



# Keeping in touch



St Hugh's Church, Gosforth

6th September 2020

## Welcome

As I write to you, we are already in the throes of late summer, with autumn not far behind. Recently, despite Covid 19 domination, the seasons seem to have shot by, and yet we've seen our gardens thriving as per normal, despite almost everything else around us taking an enforced pause.

As I look towards autumn I have asked myself how I can enable All Saints' and St Hugh's to thrive in the same way despite the continued challenge of uncertainty. What urgently demands priority?

I believe our connections are the key. We need not only to renew but to create. This must be across the board, with God, with people we have not engaged with in both parishes, and among ourselves.

In the coming weeks and months we must ask ourselves what we are actually doing to make new connections as well as strengthen our existing relationships. Making contact, especially with the under 45s and young families, is a particular challenge. This will be the focus of work for Jamie Donaldson, our new youth and children's worker, but it is a concern for all of us.

How can we, as individuals, make connection? I know we must start by thinking where people are right now and develop a realistic understanding of our communities. All Saints' and St Hugh's present different challenges, and only research and careful consideration will help us to rethink how we can proclaim the Good News afresh and reconnect with those we serve.

Covid 19 continues to force us to think 'outside the box', but view this as a good challenge. Perhaps some of us have been too comfortable. We are having to acclimatise to a world where our gatherings and visits are limited yet at the same time we have learned to embrace other ways of connecting: via the internet—Zoom, Teams, Skype and Live-

stream, to name a few.

## What else are we currently doing?

We have a new-style weekly mail for us to connect with online, and this new magazine, so that we are aware of our latest happenings. We are planning initiatives that will help us to better understand and reach out to our young people and we will be welcoming new groups to use the All Saints' Centre and the St Hugh's facilities, but this is just a beginning. I am clear that, in order for us to thrive, raw innovation is demanded of us. We need vigour and determination in bucket-loads.

**Andrew Shipton**

## Sunday Worship at St Hugh's

For the next few months, it is likely that services at St. Hugh's will be at 11am:

13<sup>th</sup> September  
27<sup>th</sup> September  
11<sup>th</sup> October  
25<sup>th</sup> October  
8<sup>th</sup> November  
22<sup>nd</sup> November  
6<sup>th</sup> December

The arrangements for Christmas are yet to be announced

## Did you notice?

Beverley, Andrew and I met recently informally, to talk about the plans for worship at St Hugh's in the present situation. There will be an opportunity to discuss this at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting at St Hugh's in October.

During the course of our social-distancing meeting, the subject of the notice board on the wall of St Hugh's came up (it is in need of restoring or replacing and bringing up to date). It got me thinking about when I started going to church, as a teenager, more than 60 years ago. At that time, almost every parish church in the Church of England would have a prominent notice board outside the church building. The times of the Sunday Services would be on them, and just about every one would have something like: 8am Holy Communion; 9.30am Parish Communion; 6.30pm Evensong. In addition, there might be information about Sunday School and (in most 'High Church' parishes) the times of the daily Eucharist. How things have changed! In many places, the early Communion Service has disappeared, along with Evensong. It is quite common nowadays for a church to have just one service on a Sunday morning—and in some places, not even every Sunday.

The coronavirus pandemic has forced the churches to make even more drastic changes to their regular patterns of worship. Forbidden to enter their churches for months, church-goers have only gradually been allowed to hold services once more—but in a much-restricted way: no singing (!), face masks, hand sanitisers, no cup of tea afterwards (!!!). You begin to wonder if the Church of England will ever be the same again. It probably won't.

We can react to all this in either a pessimistic or an optimistic way: despair versus hope. It is important to remember that worship and tradition have frequently changed, and some of the changes have been fiercely resisted, whilst others have been warmly welcomed. What the present abnormal situation has done is to remind us is that we are still the church, the body of Christ, and that is true even when we cannot do, as a Christian community, the things we used to love to do. It has forced us to think, however unwillingly, about how to present the gospel in different ways. I am full of admiration for those clever people who have managed to master the mysteries of our technological age and have broadcast worship to a wider "congregation" (I am not one of them. I have an obligatory Zoom meeting coming up

shortly, and have no idea how to Zoom!).

What Christians have always had, even in the worst possible situations, is hope in a living, loving God, in his Son Jesus Christ, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Notice boards of the future are going to look somewhat different. But change? Bring it on!

**Canon Sydney Connolly**

We are grateful to Syd, a retired priest who is attached to St Hugh's.

