus and spread out to the corners of the known world.

It is wonderful that at least two members of our congregation are preparing to welcome Ukrainian refugees into their homes. This action is an embodiment of our Easter hope. Kindness, humanity and compassion do triumph over cruelty and destruction. Many

centuries ago, St Augustine of Hippo proclaimed: "We are an Easter people and Alleluia is our song!" That's a song we can own as we welcome, cater and befriend this Easter.

Andrew Shipton



Paul Wilkinson recently captured this delightful image of our cherry tree looking its best against the tower.



Christian Aid Week

15th - 21st May 2022

The combined effects of the Covid19 pandemic, conflict and drought have robbed many people of the power to provide for their children.

This year's Christian Aid Week campaign focuses on the story of Jessica, a mother living in Zimbabwe, who used to be able to provide for her family but now struggles to feed her children. But it is not only families in Zimbabwe who are in need. War in Ukraine will drive up food prices around the globe. Without fertiliser and foods like wheat and cooking oil that Ukraine and Russia produce, vulnerable families will be pushed even deeper into hunger.

Gifts made during Christian Aid Week could help farmers set up water taps on their farms and provide seeds that thrive in drought, so that people can grow their own food again, turning dry, dusty land into gardens of hope.

Every gift, every action, every prayer celebrates and shares hope with those facing crisis around the world from Ukraine to Zimbabwe.

All Saints' is a longstanding supporter of Christian Aid Week. Whilst recognising the generosity of our congregation towards many other urgent causes, we aim to support Christian Aid again this year. We do not plan any house-to-house collections but return-envelopes will be available in church, and we hope to set up an e-envelope for online donations. Details of this will appear in future weekly pew sheets.

Whilst fund-raising is of vital importance, other ways to support Christian Aid are also much appreciated. Prayer can be a powerful tool and daily devotionals will be available in church from the beginning of May.

Thank you for any support you can offer.

Our East Window



Photos: Emma Anderson

Part of the mullion framing our beautiful east window has been found to be damaged, probably as a result of recent storms — see the picture on the left above. We are urgently seeking to carry out emergency work to avoid any further damage to the stonework – or the stained glass. This will be undertaken over the next few days and will involve scaffolding support. We will then seek a permanent solution, as part of which we hope to clean the window, so that it will shine brighter in the future.

Paul Wilkinson, Christine Willoughby

Children and young people at All Saints'

On the next three pages we look at the various groups that cater for our younger members, from teenagers down to babies — some of them for their elders too..

There's Evolution on Tuesday evenings, the Sunday afternoon Faith@4 which Evolution launched last month, Young Saints during the Parish Communion service on Sundays, and Little Saints on Tuesday afternoons. And on page 6 you'll find that if you missed Cake and Nursery Rhymes last month, you can still enjoy an Easter Egg Hunt after the service on Easter Day, games on the green on 14th May, and more to come. And on page 7 there's news of Archbishop Runcie School.

Evolution

Evolution is All Saints' Youth Group, which meets every Tuesday evening during term time at 6pm. The group currently consists of children aged 8-13, and we include activities and discussions for everyone in this age group.

At Evolution, we have lots of fun playing games (which can get very competitive!), share our news of the week, and have conversations and thoughts about our faith. We are also really pleased to say that recently we have launched a new service called Faith@4, and we plan it and also lead the service in the Parish Centre. Each service has a theme and we really enjoy planning the crafts and activities that the congregation can take part in — oh, and there's always tea, coffee and cake! Please check the church website or newsletters for details of the next service!

New members are always welcome to join us. You don't need to book — just turn up on the night.

Beverley Davies



The Evolution Group

The Evolution group do so many fun activities that always include everyone.

They have leaders who provide the activities and sometimes join in with them.

They are based on a Tuesday evening at 6pm–7pm. In that hour, the young children are given different opportunities in games and can include their own ideas into them.

The children who come here come to let off some steam (in All Saints Church Hall) whilst getting to know other children in different age groups or their own.

This Evolution Group also like to think about God, and can sometimes even get to play a role in some of the Church Services.

Please come along and join us.

