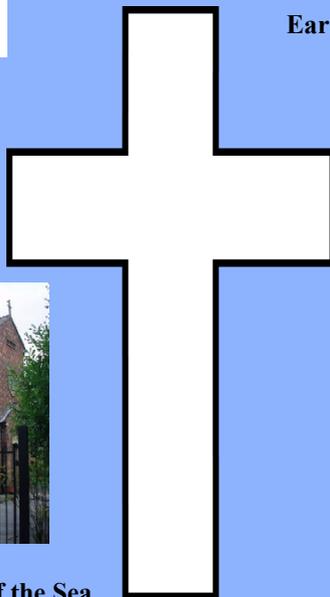




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CHURCH VIEWS

February 2023

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**Our Lady & St. Edmund,
Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea**



St. John's Backworth



**Immaculate Heart of Mary,
Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea**

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

February 2023

Whoa folks, those bad guys have unhitched Trigger! There are a lot of them, and none of them is wearing a White Hat. Trigger should not be running loose because he is not Roy Rogers' Trigger, he's my own, my very own hobby-horse, and his full name is Trigger Warnings. But even he is under threat from one California University which wants 'Trigger' removed from 'Warnings' because of its association with firearms.

I am happy that not one of the books I got for Christmas was so dangerous that I was advised not to read it – but then my family know my taste in reading since I stopped teaching English Lit - none of my current books will ever enter that rarefied atmosphere.

But pity our poor students. The Russell Group, the organisation of top Universities, has now issued a THOUSAND trigger warnings on books that students might find upsetting. Hands up anyone who knows a student likely to read that many books!

Well, Cambridge University and the Globe Theatre both warn against Shakespeare, particularly the horrifying *Romeo and Juliet*. Maybe we should applaud Nahum Tate, the poet laureate who gave *King Lear* a happy ending so it didn't upset theatre audiences. Charles Dickens, the monster, is clobbered by Salford University for *A Christmas Carol* with those ghosts and time-slips, and *A Tale of Two Cities* merits a warning about beheadings and imprisonment, so if you have never heard of the guillotine, don't go there - it might be a far, far better thing that you do than you have ever done... Don't even start me on *Oliver Twist*.

But skipping London University, trying to save students from the terror of Jane Austen's long frocks or Charlotte Brontë burning houses, let's wander lonely as a cloud to Wordsworth. How many friends do you have who have ever been frightened by a daffodil? Or even a host of golden ones come to that?

But in the prize categories, Chester University’s warning against Harry Potter is runner-up to the outright winner, the University of Aberdeen which advises students to “Seek help if you are unable to cope with the themes of this book.” The book is *Peter Pan*.

But times and taboos change. As long ago as the Sixties Professor Tom Lehrer lamented that when he went to college, everyone knew you couldn’t say certain words in front of a girl, “But now”, he continued, “you can say all the words, but you can’t say ‘girl’ ”.

It’s easy to mock this trend, but it’s saddening that anyone is being advised not to embrace so much that is great, instructive, uplifting, or just plain fun.

Wouldn’t we be better teaching our students and the others who are going to inherit our beautiful but very imperfect world that there is a vital need for tolerance? Allowing them to learn that because someone’s view is different from theirs it does not mean it’s hostile?

Our future will be brighter if we teach them to keep open their books and their minds; teach them to reach out rather than shut out. Closing book covers may too easily lead to closing doors.

This February let’s try to keep open our books, our minds and our doors.

Gerry Latimer
Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea



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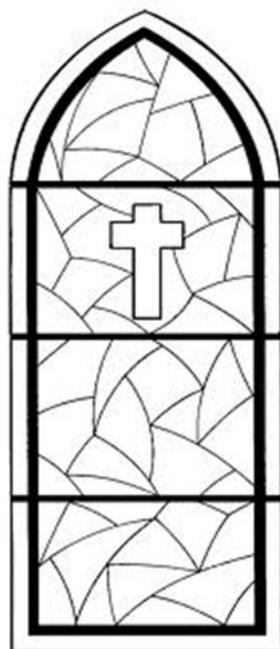
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The letter on the next page is a bit too faint to read properly, so I've reproduced the text here, in a larger font. *Jean.*

Dear Mrs Richardson

I would like to thank St Alban's Earsdon & St John's Backworth on behalf of the Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS) for the recent donation of £305.00.

