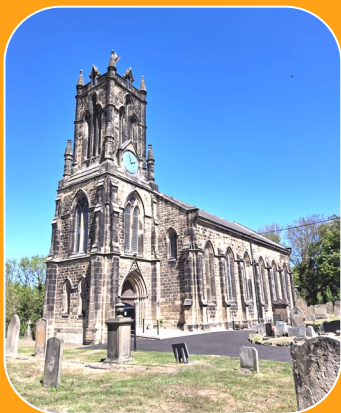




St. Alban's Earsdon

CHURCH VIEWS

**October
2025**

£1.00



St. John's Backworth



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

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

OCTOBER 2025

Seeds of Life: St Alban's and St John's 2025-2030

Hello everybody,

As I sit down to write this Thought, I'm aware that it might be of limited value to our Roman Catholic friends. However, as I guess lots of churches are facing similar challenges, I hope what's here might help Immaculate Heart and Star of the Sea to compare notes.

As trailed in September's 'Church Views', St Alban's and St John's recently had a Church Council Away Day. On Saturday September 27th a group of us went to Holy Saviour's in Tynemouth. We spent the day reflecting on where we've come from, assessing where we are now, and seeking God's guidance for our life together up to 2030.

For the headlines of our *looking back*, see pages 4 and 5 of September's magazine. Along the way, we reflected that the pandemic had brought us closer together as a congregation. Zoom worship, and our booking-in system, enabled us to get to know each other's names. In other ways, too, the pandemic benefited us by forcing our hand. For example, we were not able to mount Christmas Eve services full of excited children. So we mounted 'Journey to the Crib', turning St Alban's into an exploratory. Families came in at ten minute intervals to explore the church, see lots of nativities on display, and take souvenir pictures by a Christmas tree. We reflected that something like this shouldn't just be kept for pandemics, but could be part of our outreach in normal times.

When we came to assess where we are now, voices were quickly honest and realistic: ‘are we stuck in our ways?’ ‘We’ve got a lovely, faithful, secure congregation... but it’s quite static’. ‘We have an ageing congregation, and the few new people that we see are themselves of a certain age’. ‘We have a marketing issue – we’re not communicating our brand’.

Then the ideas began to flow...

- ‘There’s lots of new building in our parish – we could develop a Welcome Pack. It would have in it lots of information about our churches, and invite people along. We could leave the Welcome Packs in estate Sales Offices – it might benefit them, too.’
- ‘We don’t currently cater for the whole family on a Sunday. The vicar has often talked about re-launching Sunday School, but nothing has happened. We could develop links with the Uniformed Groups in the Eccles Hall, and invite them to church parades. And we could develop the links between St John’s and Backworth Park Primary School. We could invite RE lessons to come and explore St John’s. We could form an ‘Open the Book’ team for acting out Bible stories in school assemblies. We could work alongside the school e.g. to sing carols outside the new Pavilion pub in Backworth.’
- ‘People like doing things outside – we could develop this. Lots of people from Earsdon and Backworth gather at the War Memorials on Remembrance Sunday: how about arranging an event to mark the anniversary of the Hartley Pit Disaster? We could gather at the Monument and read out the names of the victims. Afterwards, we could offer people a hot cup of coffee in a cosy church.’

- ‘During the pandemic we sang ‘Carols by the Swings’ in Earsdon play park, accompanied by the Salvation Army band. Perhaps we shouldn’t lose sight of that as well.’
- ‘We could mount a Flower Festival. These are popular, and we have very good flower arrangers in our number. Something like this could build on the great success of the Scarecrow Festival and Heritage Open Days.’
- ‘What about introductory courses? I was introduced back into church through the ‘Alpha Course’. Something like that really helps people to asks lots of questions they have about faith.’
- ‘Are we overlooking our pubs? Our publicans might be very happy to host a carol sing, or a harvest sing. The Glastonbury Festival has a very popular ‘sing along to old favourites from school assemblies’. And it would be win-win if we helped put more money across the bar.
- Meanwhile, we recognised that St Alban’s choir is a bit stuck, like the congregation. How might we draw more people into the life of the choir? Perhaps the choir could be opened to new people who might like to sing the Christmas music. Who knows? Come the New Year they might have caught the bug and want to continue.

