

The Remembrance Season commences: 30th October – 12th November 2022

All Saints and The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed

Greetings from Eileen

Dear Friends,

A PRAYER FOR THE NATION

Almighty God,
you have given your Holy Spirit
to lead us into all truth:
guide the leaders of this nation,
and equip them for the work set before them
in the days ahead.
Give to them your wisdom and your peace,
revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Our nation has a new Prime Minister, Mr Rishi Sunak. Like the Conservative Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli in 1868 and then for a second time in 1874, who was the first of Jewish Italian ancestry and appointed during political turmoil, our new Prime Minister is also a Conservative leader, the first of Asian-Indian ancestry, and we hope to be moving out of a turbulent political period.

An exchange on Facebook:

'Mr Sunak and his wife are worth more than \$1.1 billion, placing them among the 250 wealthiest British people or families.'

Comment 1: *'Let's hope he's able to truly empathise with those who have nothing and whom he serves.'* Comment 2:

'when pigs fly'. Comment 3: ***'for the sake of the country I hope pigs fly'.***

I have observed this nation to be a people of restraint especially in times of significance and concern. So, this comment caught my attention. *"I screamed at God for the starving child"*. Well, someone is to blame: the greedy, the selfish, the wealthy and rich, and God for not striking them down. *"...until I saw the starving child was God screaming at me"*. I'm not inclined to imagine God screaming. But God's world has abundance, graciously and generously provided for everyone, and those who have and those who lead must be the most appalled to see

"I screamed at God for the starving child until I saw the starving child was God screaming at me".

people in want and poverty.

Pigs do not need to fly. Those who lead and those who have, must act.

This newsletter is for 2 weeks

SERVICES: All Saints is celebrated this Sunday with The Bishop's Chaplain Chris Knights

9.30am St Andrew's, Winston – Holy Communion

10.45am St Mary's, Gainford – Holy Communion

Services on the 3rd Sunday before Advent 6th November will be led by lay leaders at both churches.

God, the most holy and glorious Trinity is with us, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

NOTICES:

Eileen is away in her diocesan role as UK Minority Ethnic and Global Majority Heritage Advisor, and in her national role as Participant Observer on the House and College of Bishops; and thereafter she is on Individual Guided Retreat in North Wales.

This announcement was made on Sunday 23rd October 2022:

Appointment of Revd Canon Eileen Harrop as Priest-in-Charge of Ingleton St John the Evangelist and Staindrop St Mary

Bishop Paul is delighted to announce that Revd Canon Eileen Harrop has been appointed Priest-in-Charge of Ingleton St John the Evangelist and Staindrop St Mary. Eileen will continue to serve Gainford St Mary and Winston St Andrew, however she will be laying down her half time role as Entrepreneur Priest in Bishop Auckland in order to now serve Staindrop and Ingleton. It has for some years been part of the Barnard Castle Deanery Plan for the four parishes to be served by one full-time Priest-in-Charge. Eileen is excited about the opportunities to proclaim the Gospel and share the love of Christ in these parishes. We expect her to be licensed early in Advent.

Meetings are being convened for the leaders of the 4 parishes to discuss practical arrangements and the Licensing Service early in Advent. Please pray for this new season of ministry, giving thanks for God's leading, favour, and blessings, and for help to discern and make wise and joyful decisions going forwards.

- **Saturday 29th October: Anna, Michael and Millie are holding a 'late morning afternoon tea' between 11 am and 1 pm in Winston Village Hall** to raise money for the Special Care Baby Unit in Darlington Hospital, and there will be a raffle too. They would love to welcome you and for your support for this special unit which has looked after Millie so well.
- **A WARM & WELCOME SPACE in Gainford:** A community team, led by Wendy Broderick (our Lay Pastoral Minister), is planning for a weekly space for anyone who would welcome socialising in a warm environment. Please do complete the questionnaire distributed with the Parish News, on social media, and attached to this newsletter.
- **Churches Together in Gainford screening of the Virtual Pilgrimage on Thursday 3rd November 7pm** Gainford Village Hall Supper Room.

