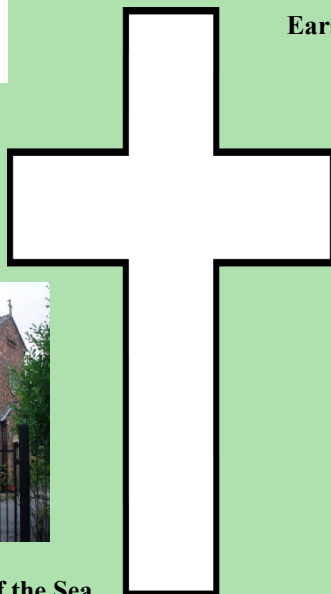




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Earsdon Methodist



CHURCH VIEWS

December 2021



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**Immaculate Heart of Mary,
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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

December 2021

Dear All,

When the clocks change, and the days shorten, life becomes very different. For a start, there is much less light to see by. These last few days I've found myself consulting the website 'Magic Seaweed'. Magic Seaweed gets its name because it gives the times of high and low tide. But it also gives the times for first light... sunrise... sunset... and last light. As I write, on Tuesday November 23rd first light was at 7.09, and last light will be at 4.34.

This is important for a dog walker. I tend to take our spaniel Dinah out for her 'pee-poo-sniff' first thing in the morning. And in the afternoon I often take her out for her second of two main walks in the day. There are great riches to be had out with the dog at this time of year. This morning, there were gorgeous splashes of early light on the bare trees. Yesterday afternoon, walking from Earsdon towards Backworth, we were headed straight into a glorious sunset. By the time we got back, 'last light' was nearly upon us and the tractor cutting a hedge near Church Farm stables needed to shine all its bright lights to be able to see.

It's a powerful thing that, in our part of the world, we celebrate Christmas at the darkest time of the year. At the beginning of John's Gospel, the baby of Bethlehem is a light coming into our darkness...

In Jesus was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. Jesus, the true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

'The world' can often feel like a very dark place indeed. Who would have thought, this time last year, that Christmas 2021 would itself be overshadowed by Covid? You will no doubt have seen pictures of the civil unrest in Holland and Austria over measures to try and curb the virus. Meanwhile, it's alleged that Belorussia has been using vulnerable migrants to put pressure on the European Union. A man drives his car into a Christmas parade in the US, killing five and injuring many more.

A young white man is acquitted by a US jury on all counts, despite having shot and killed two people. And there is disappointment in the air over the outcome of the COP26 climate change summit.

Into this often dark world, Jesus comes as a light. His light shines with grace and truth and love and forgiveness. This Christmas, how we need that light.

Yet it's not all down to Jesus. Jesus the light calls everyone everywhere to be his disciples. And if He is 'the light' then – according to Jesus – so are we:

You are the light of the world Jesus tells his disciples. *A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.* This Christmas, let's play our part in shining out with grace and truth and love and forgiveness. And let's do that before 'first light', and after 'last light'.

A very Happy Christmas to everyone at St Alban's, Earsdon Methodist, Immaculate Heart, St John's, and Our Lady and St Edmund.

Tim Mayfield.

Photo curtesy of Tim Mayfield





Wishing all our readers and
advertisers

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS,
and a HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Thirteen ladies from St Alban's & St John's enjoying their Wednesday catch-up (24th November) at Sainsbury's café. Looks like you are having a lovely time.
Many thanks to Ali, who is taking the picture and is therefore out of shot.



Snowmen

Two snowmen were standing next to each other. One said to the other: "Can you smell carrots?"



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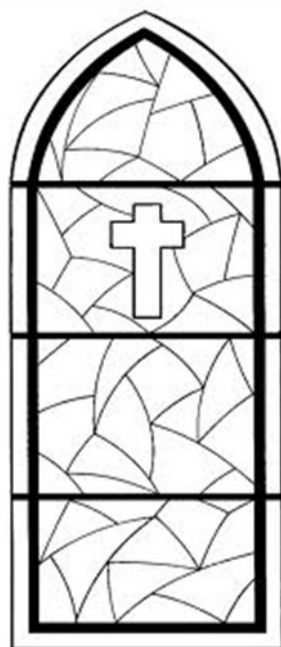
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COMMUNITY NEWS

Forthcoming events

The Parish of Earsdon and Backworth organises a number of social events throughout the year to raise funds and encourage fellowship.