Rivers of ideas are great, but they come with a potential problem. Too many ideas, and you end up confused, and unsure about what to do. That’s where the Church Council now needs to continue its work. We need to discern, from God, a realistic plan for our life together 2025-2030. What’s realistic to take on?

Might some of these ideas be gently let go of? What's the right order to do things? These are the questions that will occupy us as we move on from our Away Day.

Towards the end of the day, Jo McEvedy suggested a possible image that might tie a lot of this thinking together. She reminded us of those moments in the gospel that are all about *seeds*. The sower sows seeds all over the place. Not all of them grow. Some fall on the hard-trodden path, others fall into good soil. Not all of our seeds will grow... but that doesn't stop us sowing them anyway.

And, Jo concluded, Jesus told a story about a mustard seed. Starting small, it grew into a large bush, and 'the birds of the air' came to its branches. Might that be a picture for our life together, and for that of our Roman Catholic friends, as we continue our journey together under God?

With love,

Tim Mayfield.

St John's Church

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Saturday, 8th November 2025

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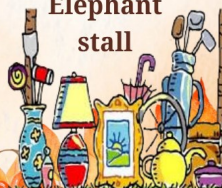
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The 10th anniversary of Earsdon Scarecrow Festival took place on Saturday, 13th September 2025.

As ever, the village displayed very many scarecrows and hundreds of people visited to check them out. There were stalls inside the hall, and of course the ever popular map and trail to find every one of the scarecrows.



This event raises money for Bloomin Earsdon, the local cause that provides flower tubs etc. to help keep the village looking lovely.





Here are just a few of the scarecrows that we have room for.



Weather Outlook for the month of October 2025.

Direct from the Captain's Charts.

Ex Hurricane Storm Amy heralds the first of the named storms at the beginning of the Autumnal Equinox. The winds were forecasted to increase from the Southwest late Friday becoming stronger and veering from the West and peaking on Saturday, reducing steadily on Sunday (5th), I predict the remnants of Amy will stay with us for a couple of days into the new week giving unsettled weather as it heads further north and declines.

The beginning to mid October.

To start the period the UK will be subject to a broad westerly weather pattern allowing weak frontal systems to spread in from the Atlantic. Within this, we are likely to see further spells of rain or drizzle and strong winds at times affecting northern and western areas, it is likely that all parts of the UK could see much rain from time to time. As the month progresses there is a signal, albeit a weak one, for pressure to build in the vicinity of the UK, with a better chance of more areas seeing some longer drier interludes. On the whole temperatures look to be fairly close to average, although some chilly nights are to be expected at times.