Your fundraising achievement allows us to be there across the region for those people who need us the most. People like Pete Holland, a motorcyclist who was involved in a serious crash on the A68, County Durham, while out riding with his son. Mr Holland was assessed and treated by the GNAAS paramedic and doctor before being admitted to the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle for ongoing treatment. The accident left him with a great admiration for the staff at GNAAS and the hospital who helped him in his time of need. He said,
"I was greatly relieved that they turned up for me. Prompt reaction, expert in their field, got me to the right place at the right time, where again expert staff took over me at the RVI and took great care. Just wonderful."

We think all of our supporters who fundraise for us are amazing, as without you we simply couldn't raise the money we need to continue operating our life-saving service, which last year cost a staggering £5.3 million.

Once more, thank you for your support, we couldn't continue to operate without you. We appreciate all donations and will never pressurise our supporters into giving more. If, for any reason you would like to speak to us, you can contact us on **01325 487 263** or visit **www.gnaas.com**. We'd love to hear from you.

* If you have any suggestions, comments or requests *
* regarding the magazine, or for anyone thinking of *
* sending in their contribution for publication, please *
* email it to **magazine@StAlbansEarsdon.org.uk** *
* or call **Jean** on **0191 2377273**. *

Cathryn Richardson received this “Thank You” letter from the Great North Air Ambulance, after they received the donation raised from St Alban’s and St John’s community Christmas Card:



Mrs C Richardson

WHITLEY BAY
Tyne and Wear
NE25 9QG

Progress House,
Urley Nook Road,
Eaglescliffe,
Stockton-on-Tees
TS16 0QB
t. 01325 487263

Our Reference: 156510

5 January 2023

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Yours sincerely

Grace Daji

On behalf of Great North Air Ambulance Service

Our privacy policy is published on our website here: <https://www.greatnorthairambulance.co.uk/privacy-policy-2/>. From time to time we may wish to contact you by email, post or telephone. To update your contact preferences, call 01325 487 263 or email support@gnaas.co.uk.



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It's hard to see the tiny Christmas angels on the wall at St John's, Backworth - but what a delightful gesture!

Thank you to Alison who displayed the Christmas Angels for community collection in December. They disappeared within two hours, nice to know they are collectible.



Smile-lines

Giving up for Lent

At the end of the pre-Lent sermon, the vicar suggested, as an example to the rest of the community, that the congregation should worship in an unheated church for the whole of Lent. As they made their way into the chill Sunday air the vicar addressed one member of the congregation, asking what she had decided to give up for Lent. "Church," she replied firmly.

In a sack

Seen in a church magazine: "Bring your old newspapers (and your neighbours), put them in a sack and tie them if possible."

Judgement?

This true story concerns the visit of a visiting preacher to a little village chapel... 'He was a few minutes into his sermon when, without warning, about twenty square feet of thick and decayed Victorian plaster fell from high on one wall and crashed into a group of empty pews below. As the dense fog of dust began to settle, and it became clear no one was injured, the minister prepared to resume his sermon. Then he paused, and looked heavenward and in a slightly pained voice, asked: "Was it something I said?"'

Talking theologically...

Jesus asked His disciples who men said that He was. And one of His disciples replied: "Master, thou art the supreme eschatological manifestation of omnipotent ecclesiastical authority, the absolute, divine, sacerdotal monarch."

And Jesus said, "er - What?"

BITS 'N' PIECES

It was...

175 years ago, on 21st Feb 1848 that the Communist Manifesto was published in London. It was written by Karl Marx, with the assistance of Friedrich Engels.