Earsdon with Backworth Mothers' Union

* Wednesday, 15th December, 12 noon for 12.30pm at
Beefeater Restaurant, 9 Spanish City Plaza
Whitley Bay
Tyne & Wear
NE26 1GB

* Subscriptions of £27.00 for Mothers' Union membership for 2022 are due.

St Alban's and St John's:

Most activities are listed on page 24, which include

- * Carols by Candlelight Sunday 19th at 6.00pm. This is a very popular service and booking is **essential**.
- * Tuesday 21st 10am to 6.00pm Journey to the Crib. Families to book in at 10 minute intervals.

A message from Janet Dobson:

I would like to send heartfelt thanks to everyone who sent cards and flowers, and to those who phoned and visited me since George's passing.

I am truly grateful for the support.

Love, Janet.

Please do consider using the services of our advertisers who loyally support our church magazine. If you know anyone who would be interested in taking out an advertisement, please

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Many thanks to Barbara Golightly for this:

St. John the Baptist, Backworth held their Autumn fete on Saturday 13th November. This year we had a change of venue and set up our wares in Backworth Social Club. The event was well attended and the staff at the social club were great hosts.

Morrisons Community Champions Gaynor Drake-Browning & Michael Green officially opened the fete and also presented Ali, our Church warden, with a gift for “International Kindness Day “. Thank you to all our helpers and supporters.



A fantastic total of
£650 was made !
That's SO impressive.

A note from Joan Armstrong:

Do you remember last Christmas Tide 2020, we made swags across the pews that were cut off because of social distancing. The conifer off cuts were given to us by Simon of Backworth Bakery. He was very generous and gave us all the pieces for no charge. He also said that he would donate a Christmas tree to St Alban's this year.

Ali and I went down to see him last month and he has kept his promise. The tree will be delivered just in time for Wellfield Middle School Carol Service.

A great big THANK YOU to Simon.

When you take a picture of the tree please put it on Social Media and give him your thanks.



Pictures of last Christmas curtesy of Joan Armstrong.

Christmas Rush

That time again, my trolley's full
Buying all the Christmas fare,
A turkey crown, a rib of beef,
Crisps and nibbles, lots to spare.

Christmas crackers and serviettes,
Paper for wrapping and cards to send,
Nuts and oranges, figs and dates
The list goes on, there seems no end.

In all this rush it's good to pause
And think about that special Day,
When shepherds watched and angels sang
As a Baby lay in a bed of hay.

By Megan Carter

Timely Quotations

Filling the world, He lies in a manger! – Augustine

Peace is a free gift, and it flows from the pure mercy of God. – John Calvin

The Christian story is precisely the story of one grand miracle. - C S Lewis





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Welcome to “**The Secret Life of St Alban’s and St John’s Folk**”.

This month we have been talking with Ali Griffiths, Churchwarden at St. Alban’s & St. John’s churches.

1) Where were you born?

I was born in Preston Hospital, North Shields.

2) What do you do during the week, when you’re not at church?

Mon & Tues are fairly quiet normally, so I consider this my 'time off' although it doesn't always work that way. Wed/Thur I do Holy Communion at St Alban's & St John's alternately, on Wed I also go visiting some of our congregation around Wellfield, with a few of the ladies. Then Thurs/Fri I do some voluntary work that brings me to the weekend and preparing for Sunday Services.

3) What are you most likely to be doing on a Saturday evening?

We used to go out for a meal and a glass of wine, sometimes pre-covid, nowadays it's a quiet night in with my wife [if she's not working].

4) What’s your favourite book/film/TV programme?

I don't read a lot, but when I do I love True Crime, but the last book I read was a very interesting autobiography by Albert Pierrepoint, the hangman/executioner.

5) Tell us something you’ve learnt recently

How to be a better Christian.

6) Tell us about somewhere interesting you’ve visited or lived in

The most interesting place my wife and I have visited would have to be Singapore, we went July/August 2019 for our Honeymoon.