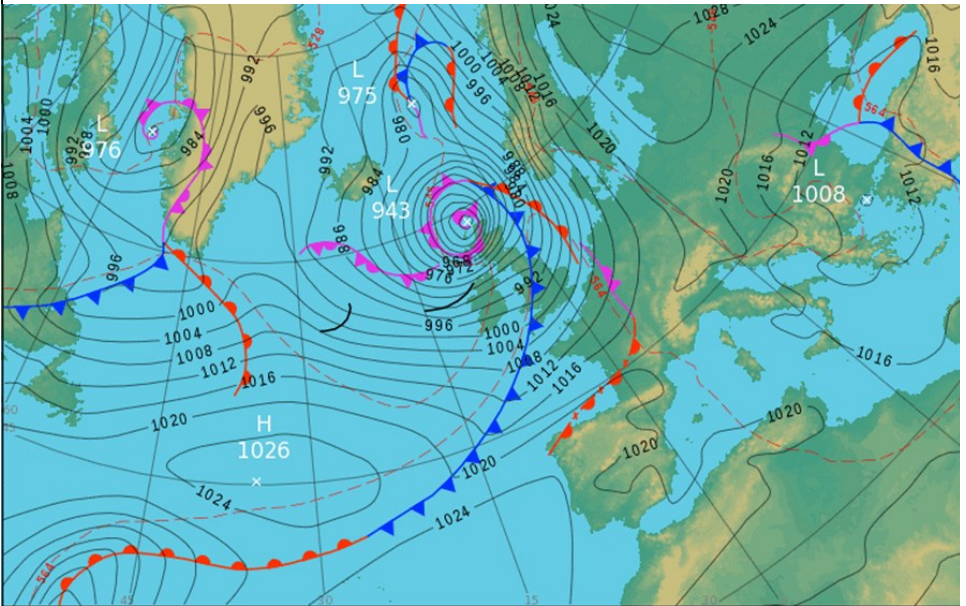
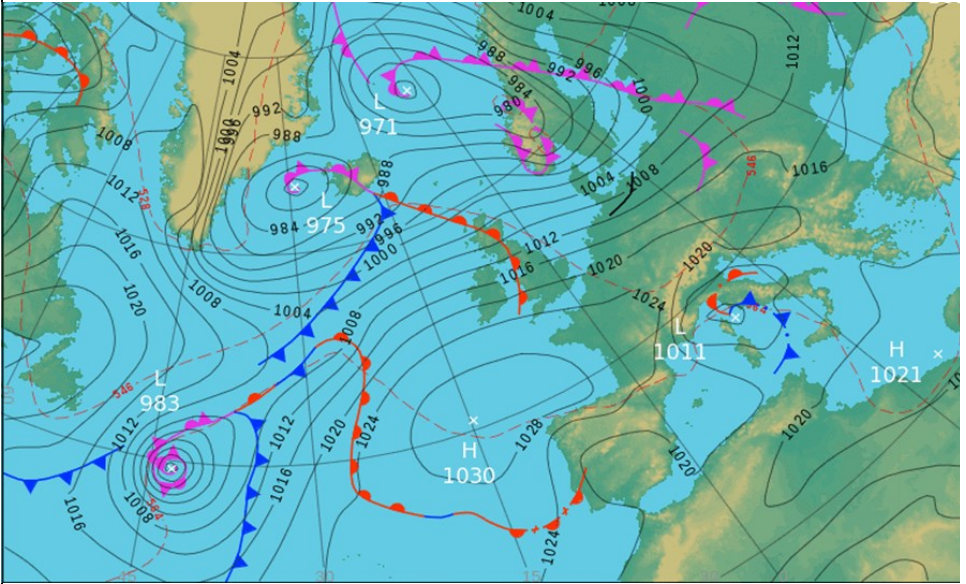
Mid to the end of October.

The mid to the latter half of October will likely see a transition to more widely unsettled conditions once more with successive depressions moving in from the Atlantic or a rather slower evolving weather pattern remains to be seen. There is a greater chance of more places seeing frequent spells of rain or showers with the possibly of strong winds.

Temperatures are predicted to remain close to average overall, with a reduced incidence of chilly nights compared to earlier in the month.

D Gibson
2nd October 2025

North Atlantic Surface Pressure Chart Prediction for 12:00 hrs (UTC) on Sunday 5th October 2025.



At the time of going to press - the above pressure chart shows the predicted severity of Storm Amy on Saturday (4th) with tight isobars indicating the strength of the wind across the UK.

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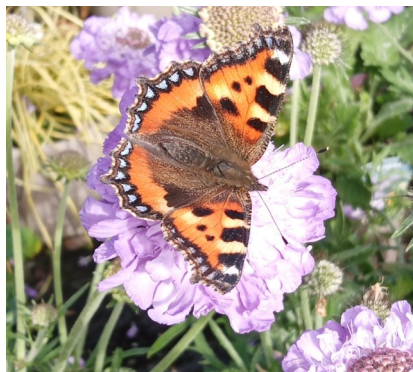
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CHURCH VIEWS FOR OCTOBER 2025 FROM THE PARISH OF OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA



The Garden of Remembrance at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church this October captured the last of the roses and the first of the autumn leaves.



And we welcomed the bounty and beauty of the world we have been given as late summer turned into a currently benevolent and fruitful autumn.