Daisy Bruce

Faith@4 service, 6th March

Faith@4 was a Sunday afternoon service run by some of the young people of All Saints'. Lockdown has changed peoples' lives so much, particularly for teenagers at a vulnerable stage of their social and spiritual development. This service enabled them to come together in a smaller safe environment to share their thoughts and ideas.

The whole afternoon was organised by themselves, with assistance from Beverley and Ros on the piano. They organised the projector and screen for the prayers and songs, and created bays for us to talk about faith through art and craft which is still displayed in the hall.

Bravely they each stood up and spoke about their experience of lockdown: not being able to go to school or see friends, and having to isolate from relatives in the same house. A very moving moment for everyone to listen to each others' experiences.

We finished with refreshments.

A very worthwhile event... hopefully leading to more in the future. Well done to everyone.

Helen Poole

More pictures on the next page



Two views of Faith@4. Photos by Shannon Sibbald



Young Saints

Have you ever wondered what the children get up to during their absence from the 9.30am Service each Sunday? They leave with their leaders, Ann, Felicity, Helen and Allison, shortly after the start of the service, then reappear forty minutes later; but what happens in between — and where?

When we were allowed back to church after lockdown, adults could worship indoors but children's worship was entirely outdoors. Imagine the challenge — “what if it rains?” and “what if it is freezing cold?” were only two of our initial concerns. As it turned out, the weather was generally benign, and it was quite easy to put together a box of outdoor resources to use on the church green or in the garden.

We have been back in the Centre during recent winter months, but it is good to again have the choice of indoor or outdoor worship.

Our children's worship is usually based on one of the lectionary readings which adults hear in the main service. Leaders have access

to Roots, a resource to help prepare teaching and activities, but each leader has their own style and adapts the material in their own way. If we feel that a particular theme might be inappropriate, or if a relevant annual event is happening, such as Fairtrade Week, leaders will plan sessions accordingly. The stories might change, but the themes of sharing, kindness, caring and being a good neighbour underly just about everything.

Sessions vary, but generally include an introduction to the theme, the Gospel (or other reading), discussion, activities and prayer. The Gospel can be presented in a variety of ways — it could be a simple story for the youngest children, a reading from the Bible for older ones, or a dramatised version, to name but a few. Discussion is intended to tease out the meaning of the reading and its relevance for today. Whilst we want children to know the stories from the Old and New Testaments, we want them to understand how the Bible relates to us, what it demands of us here and now, and how they can respond in their day-to-day lives. Activities often include games or tasks which help to teach or practise one of the week's themes — and chocolate is often involved!

You might have seen the children return to church carrying “something to show”. This is not just to prove that we have actually done something over in the hall, but also to involve them as a part of our church worship — and for the adult congregation it is a delight to share in the children's learning! Their presence is a joy!

It also means the children can take home a reminder of what they have learned that morning. Teachers among you will be familiar with children knowing their “learning targets”. We don't formally refer to “targets”, but hope that the crafts act as a discussion point at home; a prompt for families to remind children of their time with Young Saints.

You might remember a time when we had three age groups each week: 3-5 years, 6-9 years, and over 9s. Numbers currently mean that children worship together in one group, but we are keen to create different age groups so that activities can be more age-appropriate.

We welcome children of all ages, with no lower age limit. We try to arrange a leader and a helper, both with a DBS, for each week, so that parents or carers can remain in church whilst their children are left in safe care.

However, we expect children under three years to come along with their adult, and we do understand that some older children might need bring their adult for a little longer, until they feel sufficiently confident for their adult to stay in church.

If you would like your children to be more involved in church life, do come along to experience what we do. If you would like to be more involved yourself, we always need more volunteer helpers; you would need a DBS check but this is now a quick and simple procedure. For further information, please speak with Lesley Atkinson, Ann Cross, Felicity Shoesmith or Helen Langley on Sunday morning, or contact the church office.

Lesley Atkinson



A quiet moment at Little Saints

Little Saints

Tuesday afternoons are Toddler afternoons in the All Saints' Centre — though toddlers are expected to bring an adult with them.