7) In what ways has everyday life changed for you since the Corona virus started?

It's changed quite a lot, it's made me look at our community in a different way, I think a lot of people like myself care more for others now than they ever did before, which is one of the good things that has come from this Pandemic.

8) What does being a Christian/being part of the church family mean to you?

Everything! My faith is now stronger than ever, I didn't understand the true meaning of 'Church Family' until I came to St Alban's. The people are so warm and welcoming that we felt at home right away.

9) Do you have any prayer requests we can ask the magazine readers to pray for

There are so many I could think of, but my prayer request would be for Pearl & Edward who have been through so much in their lives, and so quickly. This prayer would also include Craig and the rest of the family.



10) If you could spend 10 minutes stuck in a lift with Jesus, what would you talk about?

I'd have to ask the question "why me Lord"? when there are so many people more worthy of your time.

 * 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**. *
 * *****

CHURCH VIEWS FOR DECEMBER 2021 FROM THE PARISH OF OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA

Reverse Advent Calendar



Throughout Advent we are continuing our Food Bank Reverse Advent Calendar. Instead of opening a door for a daily reward, everyone was encouraged to give a small item each day, adding one 'Festive Extra' as a welcome treat.

The novelty obviously appealed, and as usual, we were delighted with the generous response.

The Whitley Bay Food Bank is always appreciative of our help and support.

Christmas Treats for Young People - Thank you all!

This year we joined with twelve other local Churches to provide Christmas treats for around one hundred homeless or vulnerable young people who are supported by DePaul UK. In this pandemic year, we all felt that the youngsters deserved all the treats that we could muster, and we have had an amazing response to the appeal; already we have an abundance of items we requested. Thank you everyone!

The gift bags will be made up at the beginning of December – and those packing them will tell you that it's a great way to get that Christmas feeling.

Bishop visits HMS Queen Elizabeth

Bishop Paul Mason, Bishop to the Forces, recently flew out to our biggest warship, the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, in the Mediterranean. From RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus it took just over an hour by helicopter to reach the carrier. Upon arrival Commodore Steve Moorhouse allowed him and other guests to stand by the ramp on the flight deck to watch the F35 jets take off, which he described as a "truly awesome experience".



He said later, "The experience of being on board an operational Aircraft carrier is really quite unique and it gives some insight into the professionalism, dedication and enthusiasm of the young men and women of the Royal Navy. There is only one chaplain on the carrier and on this deployment it is an Anglican,

Padre Ralph Barber, who facilitated Mass for me. Fr Robert Matau is on HMS Dragon which is part of the carrier group."

Bishop Mason celebrates Mass in the ship's chapel attended by Captain Angus Essenhigh and members of the crew.



Bishop Mason and Captain Essenhigh share some local connections. The Bishop and his family were parishioners of Our Lady and St Edmund in Backworth, and he was educated at St Thomas More High School in North Shields. The Captain's grandparents lived in Tynemouth where his father, Sir Nigel Essenhigh, retired First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff, was brought up before attending the Royal Naval College in Dartmouth.

More from the Petrol Pump Wisdom chalk boards:

Can you imagine wanting to make sure you drove by a certain gas station every day? Just to see what the message was on the chalk board? It's true -- a gas station has become quite a landmark in Gauteng, South Africa, with its daily "PetrolPumpWisdom", which consists of uplifting quotes written on a chalkboard. Some people say they deliberately travel this route just to read the quote which brightens their day.



Here's a little reminder for those of you who pay your magazine subscriptions annually. Next year's subscription (still £12.00) will be due next month, so we will be calling early in January 2022. Thank you.



Angel tidings

A little boy was to be an angel in the Christmas play and his one line was: "Behold, I bring you good tidings." He asked what tidings were and his mother explained that the word meant news.

On the night of the play, the youngster had stage fright and, after a long silence, blurted out: "Hey, have I got news for you!"

Christmas Carols

One night Lucy went carol singing. She knocked on the door of a house and began to sing. A man with a violin in his hand came to the door.

Within half a minute, tears were streaming down his face. Touched, Lucy sang every carol she knew - and some she didn't. The man continued to weep gently throughout her performance. "I understand," she said softly at last. "You are remembering your happy childhood Christmas days."