Our prolific - but far from vertical - apple trees will be professionally pruned and given sturdier supports in January when they are dormant.

Changed Daily Mass Times

On 1 October the daily Mass times in all three of our churches changed to 10.00am. This will make it easier for those using bus passes, or those of us who find it a problem getting anywhere before that without creaking. “No officer, that wasn’t a gunshot. It was me knees.”

CAFOD Group Gift

The final total raised for a clinic in the developing world was over £5000 and the cheque was presented to the Diocesan CAFOD representative in September. The Family Fast Day on 3 October gives further opportunity to eat simply and help frugally, donating the cost of a usual day's food to those coping with war and climate catastrophes.



Our Lady and St Edmund's

As reported at the September open meeting of the Pastoral Parish Council, negotiations about a financial settlement with Northumberland Estate are continuing. The covenant on the land is restrictive, affecting any settlement, and the financial figures in the July Minutes of the PPC reported to the open meeting are so far unchanged.

Macmillan Coffee Morning Thursday 16 October

Please come along at 11.0am at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. MacMillan nurses do amazing work for those affected by cancer and that means some of our own families or our friends. The purpose is serious but the social gathering is always lively – and we have some amazing bakers!

Beauty and the Beast Pantomime, Playhouse, Sunday 7 December

Tickets for the 4.30pm performance will be available after Masses on the weekend of 4/5 October or from the Parish Office.

In case it comes up in a pub quiz, the story was written by novelist Suzanne-Gabrielle de Villeneuve. Her other writings (no, me neither) must have lacked that certain something.

Walking Group

The autumn season will open with Thursday walks from Bolam Lake to Shaftoe Crag on 2 October and in the Blanchland area on 16 October.

Gerry Latimer, Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea

New Parish Mass Times:

St Edward's: Sunday 9.30am, Tuesday and Friday 10.00am

Immaculate Heart of Mary: Saturday 6.00pm, Wed 10.00am

St Mary's: Sunday 11.00am, Thursday 10.00am

St Oswin's: Sunday 9.30am, Tuesday 10.00am

Harvest Festival

Earsdon and Backworth celebrated Harvest Festival on Sunday September 28th. The 9am service at St John's, and the 10.30am service at St Alban's, and Children's Church in the afternoon back at St John's, all gathered significant contributions for 'The People's Kitchen'.

Owen and Phil then came in The People's Kitchen van to collect it all. Phil rolled a shopping trolley up the ramp and into the back of St Alban's. He stopped in his tracks and shouted for Phil: 'Phil – we need another trolley! Or two!' In the end, Phil and Owen filled three shopping trolleys full. They said they'd have to go straight back to the depot with it all before they could do another pick-up. 'Amazing!' Phil concluded: 'we've never collected so much in one go!' Thank you so much, everyone.

Meanwhile, the excellent sum of £554.77 was given to help farmers in Tanzania increase the yield of their harvest. There was a beautiful moment when young Sophie Lambert brought up the collection for Tanzania. Sophie is the daughter of Jennifer Lambert, who was there in the choir. Jennifer is the daughter of Suzanne Medows, who was there in the congregation. Suzanne is the daughter of Jim and Anne Appleby, who in the past took consignments of goods out to Tanzania. Many of these were donated by the congregation. It's special to think that our current new link with Tanzania is building on these rich links from the past.

I also thought you might like to note our running total since Harvest 2021. Including that first collection for Tanzania, we've now sent the Diocese of Central Tanganyika a total of £4,028. £2,687 of this is towards the work of Conservation Agriculture in the Diocese. £1,310 of this is the amount raised for the building of the new St Andrew's Church in our link village of Majeleko. And for the eagle-eyed, the remaining £31 was fees we paid to Barclays to transfer this money to St Andrew's.

Dianne with her faithful helper Barney and her lovely Tanzania display for Harvest Festival.



And the display in full:



Owen from
'The People's
Kitchen' loading
up a trolley.

*(continued on
next page.)*



One trolley filled

...and off to the depot. Phil (left) and Owen with your generous donations.