100 years ago, on 16th Feb 1923 that British archaeologist Howard Carter opened the sealed doorway to Tutankhamen's tomb in Thebes, Egypt. The following day he entered the burial chamber and discovered a wealth of treasures.

70 years ago, on 28th Feb 1953 that British scientists Francis Crick and James D Watson announced that they had discovered the double-helix structure of DNA.

65 years ago, on 6th Feb 1958 that the Munich air disaster took place. A plane carrying the

Manchester United football team ('the Busby Babes'), plus support staff and journalists, crashed while attempting to take off from a slush-covered runway at Munich-Riem Airport. 23 people were killed, including 8 players.

50 years ago, on 8th Feb 1973 that the US Senate established a select committee to investigate the Watergate scandal. This led to US President Richard Nixon's resignation in August 1974.

40 years ago, on 8th Feb 1983 that champion racehorse, Shergar, was kidnapped in Ireland and a £2million ransom demanded. The horse was never seen again.

30 years ago, on 24th Feb 1993 that Bobby Moore, British footballer and captain of the England team that

won the 1966 World Cup, died.

25 years ago, on 23rd Feb 1998 that Osama bin Laden issued a fatwa against all Jews and Crusaders.

20 years ago, on 1st Feb 2003 that the US space shuttle Columbia disintegrated over Texas during re-entry, killing all seven astronauts.

10 years ago, on 1st Feb 2013 that the Shard, a 72-storey skyscraper in London, was officially opened. It is the tallest building in the UK and the sixth tallest in Europe.

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St Alban's & St John's Home Communion



The work of our Home Communion visitors has been on hold since at least March 2020. This work was sawn off by the pandemic, and is just in the process of being re-established. Our Home Communion visitors are (front row) Sue, Cathryn and Linda, and (back row) Craig, Gil, Liz and Ali. If you follow the 10am service by livestream and would like a member of the team to bring you communion at home, do let us know: you will see that we have quite a team at our disposal. There was a lovely occasion the other week when Liz took communion to Joan: Liz left the service... and when she got to Joan's the same service was on, being livestreamed into Joan's living room: the wonders of modern technology!

Tim Mayfield

With Valentine's Day in mind...how do you define love?

*A group of 4-to-8-year-olds was once asked: 'What does love mean?'
The answers they gave were surprising for their depth of insight....*

“When my grandma got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toe nails anymore. So my grandad does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love.” Rebecca - age 8

“Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your chips, without making them give you any of theirs.” Chrissy - age 6

“Love is when mum makes coffee for my dad and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is OK.” Danny - age 7

“Love is when mummy gives daddy the best piece of chicken.” - Lucy - age 5

"Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all day" Daisy - age 4

Seen in a church pew sheet:

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a crèche downstairs.

Next Friday the church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility. Do come along!



CHURCH VIEWS FOR FEBRUARY 2023 FROM THE PARISH OF OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA



Archbishop Malcolm McMahon, OP

Following the resignation of Bishop Robert Byrne in December 2022, the Archbishop of Liverpool has been appointed Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle until a new Bishop is appointed. The Initials ‘OP’ indicate that he is a member of the ‘Order of Preachers’, better known to most of us as the Dominicans.

Born and brought up in London, he graduated from UMIST (University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology) in Mechanical Engineering and worked in the transport industry. In 1976, he joined the Dominicans, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1982 becoming chaplain to Leicester Polytechnic before it became De Montfort University.

His first connection with Newcastle came when he served as parish priest at St Dominic’s, New Bridge Street, in 1989.

In 1992 he was elected Prior Provincial of the English Province of the Order, and in 2000 he was elected Prior of Blackfriars, Oxford. Later in that year he was appointed Bishop of Nottingham.

He was installed as the Archbishop of Liverpool in 1st May 2014, the feast of St Joseph the Worker. His current appointments include Vice President of the Bishop’s Conference of England and Wales, Trustee of the Catholic Trust for England and Wales, and National President of Pax Christi, (Peace of Christ) the International Catholic Movement for Peace. Since Liverpool is at least three hours away, Archbishop McMahon has appointed Canon Peter Leighton to work with the current staff on the day to day administration of the Diocese.