"No, not exactly," he replied in a choked sort of voice. "I'm a musician!"

New bank

A mother decided that ten-year old Rachel should get something 'practical' for Christmas. "Suppose we open a savings account for you?" she suggested. Rachel was delighted. "It's your account, darling," her mother said as they arrived at the bank, "so you fill out the application." Rachel was doing fine until she came to the space for 'Name of your former bank.' After a slight hesitation, she put down 'Piggy'.

Grandfathers

I was talking to my young Sunday School class, and a four-year-old boy suddenly asked me: "Miss, do you have a grandfather?"

I replied, "I used to have two, but they both went to Heaven to be with Jesus."

He thought, shook his head sadly, and said, "One of my grandfathers hasn't gone to Heaven."

(Long pause while I tried to decide how to proceed.)

"He's gone to Bexhill-on-Sea" continued the boy.

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Earsdon Methodist Church

Preachers for December 2021

Sunday	5th	Rev'd. John Mason. Holy Communion.
Sunday	12th	Mr. John Bedigant.
Sunday	19th	Rev'd. John Mason. Carol Service.
Sunday	26th	NO SERVICE

Christmas Eve Services.

4.00pm	North Shields Methodist Church	Christingle Service - Rev'd. John Mason.
4.00pm	St. John's Methodist Church.	Christingle Service.- Rev'd. Eva Walker.
2.00pm	Monkseaton Methodist Church.	Holy Communion - Rev'd. Tony Farrer.

Christmas Day Services.

10.00am	North Shields Methodist Church.	Christmas Day Service - Rev'd. John Mason.
10.00am	St. John's Methodist Church.	Christmas Day service - Rev'd. Ever Walker.
10.00am	Cullercoats Methodist Church.	Christmas Day Service - Rev'd. David Wynd.

Auriol Finch, 02/09/1939 - 08/11/2021

It was a great shock to everyone when we heard of the death of Auriol on the 8th of November. Although Auriol had been ill for a while, we did not realise just how poorly she was. Auriol was born just a few days before the start of World War 2 in Waterloo Road, Wellfield. As was usual at that time, Auriol attended the Sunday School. Later she became a Sunday School teacher, and also helped in the running of the Junior Youth Club. More recently she was the Church Treasurer for six years and was still a communion steward and a helper at the fortnightly 'soup and sandwiches'. We extend our condolences to Beverley, Ray and family; Catherine, Jem and family and also to brother John and sister in law Jo. Auriol's funeral service will be held in the Chapel on Monday, 6th December at 2.00pm. followed by Cremation at Tynemouth Crematorium at 3.00pm. Family flowers only please. Donations in lieu if so desired to the RNLI.

CHEWING GUM

Out of the blue I was sent a free sample of chewing gum with the maker's compliments. A packet worth 49 pence – just for me.

Mind you, it is a big difference to my schooldays when gum was sold from a penny slot machine – and every fourth penny got an extra packet free ~ and I am talking old pennies!

I remember once waiting half an hour beside the machine outside our local shops and waiting to be the fourth customer – only to find that the third person put in two pennies, so my wait had been in vain.

But my real problem with chewing gum has always been what to do with it once the flavour has gone. There is no foolproof, mess-free solution. As a lad at school, under the desk lid or behind the ear were favourite places, but both made a sticky mess, especially when you came to re-use the stuff. These days I try to be more refined with my samples and merely put the used pieces in the bin. But even there, if not wrapped in paper, they can make a mess. When I watch football on television there are a lot of players and managers who chew gum, and the more tense they feel it seems the faster they chew. Whilst it seems that for these people every need is met, there never seems to be a bin handy when they are finished chewing!

Perhaps I should just give my gum away to those who want to stop biting their fingernails; or who want to stop smoking; or those who don't mind aching jaws after 20 minutes. But even they would have the problem of disposing of it without creating a sticky mess.

Of course, in some circumstances, the ability to be sticky is an advantage. The Apostle Paul wrote to a particular church going through a bad patch and said "Remember above all else that love sticks – even when life's flavour has gone, love looks for the best.