“The People’s Kitchen” <https://peopleskitchen.co.uk/>

As you will have seen among the “Sneak Previews” on page 25, Jo McEvedy is to be licensed as a Reader later this month. We asked Jo to give us a few words before her special service at Newcastle Cathedral.

It seems a long time since I gave my first sermon which, if memory serves, relied more on ‘Lord of the Flies’ than Luke! Since then, I have learned a great deal and made many friends. Grateful thanks to the St Alban’s and St John’s family, who have given me unfailing support and encouragement.

As well as Tim, who has been an absolute star, I would like to mention Ali and Barbara with whom I worked on Children’s Church last year, and the amazing Julie at Church of the Good Shepherd, who was inspirational. I am very excited to be beginning ministry as a fully-fledged Reader, something I could not have imagined a few years ago.

Love and blessings to you all,

Jo



Memorial Service 6pm Sunday November 2nd

On Sunday November 2nd at 6.00pm St Alban's is to host a special Memorial Service. During the service we shall light candles in memory of all whose funerals have been held through St Alban's Earsdon and St John's Backworth in the last twelve months, naming them as we do so. Please consider yourself warmly invited to this service, as we will also remember in the same way anyone you would like us to remember. If there's someone special to you and you'd like their name to be included, please email tim.mayfield@btinternet.com



A lovely message sent in by Joyce Whitehouse:

Congratulations to Kim Whitehouse who has completed two 26-mile walks in aid of charity.

The first was July 12th and raised £446 for Alzheimer's Society.

The second was on 13th September to Bamburgh and raised £661 for MacMillan Nurses.

Preparation for the walks began each day at 6.00am, prior to going to work!

What an effort! Well done Kim for raising such a great amount for these worthy charities. £1107 altogether.

Date for your diary...

St Alban's Nativity Festival

Saturday 6th December 10.00am to 5.00pm.



Refreshments will be served... mince pies, biscuits and coffee.

We are looking for volunteers to set up and display nativity scenes in the church.. Please contact Joan A if you are interested in helping.

More news to follow in November's magazine.

St. Alban's and St. John's

Diary Page for October 2025

Sunday	5th	<u>Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity</u>	
	9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	12th	<u>17th Sunday after Trinity</u>	
	9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	16th	9.30am	Holy Communion St John's
Sunday	19th	<u>18th Sunday after Trinity</u>	
	9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	26th	<u>Last Sunday after Trinity</u>	
	9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Thursday	30th	9.30am	Holy Communion St John's

'Living Bread' – a Quiet Day

Our next Quiet Day is on Saturday October 11th, at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Battle Hill. The day will be punctuated by the rhythms of making our own bread – the mixing, the kneading, the miracle of seeing the yeast, making it rise, shaping into bread rolls and baking. The day will end with communion, with the bread you yourselves have made.

To book, email tim.mayfield@btinternet.com

St. Alban's and St. John's

Sunday Gospel Readings for October 2025 :

5th

Luke 17.5-10

12th

Luke 17.11-19

19th

Luke 18.1-8

26th

Luke 18.9-14

Sneak Previews...

Jo McEvedy is to be licensed as a Reader at a special service in Newcastle Cathedral on Saturday October 18th at 2pm. Let's turn out in force to support Jo.

Tim and a team lead the **Carbon Literacy Project** on November 16th and 26th and January 14th. Three online sessions (7 till 9pm) will examine the science of climate change, our own personal carbon footprints, and what we can be doing together as church. The course can lead to Carbon Literacy Certification for those who choose to take this option.

By popular demand, Max will again be co-leading a **Reformation Sunday** service. Using the communion service from the Book of Common Prayer, this service will be at 10.30am on Sunday November 2nd.

Remembrance Sunday falls on November 9th this year. Gather in the Eccles Hall for a short act of worship at 10.30am, before processing down to Earsdon War Memorial.



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* 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**. *

Please note - all material for next month's magazine
(November 2025) will need to be in before
Wednesday 29th October . Thank you, *Jean*.