Walking Group

I'm happy to report that the group is walking again in 2023. The next walk will begin at 9.30am on Tuesday 7 February from Immaculate Heart of Mary Church on Sandringham Drive. We will go to the Silver Fox Way in Shiremoor then down to the Royal Quays Marina, and on to Tynemouth Priory and the Metro home. Another walk will take place on Tuesday 21 February.



Night Shelter



The Severe Weather Emergency Protocol will continue to operate until March. It began in Whitley Bay last November, offering those sleeping rough a place off the streets when the temperature drops to zero or below as it did in late January. The Night Shelter, at Oxford Street Methodist Church, needs volunteers to help, and is organised by the Whitley Bay Street Pastors.

(whitleybay@streetpastors.org.uk)

Normality Returning

It might have been a long time, but it's a joy to note that all the restrictions have gone from the parish churches, and as normality returns we begin to take things for granted again. That's good too in its own way – 'normal' and 'noticing things' don't go together. So the Luncheon Club has now met twice, there have been four baptisms, and informal chats over tea and biscuits are taking place again after weekday Masses. Inside, the flower arrangements are beautiful, and outdoors the gardens are beginning to show green shoots. Even Lent beginning with Ash Wednesday on the 22nd of this month gives a sense that the year is moving on as it used to.

I can almost forgive the Easter eggs crowding the supermarket shelves.

Gerry Latimer

Parish Mass Times:

St Edward's: Sunday 10.00am, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 9.30am

Immaculate Heart of Mary: Saturday 6.00pm, Wednesday, Friday 9.30am





*Many thanks to Jill
for these pictures
of our beloved
friend,
Helen Blackburn.
May she rest in
peace.*

See also page 30.

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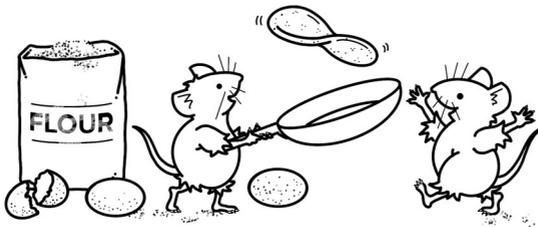
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St Alban's & St John's Events

21st February, 7.30pm at the Eccles Hall, Earsdon; the traditional and now famous Pancake & Quiz Night. Please contact Joan on 0191 2529239 if you'd like to join us.



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Earsdon Methodist Church

Diary for February 2023

Sunday	5th	Rev'd. W Blakey
Sunday	12th	Rev'd. L Eccles Holy Communion
Wednesday	15th	Church Council 2.00pm
Sunday	19th	Rev'd. E Gordon
Sunday	26th	Mr J Bedigan

Musicians for February 2023

Sunday	5th	tba
Sunday	12th	Mr a Bainbridge
Sunday	19th	Mr a Bainbridge
Sunday	26th	tba

INFLUENCE

I never really knew a person who was as superstitious as my mother in law – and although she was the salt of the earth and the kindest and most caring lady you could wish to meet, she would not let me break a mirror or put new shoes on the table – without having to perform a compensating and influencing remedy . Of course, she was not unusual, as I have known many people who have had other rituals they go through which they felt would influence matters.

Like the solicitor who whenever she went into a room, had to pat the door three times, when she closed it behind her – and the mother who had to go to the cutlery drawer every time she went into the kitchen and open it and then close it firmly – and my bank manager friend, who would double check that he always put a dot after every signature he ever signed.

I was amazed when someone ‘at home’ hinted that I was border line OCD . “Surely not,” I said. However I was reminded that I do like the dishwasher stacked in a certain way; I do keep our box of medication ordered in the same sequence with the boxes a certain way round ; I put my spectacles and my mobile phone wire in their respective boxes each night before retiring and I have just realised that when getting dressed I put on my left sock first ! “Surely, I pleaded, this is just being organised and having a system; surely this is just having a routine? “ I received a kind smile in reply and was told that ‘the jury was out!’