## Flowering through

Many people comment on how pretty the Japanese Anemones in the Garden of Remembrance look at the this time of year, and although they do, in actual fact they can be a bit of a pest! The ones in the photograph are choking a couple of other plants, and no matter how many times they're dug out, they keep coming back. They even grow out of the stonework of the church which is definitely pushing their luck. They do add a spot of cheer of a bleak day, however, so we may as well enjoy them – they're not going anywhere!

**The Gardening Group**



## Keeping in Touch

What an apt title! This is what has been so important during the last six months and going forward.

Having been shielded during the last six months, contact with family, friends and neighbours has kept me sane and at times from utterly despairing! Unexpected callers at the garden gate bearing flowers and yummy cheese scones, and those doing jobs for us, have been invaluable and we are so grateful. I'm especially grateful to Chris, Louise and Tim and extended family for their love, support and shopping. Plus the traders on Ashburton Road who have delivered orders with a smile; thank you.

I bought a trouser suit in February to smarten my wardrobe for the occasions we had in our diary. It remains there, patiently waiting in anticipation! Our trip to the Lakes was also cancelled. Shucks, so how to keep interested in life?

Nature notes written every day have given me much joy. Observing something new: bird-song in early Spring, blossoming through the season, God whispering in the trees and so much else. To have time to listen, look, smell and enjoy. Going for my first walk in June on very wobbly legs made me realise I'd missed the season changing—how did that happen?

Christine Willoughby lent us a 1000-piece jigsaw, a challenge. It took a long time, but gave us a focus, and we thoroughly enjoyed it. We then tried a Telegraph jigsaw, managed to do the clues and put them in the jigsaw, but the answers in the grid were beyond us. Good luck if you try it—it's back in its box, available to borrow!

I have loved telephoning everyone on a list I made at the beginning of lockdown. Having a human voice, having a chat, swapping feelings and worries and the joy of good news and ideas has helped keep me engaged with others and feel that we are all in this together. Now I can meet up for a cuppa, what a joy. However I still keep my list going.

A routine helped; a date with the Hoover; all those jobs that have wanted to be done for a long time. A sense of a job well done has eased the monotony. Chris has worked hard in the garden and I've enjoyed helping him and just being outdoors. Thank goodness for a garden.

My baking has been ignored but I did make Sophie a birthday cake and some biscuits—it's something I need to get back to.

Now out of shielding I have a nervousness about where to go and how safe it is. However

with a face mask and hand sanitiser I have braved the supermarket, odd shops and the dentist. My main achievement has been buying a battery for my watch and a cup of coffee in Central Park. How brave is that?!

Well, enough of that, I could go on and on and bore you all, so I'll sign off, looking forward to seeing folk soon. Take care and stay safe.

PS: Something Andrew said to me through a difficult time helped me keep smiling: endure, resilience, patience and positivity. God bless,

**Dee Matthews**

### Recipe:

#### **Nutty bean burgers with mango relish**

In the last few months we have eaten a lot less meat; this tasty alternative makes a change from the meat version.

- 1 small onion
- 2 tblsp olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, crushed, 2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 400 gm tin kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 400 gm tin butter beans, drained and rinsed
- 50 gm chopped mixed nuts
- 40 gm fresh breadcrumbs
- 15 ml dark soy sauce
- 15 ml lemon juice
- Salt and pepper
- Oil for shallow frying.

Peel and chop onion, garlic and thyme, fry in oil gently for 10 mins.

Add beans, fry gently for a further 5 mins.

Transfer to food processor and pulse to form a rough paste, transfer to large bowl, stir in nuts, breadcrumbs, soy sauce and lemon juice, season generously.

Leave as long as you can for flavours to develop.

Divide the bean mixture into six portions and shape into burgers. Heat oil in a heavy-base frying pan and fry for two minutes each side until golden and cooked though. Serve in burger buns, with a mango chutney.

These are very tasty, and pre-cooked they freeze well.

**Elizabeth Crawford**

## Did you do a bear walk?

In early April the press featured articles about people setting up bear walks. These would help parents provide an activity for children; as they went on their daily walks the children could look out for furry friends!



Gradually bears started appearing all over Gosforth—nursing bears in full uniforms, much-loved friends held together with old clothes, smart young bears—and of course a plethora of other friends. There were exotic jungle animals, lots of puppies,

especially dalmatians, and even topical friends from Star Wars and Frozen. One house near us had a magnificent Noah's Ark and animals made entirely from Lego. What a temptation to knock on the door and ask to play!