Little Saints is a drop-in group, open to all pre-school children, 0-5 years, and their carers, from 1.00pm until 2.30pm each Tuesday afternoon during term time.

We experimented with holding a session during February half-term when older siblings could come along with their younger brothers and sisters; this seemed to work well, so it will be repeated during future school holidays.

The sessions are intended to provide young families with opportunities for their children to engage in fun, age-appropriate play activities alongside other children, whilst their carers revisit some adult company — often lacking during a day at home with a toddler!

The hall in the All Saints' Centre, where the group meets, provides an ideal space for a

range of activities. Children can move freely between: building with Lego and other construction toys; cooking and shopping in the "home" area; riding on one of the small wheeled toys; sliding down the mini-slides; steering cars around the garage; being creative with play-dough and the craft for the day; and sharing a quiet book.

There is a large soft mat for the very youngest children to sit or crawl on, though they are by no means restricted to the "baby" area. Free play is enjoyed for the first hour, then all is tidied away in time for a (healthy) snack for the children, whilst adults can indulge in coffee and cake.

For the final fifteen minutes, the children take turns to choose songs and develop their percussion skills before we say "goodbye" in time for them to collect any older siblings from school.

If you have a pre-school child, or know of anyone looking for a pre-school afternoon group, do visit us. Children bring along a range of different carers: Mums, Dads, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Childminders — all are welcome. The cost is £2.50 for each first child and £1.00 for additional children in the same family group. For children under 6 months it is £1.00.

The group is maintained by some fantastic volunteers. If you have any spare time on a Tuesday afternoon and would like to join a rota to help with snack time or clearing away toys, even on an occasional basis, we would love to hear from you.

Lesley Atkinson



Everyone busy at Little Saints

Photos by Lesley Atkinson

Cake and Nursery Rhymes

On a sunny Saturday afternoon in March, a lively group of under-5s joined their Mums, Dads and Grannies for a good old singalong in the church Centre.



This happy event, made happier by home-made cakes and buns, was the first in a series of monthly weekend activities organised by the newly-formed All Saints' renewal and funding group.

With Diana and Dorothy leading the nursery rhymes, and a good number of helpers engaging with the youngsters, it was difficult to work out who was enjoying the afternoon most, the adults or the children!



Aimed at attracting All Saints' worshippers, existing church centre community groups and the local neighbourhood, the session was all part of the church's vision to strengthen its local engagement by nurturing family activities and making the best of its wonderful facilities.

Cake and Nursery Rhymes was a great success!

Please spread the word and join us for the next event on Easter Day (see below).

Announcing new activities for the young and not so young ones!

Easter Sunday April 17 from 10:45-11:45:

Easter Egg Hunt, Bonnet Parade and craft fun—see below.

Saturday May 14 from 3:30-4:30:

*Ball games on the Green
(for all generations).*

Other events in the making for the next few months are: **A Teddy Bears' Picnic, A Tea-Party to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and Games my Grandparents Played.**

Just come along and have some fun!

Felicity and Mike Shoesmith



School Report: Archbishop Runcie First School

Nursery are excited for Easter and have been learning all about Spring and new life. We began our journey to Easter by making pancakes for Shrove Tuesday, and then discussed the promises we would make for Lent.

We talked about what we could do to make someone smile during Lent, and each made a lenten promise. We went on a walk to look for signs of new life, and discovered many things beginning to grow. We planted some seeds, and we can't wait to watch our seeds begin to grow!

Reception have been looking at how Christians prepare for Easter, and have been learning about what hot cross buns represent, and have enjoyed eating them!

They have been looking at how the world changes during spring, and they know that spring is a happy time of year for many people. Reception have also been learning about a cheeky little rabbit called Peter, and have been writing brilliant letters from Peter Rabbit to Mr McGregor, and learning about different animals that feature in Beatrix Potter stories.

Alex Davison



A Welcome for Ukranian Refugees

Dorothy Henderson and my family are both taking part in the Homes for Ukraine programme, sponsoring people from Ukraine who have had to leave their homes due to the war.