However, I do slightly worry about a friend of mine who I meet up with on the infrequent occasions I manage to get a ticket for St James’s Park. He parks his car in the same spot, buys his programme from the same man; goes into the ground in the same turnstile and always comes up the steps to his seat two at a time. He believes that somehow this will give a winning influence on the home team. If only that were true, the team would have won every trophy there is going by now.

When *Jesus* spoke of his followers being salt of the earth, he was saying that what they did WOULD be an influence.

This could happen –NOT by always coming into the same door of Church at the same time. NOT by sitting in the same seat every week; NOT by using the same hymn book all the time, but by putting a God like stamp or seal on everything of which they are part.

We can’t just resign ourselves to the fact that we are part of a wicked or unjust world ~ where starvation is common and killing is rife. We cannot just switch off the TV news and pretend it is not there. But there was – and is – a great need to give the right flavour to that of which we are all part – and it only takes a sprinkling of salt to do a great job.

So,
God of us all, bless us with the ability to season all life with patience,
kindness and good humour,
and may the influence of your persuasive love be ours
Amen.

Wes Blakey

St. Alban's and St. John's



Diary Page for February 2023

Thurs	2nd	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	5th		<u>Third Sunday before Lent</u>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wednesday	8th		Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	12th		<u>Second Sunday before Lent</u>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	16th		Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	19th		<u>Sunday next before Lent</u>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wednesday	22nd		Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	26th		<u>First Sunday of Lent</u>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	2nd		Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	5th		<u>Second Sunday of Lent</u>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's

St. Alban's and St. John's

Sunday Gospel Readings for February 2023 :

5th

Matthew 5.13-16

12th

Matthew 6.25-end

19th

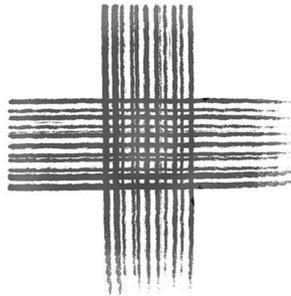
Matthew 17.1-9

26th

Matthew 4.1-11

5th March

John 3.1-17



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2023

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					9	5		3
6	7			3	2	9		
9				1				
4	1	6				7	9	5
				6				1
		3	1	8			4	6
2		7	4					
8	4							

Please note - all material for next month's magazine (March 2023) will need to be in before Wednesday 22 February 2023.
Thank you, *Jean*.

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Marti's Musings 107

I can't believe how cold January has been! Everyone's heating bills must be through the roof and we are all sitting in 5 jumpers! I hope the plants survive as when I walk across the soil it is frozen solid. This does not bode well for future open gardens.

I was incredibly sad to hear about our dear friend Helen Blackburn's passing. I used to meet her for walks with grandma and Hannah and have a good pootle round the village. She was always there at choir practice and had such a lovely alto voice. I was at her open garden last summer and listened intently to her poetry reading. We will all miss Helen very much.

I am looking forward to Burns night as I love haggis and hope I will get some leftovers!

Lots of love and poetry readings

Marti xxx



More pictures of our lovely friend Helen on pages 18 & 19.

WORDSEARCH

In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first 'public appearance'. Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child - to 'present him to the Lord' and she, as a new mother, was 'purified'. Thus, we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, 40 days after Christmas. Jesus is described in the Bible as the Light of the World, and so early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day. The Church also fell into the custom of blessing the year's supply of candles for the church on this day - hence the name, Candlemas. The story can be found in Luke 2:22-40, where Simeon makes his great declaration of faith and recognition of Jesus. Simeon's 'Nunc Dimittis', is embedded in the Office of Evening Prayer.

Forty
Days
Baby
Boy
Public
Appearance
Mary
Jewish
Mothers
Temple
Jesus
Purified
Present
Lord
Festival
Presentation
Light
World
Candlemas
Simeon
Nunc
Dimittis
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Prayer
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PCC Secretary

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