We changed our window to go with the season. At Easter a collection of bunnies appeared and we even put up some wartime photos for VE Day.

We did wonder if it was worth it – until we looked out of the window and saw a very young man standing on our



lawn studiously observing our bears. He was totally impervious to the urgings of his grandmother who of course was trying to remove him from our grass. A lovely moment!

So to all those who did put friends in their



windows, Thank you. They were noticed and much

appreciated by adults as well as children and made such a difference to the daily walking routine. Not least it meant a lot to feel a small thread of contact between us and the people living behind those closed doors and blank windows.

**Christine Willoughby**

## Risk Assessment in the Old Testament?

As some of you may remember, I set myself the task of reading the entire Bible in a year and am on course to complete it mid/late September. I have been reminded of how much of the Old Testament is concerned with ensuring the correct procedures for worship, especially in the elaborate descriptions of the Temple rituals, many of them concerned with the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple after the exile in Babylon. In the context of our present situation of having had to carry out risk assessments in order to conduct services in church, the following verse from Ezekiel struck me as interesting:

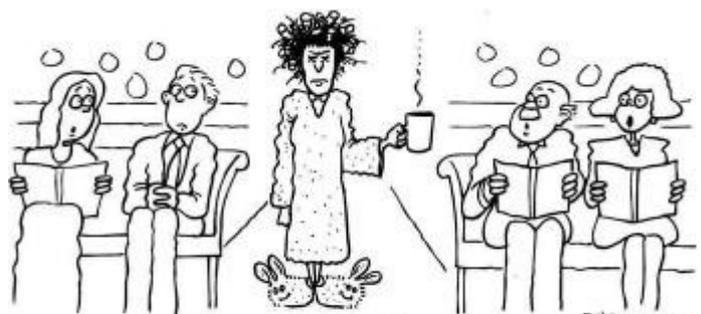
When the people of the land come before the Lord at the appointed festivals, whoever enters by the north gate to worship shall go out by the south gate; and whoever enters by the south gate shall go out by the north gate: they shall not return by way of the gate by which they entered, but shall go out straight ahead.

Ezekiel 46:9

Had the officials responsible for worship carried out a suitable risk assessment?

**Ruth Birnie**

## Back to church



Mrs. Jones got a little too used to watching online worship from home.

Thrive Mission Unit: <https://unitingchurchwa.org.au/>

## Support cancer

Some time ago I planned to mark 20 years since I underwent treatment for cancer, with a year of fundraising for three charities that are so vital for the care and support of patients in the North East: Macmillan Cancer Care, the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and the RVI Breast Cancer Research Fund.

Since then, of course, lockdown was imposed on us, and many of the ideas I had to raise money just went out of the window! No coffee mornings, prosecco evenings, cake sales, craft stalls, sponsored walks—there was little that could be done that wasn't "Virtual" as we all fought to control the coronavirus.

However...an opportunity arose with the advent of face masks, so I got the sewing machine out of hibernation and began to stitch masks for family and friends. A bit of promotion on social media—and in All Saints' pew sheet!—increased the sales magnificently, with the result that over £500 was raised in the space of only a few weeks.



**A small selection of the masks made for charity. If you would like to purchase any they are £5 each, directly from Ann, with 100% of money going to charity.**

At the moment, with the lockdown situation eased, the next event I plan to run is the annual Macmillan Coffee Morning in September at the Community Centre in the Great Park (as in previous years). The planning has been more complicated than ever, of course, but with the help and support of the Centre manager we're giving it a go, and in October half-term I hope to organise a series of sponsored family walks, socially-distanced if necessary, then the sale of cards and crafts in the run-up to Christmas.

I would like to thank everyone who has supported this venture so far. As well as

purchasing masks, quite a few people have also made an extra donation. I'm not expecting for one moment that those who have already made a donation or a purchase will be supporting every event, but please bear with me over the next few months when some of these will be mentioned in the pew sheet.

**Ann Cross**

## New Youth worker



Hello everyone my name is Jamie and I'm very happy to be the new Children's and Youth worker for All Saints'. I'm really looking forward to getting stuck in and enjoying my time here, meeting new people and putting on lots of activities and helping with services where I can!

A little bit about me: I'm 21 and have previously spent my time as a youth worker from when I finished my A-Levels in 2017. I have a few hobbies in my spare time such as watching action movies like Star Wars or Marvel, or playing video games on my Xbox. When I'm not in the house or out with my friends I love exploring the countryside, climbing up hills or venturing through thick forests, I love it!