Earsdon

plants centre



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

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Funeralcare

All in the month of October

It was...

200 years ago, on 25th Oct 1825 that Johann Strauss II, was born. This Austrian composer is best known for his waltzes, including *The Blue Danube*.

125 years ago, on 20th Oct 1900 that the American aviation pioneers the Wright Brothers made their first untethered glider flight at Kill Devil Hills, in North Carolina.

100 years ago, on 13th Oct 1925 that Margaret Thatcher, Baroness Thatcher, was born. She was the first woman Prime Minister of Britain (1979-90). (Died 2013.)

90 years ago, on 12th Oct 1935 that Luciano Pavarotti, Italian operatic tenor, was born. Considered one of the finest tenors of the 20th century, and one of the most commercially successful of all time. (Died 2007.)

70 years ago, on 20th Oct 1955 that *The Return of the King*, the third and final part of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, was published.

65 years ago, on 30th Oct 1965 that Diego Maradona was born. The Argentine football player, manager and coach is regarded as one of the greatest football players in history. (Died 2020.)

60 years ago, on 8th Oct 1965 that the Post Office Tower (now the BT Tower) in London was officially opened. It was the tallest building in the UK until 1980.

40 years ago, on 1st Oct 1985 that riots broke out in Toxteth in Liverpool and Peckham in London. Five days later (6th Oct) Met Police Constable Keith Blacklock was killed in the Broadwater Farm housing estate riot in Tottenham. He was the first British constable to be killed in a riot since 1833.

25 years ago, on 26th Oct 2000 that the BSE Inquiry Report was published in the UK. It concluded that the BSE (Mad Cow Disease) epidemic was caused by the use of infected meat and bone meal in cattle feed.

20 years ago, on 3rd Oct 2005 that Ronnie Barker, TV comedian, actor and writer, died. Known for *The Frost Report*, *The Two Ronnies*, *Porridge*, *Going Straight* and *Open All Hours*.

15 years ago, on 13th Oct 2010 that 33 Chilean miners who had been trapped underground for 69 days following the collapse of the San Jose copper-gold mine were rescued. Around one billion TV viewers around the world watched them being pulled to the surface one-by-one, in a specially designed capsule.

WORDSEARCH

October 2025

To St Luke, whose feast-day is 18th October, we owe a beautifully written gospel as well as the Book of Acts. He was a Greek physician and faithful travelling companion to St Paul. Under house arrest near the end of his life Paul noted, 'only Luke is with me'. Luke's gospel focuses on the compassion of Christ, and offers us moving parables, such as the Good Samaritan and Prodigal Son. Women figure more prominently in Luke's gospel than in any other: look out for the extended story of the Virgin Birth, and stories of Mary, Elizabeth, and the woman who was a sinner. His gospel also features more poor people, more lepers, more 'sinners', who are all shown to be 'inside' the love of Christ. In Acts, Luke skilfully links sacred and profane history, as subsequent archaeology has shown. He tells of how the early Christians moved away from Jerusalem into the pagan world, and especially on to Rome.

Luke
Feast
Day
Written
Gospel
Acts
Greek
Physician
Travelling
Faithful
Paul
Compassion
Parables
Prodigal
Son
Good
Samaritan
Women
Poor
Lepers
Sinners
Jerusalem
Pagan
Rome
Early
Christians



Church Contacts

St. Alban's Earsdon:

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Church wardens

Ali Griffiths, Currently unavailable.

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NE25 0SR

Tel: 07841 986 019

PCC Secretary

Rob Gowdy, 82 Chipchase Court, New Hartley, Northumberland
NE25 0SR

Tel: 07841 986 019

PCC Treasurer

Rob Swindells, 81 St Mary's Avenue, Whitley Bay NE26 3TS.

Tel 252 3919

Safeguarding Officer

Tracey Gray. Tel: 07767 382 744

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Vicar

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Church warden

Ali Griffiths, Currently unavailable.

Treasurer & Assistant Church Warden

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Our Lady, Star of the Sea :

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Tel: 252 8021

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