What a man – and to my knowledge he never had a free sample of gum in his life!

Wes Blakey

What would Christmas lunch be without crackers? Some of the jokes inside are terribly corny . However, terrible, or not, they are designed to be spoken out loud to whoever will listen. So here is a starter for this year: ~

What happened to the man who stole an Advent calendar? He got 25 days!!!

St. Alban's and St. John's

Diary Page for December 2021

Wed.	1st	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
		7.30pm	Advent Reflections 2nd mtng	On Zoom
Sunday	5th		<u>Second Sunday of Advent</u>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wed.	8th	7.30pm	Advent Reflections 3rd mtng	On Zoom
Thursday	9th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	12th		<u>Third Sunday in Advent</u>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Wed.	15th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
		7.30pm	Advent Reflections 4th mtng	On Zoom
Sunday	19th		<u>Fourth Sunday in Advent</u>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
		6.00pm	Carols by Candlelight (booking essential)	St Alban's
Tuesday	21st	10.00am - 6pm	Journey to the Crib. (Families to book in at 10 minute intervals)	St Alban's
Thursday	23rd	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
Friday	24th	11.30pm	Midnight Mass	St Alban's
Saturday	25th		<u>Christmas Day</u>	
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	26th		NO SERVICES	
Wed.	29th	9.30am	NO SERVICE AT ST ALBAN'S	St Alban's

St. Alban's and St. John's Diary Page for December 2021

Gospel Readings :

5th	12th	19th
Luke 3. 1-6	Luke 3. 7-18	Luke 1. 39-45
25th (Christmas Day)	26th	
Luke 2. 4-20	No Services.	



The Newcastle Diocese newspaper THE LINK covers two months, this time.
For access to your December 2021 & January 2022 copy, please use the hyperlink below.

[link-december-january-2021-2022.pdf](#)

Website: www.stalbansearsdon.co.uk

Church Views magazine email: magazine@stalbansearsdon.org.uk



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Complete the 9x9 grid with digits so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 blocks contains all of the digits from 1 to 9.



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



Please note - all material for next month's magazine (January 2022) will need to be in before Wednesday 29th December 2021. Thank you.

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Marti's Musings 93

It's definitely getting cold now. I can smell Christmas coming! November was surprisingly warm and some of our garden flowers are still blooming. It makes the current climate change and COP26 so important. I watched Ramsey speak on the live stream service about his new role, he did a great job and I am now planning how to cut down my carbon emissions; maybe less poo bags? I'm not sure mum will appreciate using leaves, although you can get some great corn starch biodegradable plastic bags.

It's definitely too early for decorations but does it count if you've just bought them? Mum has just got a beautiful carving of Mary and Joseph on the donkey travelling to Jerusalem which I think is appropriate for now. It's made of olive trees and came from Jerusalem! Mum found a company that import them to support fair trade. Although I'm not convinced that's much good for the carbon emissions.

Can't wait to see you all at Christmas in church!

Lots of Jerusalem blessings

Marti xx



WORDSEARCH

December 2021

Christmas is nearly here! Two thousand years ago the Jews were longing for the coming of their Messiah. The Old Testament had promised that when He came, He would preach good news to the poor, bind up the broken hearted, proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, comfort all who mourn and to bestow on His people a crown of beauty instead of ashes. Jesus did all those things. He was and is the Son of God, and whoever has seen Him has seen the Father. Whoever believes in Him will have the best gift of all – His Spirit within them, which gives them eternal life.

Messiah
Broken
Heart
Freedom
Darkness

Favour
Prisoners
Comfort
Mourn
Bestow

Crown
Beauty
Ashes
Son
God
Jesus

Seen
Father
Whoever
longing
thousand



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Church Treasurer

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Mrs B Henderson 46 Kingston Drive, Whitley Bay, NE26 1JJ. Tel: 291 3678

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Tel: 07414 601 351

Reader

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Tel: 2528977

Church wardens

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Vicar

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Our Lady, Star of the Sea :

Mgr. Andrew Faley Tel: 252 8021

Parish Office Tel: 252 7066- open on Weds, Thursdays, & Fridays, 10am to 1pm.