Before coming to All Saints' I volunteered as a Youth Worker at the Emmaus Youth Village in Consett, a retreat centre for Catholic schools in Hexham and Newcastle. Volunteering here for 2 years really helped me explore my faith. Growing up as a Christian and eventually joining the Catholic Church, I have been able to explore what my faith is and what it means to me. The Emmaus Village had me all over the place, from working in small

groups with school groups to playing capture the flag out on the fields, from acting on stage to helping out with the end of year festivals. The youth village did wonders for my confidence and character which I hope I can share with you all here in my new position as your Youth Worker!

Thank you for such a warm welcome!

Many thanks and prayers

Jamie

## **The challenges of bell ringing**

In company with other Tower Captains throughout the country, I have had some interesting times since stepping into this role a few years back: keeping the regular Sunday ringing going, arranging one-off bands for special services and special occasions, making sure the bells and ropes are safe, and not so long ago a major refurbishment of the bells—alongside the recruitment and teaching of new ringers.

Nothing, however, has prepared any of us for the complete meltdown of all of the above when the coronavirus hit earlier this year, and the subsequent lockdown.

Obviously, during the lockdown we weren't even allowed in the church. The real challenge started when ringing was permitted as long as social distancing was maintained. The closeness of the bells immediately became apparent. None of our bells were 2m. apart. Even when the spacing was changed to 1.5m., it didn't help much, as only the 9 and 10 were that far apart and the 10 is very close to the treble.

Two of the bells are 38cm apart.

I then gave thought to ringing alternate bells. Even then, the front four were too close. At this point I got my guitar out to see what would sound okay. 3, 6, 8 and 10 give a major chord and sound fine. The father of two of our younger ringers pointed out that we could put ringers from the same household together. This has enabled us to ring 3, 4, 6, 8 and 10, which sounds pretty good.

The next problem was to try to give ringers a decent chance of a ring even if it was every third week or so. Only some of our ringers can ring the tenor, and not everyone is confident enough to call changes. If we use ringers from the same household (and we have 4 such pairs) they have to ring 3 and 4. This has become so complex that I have had to create an Excel spreadsheet to cope.

Finally, the church has announced that evensong is to resume. This means either

trying to sanitise the ropes or ringing different bells from the morning. I have yet to get the guitar out to sort out which bells we could ring...

**Paul Cross  
Tower Captain**

Thank you Paul for this mind-boggling feat and thank you to all the ringers—it is lovely to hear the bells ringing out again on a Sunday morning.

## **From Hero to Zero?**

During Lockdown a lot was made of our heroes – the NHS staff in particular, but also many others who carried on doing their best to keep things going for us in all sorts of ways, paid and voluntary. They kept buses running, shops open, delivered shopping and set up new technological solutions for us. There was a feeling that we were 'all in it together' and a sense that a new spirit of community had emerged. People were doing their best and if we had to queue, things weren't quite right or technology failed us then we were still grateful that others were helping as well as they could.

However there now seems to be a new spirit abroad, where exacting standards are reappearing and that tolerance is maybe coming second to blame or fault finding if things aren't quite right/ as we would want to see them.

As Christians we should be continuing to support each other as we move forward in small steps back to 'normal'. Things aren't there yet, but let's be grateful for all that is being achieved, say thank you for the efforts people are making, even if it isn't perfect yet.

St Paul's analogy of the Church as a body of disparate parts is surely apposite here – and if some of those little toes may be a little bruised, well let's try and treat them gently and not stamp on them....

**Christine Willoughby**

## Can you identify these pictures?

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



## Can you identify these pictures: Answers from August



Path between Wolsingham Rd and Elmfield Gardens



Ashburton Cemetry



Elmfield Approach



Hedley Terrace



Regent Farm Road Roundabout/ Dobson House



Road off Wolsingham Gardens



Regent Road



Salter's Road, Sanderson Hospital Site



The Firs

## 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 when many of us are still hesitant about venturing our or our normal social activities are curtailed.

Please do contact us and let us know how you are finding things—what are you doing, what new skills/ hobbies are you cultivating, how are you keeping in touch with others?

As pupils and students start going back to school/ university how are you finding the new experience?

What is the world of work like now? How has it changed for you?

Please do write in and tell us about any of these things—or indeed any contributions you think would be of interest. 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.co.uk](mailto:allsaintsintouch@outlook.co.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you.

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

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