We will each be hosting a retired couple and helping them all to settle in to our community by helping them register for healthcare and benefits, showing them how to navigate our local transport system, and helping them with their English. At the moment we are stuck in the frustrating visa process but we hope they will all arrive within the next few weeks.

I'm sure few of us can truly imagine the devastation of having to flee your home and country under such harrowing circumstances, and so we seek to welcome them to safety whilst preserving their dignity and respecting their privacy, as they begin to come to terms with what has happened and settle into their new homes.

If anyone is planning to, or wondering about, doing the same I would be very happy to discuss my (limited!) experience so far. I read recently that we should be mindful that we are offering our guests a seat at our table, not to gather the crumbs from underneath it, and that phrase has stuck with me. With that in mind, if anyone wishes to offer practical help towards the costs of hosting, we are collecting donations of either new items or money towards things we require for our guests. The list can be found in the pew sheet or by contacting Dorothy.

Hannah Marshall

More about Ukrainian refugees on the next page



Quiz night success



The recent quiz night organised by Tyneside Welcomes in conjunction with All Saints' was a great success and raised over £1,100. Visitors reported that they had had a very enjoyable evening.

In addition, a number of new volunteers came forward, and we are excited that we now have enough people to put a volunteer team together.



Our next step is to firm up roles within the team, and then we can start putting together our application.

Thank you to everyone for your support.

Hannah Marshall and Andrew Cole



Supporting Ukraine

We recently appealed for items which could assist refugees arriving at border posts in Eastern Europe. The response was overwhelming! After two weeks we were told that the distribution centre was reaching saturation point, such that no further donations could be received.

However we will continue to review how we can assist with this humanitarian venture in future, including ways in which we might support the refugees as they arrive in this country.

Thank you to all those who donated so generously.



Andrew's car, fully loaded for delivery to the depot.

From the Registers

All Saints'

Baptisms:

20th March: Joseph Peter Christopher Stoddart

Funerals

25th March: Maria Bolland (died 1st March, aged 70)

25th March: Jean Sim (died 5th February)

26th March: Shirlie Wilkie (died 15th March, aged 89)

11th April: Frances Hagon Hancock (died 28th March, aged 94)

Burial of Ashes

12th April: Eric and Eleanor Aylen

St Hugh's

Funeral

1st April: Margaret Thompson (died 11th March, aged 93)

New website

A small group of us are currently working with a web designer to redesign our website.

We hope this will be much more visual, showing images of All Saints at worship and in our community and promoting our activities. Most of all, we hope to create a simpler link to our online worship and make it easier to search for information about the many things that are happening at All Saints.

We hope to have the new site up and running by the end of May, but to make it work we will also need to update our content. So if you run a group or an activity we will be approaching you over the next few weeks for up-to-date information — and maybe some photographs — about your activity or group.

We look forward to working with you.

The web team

Church contacts

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Easter weekend 2022

Good Friday 15th April

10.00am An informal service on the Green followed by hot cross buns

11.15am Act of Witness at Trinity Church

1-3pm Three Hours of Devotion led by Revd Christopher Wardale in the Centre

7.30pm *Jesus Christ Superstar* concert version in Church .

Holy Saturday 16th April

8.00pm Easter Vigil and lighting of the Easter Candle beginning in the Centre

Easter Day 17th April

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Sunday services at All Saints'

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Evening Prayer

—all livestreamed on YouTube

Updates will be posted on our website:

<https://allsaintsgosforth.wixsite.com/all-saints-gosforth>

Sunday services at St. Hugh's

11.00am

Updates will be posted on our website:

www.facebook.com/St-Hughs-Church-Gosforth

From the Editors

We hope you have enjoyed reading this edition of *Keeping in Touch*. Its purpose is in the title — to try and help us all to connect with each other during these strange times. Please get in touch and tell us about yourselves and how you have been getting on. As soon as we have enough to publish, we will put out a further edition.

You can hand contributions to any of the editors, or email to:

allsaintsintouch@outlook.com

We look forward to hearing from you.

Lesley Atkinson, Dermot Killingley, Ann Cross, Christine Willoughby