• **YOUTH SAINTS: Thursday 10th November 5.45pm Bible Study; 6.30-8pm Youth Saints – crafts, games, music, reflection, and FOOD!**

- **Young Musicians Concert at Gainford St Mary, 7pm Thursday 18th November:** Joshua our organist and harpist, his sister Seren joining Katie Mowbray on the violin, Claire Mead on the flute, will be supported by Brian to provide an evening of classical and light music. **Don't miss this chance to hear our amazingly talented young musicians! Tickets are £6 including refreshments from Sue Taylor, tel. 01325 730379 or on the door.**

Collect for All Saints

Almighty God,
 you have knit together your elect
 in one communion and fellowship
 in the mystical body of your Son Christ our
 Lord:
 grant us grace so to follow your blessed saints
 in all virtuous and godly living
 that we may come to those inexpressible joys
 that you have prepared for those who truly
 love you;
 through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
 who is alive and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever. Amen

Post Communion Prayer (All Saints)

God, the source of all holiness and giver of all
 good things:
 may we who have shared at this table
 as strangers and pilgrims here on earth
 be welcomed with all your saints
 to the heavenly feast on the day of your
 kingdom;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Collect for 3rd before Advent

God, our refuge and strength,
 bring near the day when wars shall cease
 and poverty and pain shall end,
 that earth may know the peace of heaven
 through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Post Communion Prayer (3rd before Advent)

God of peace,
 whose Son Jesus Christ proclaimed the
 kingdom
 and restored the broken to wholeness of life:
 look with compassion on the anguish of the
 world,
 and by your healing power
 make whole both people and nations;
 through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
 Amen

First Reading (All Saints): Ephesians 1:11-23

¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

¹⁵ I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸ so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰ God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²² And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Gospel Reading (All Saints): Luke 6:20-31

²⁰ Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

‘Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ ‘Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.

‘Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²² ‘Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. ²³ Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

²⁴ ‘But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

²⁵ ‘Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

‘Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ ‘Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

²⁷ ‘But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

First Reading (3rd before Advent): 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17

¹ As to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we beg you, brothers and sisters, ² not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as though from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here. ³ Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction. ⁴ He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God. ⁵ Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you?

¹³ But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁴ For this purpose he called you through our proclamation of the good news, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter.

¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word.

Gospel Reading (3rd before Advent): Luke 20:27-38

²⁷ Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him ²⁸ and asked him a question, 'Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. ²⁹ Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; ³⁰ then the second ³¹ and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. ³² Finally the woman also died. ³³ In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her.'

³⁴ Jesus said to them, 'Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; ³⁵ but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. ³⁶ Indeed they cannot die any more, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. ³⁷ And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. ³⁸ Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive.'

Sermon, 19th Sunday after TRINITY at Winston St Andrew's: Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop, 23rd October 2022 (Romans 15.1-6; Luke 4.16-24)

This Sunday's message follows on from last Sunday's sermon, where I drew your attention to reading of God's Word so that we know how to live as followers and believers of Jesus Christ.

Jesus himself is recorded reading the Scriptures in Luke's Gospel passage for today:

'...he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

*¹⁸ 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'*

As soon as Jesus read it, all at once, several things happened.

When Jesus returned to his seat, there was a marked silence and people continued to look at Jesus. Those hearing the words of scripture saw the very Spirit of God that Isaiah, the prophet of old, refers to, was upon Jesus. Those words had come alive. They could see in their minds' eye those occasions when they witnessed Jesus bringing good news to the poor, the captives, the sick and incapacitated, and the oppressed in many places. Even those who had not seen Jesus calling upon God the Father to bless him as he spoke, touched, lifted, and commanded deliverance from demons to be the good news in people's lives, had heard vivid accounts. It occurred to all that in Jesus' reading of God's Word, the promises of God were fulfilled. They recognised and understood at that moment God's faithfulness as a lasting reality; that they, God's people, do not wait or worship in vain.

Have you ever experienced something where you saw God's truth revealed before your eyes? It could have been a fleeting moment, or a lasting memory that comes back to lift you up unbidden time and time again.

When we read the Bible with open hearts and minds, seeking by prayer and faith His blessing to be enlightened, we can be sure that we will gain understanding by the power of the Spirit. And like those who heard Jesus' reading out the scriptures in the synagogue, you will surely also be touched by God in your daily life.

But Luke issues a warning with this scene. Despite their realisation, the people began to use their worldly reasoning to question what God had revealed to them. On this occasion, they began to suggest that Jesus, the son of Joseph who was known to them as a simple carpenter, surely could not be the Anointed One. They began creating a barrier to their blessing, blinding themselves with their society's perspective on social status.

In my experience, when God favours us with something special such as the exceptional weather for Sophie and Luke's October wedding, people justify away God's favour. Many prefer to say: *'aren't we lucky?'*

The way of the world is to deny God his goodness, and when people are in difficulty, they blame God.

Yet I know, that I had been faithful to the covenant I have with God, that when I pray with thanksgiving for each wedding, God would provide a day of blessings including the weather. And there are always witnesses to this reality. I had said at the rehearsal the day before, that no umbrellas or wet weather contingencies would be needed because God's promise is good.

For you, God's reality may be manifest in a different way. We each are called into a personal relationship with God. God does not heal the oppressed by enabling them to walk but by lifting the burden that oppresses them or by restoring their dignity or affecting their oppressor. God knows that the poor need more than words, so provide ways for them to manage in their poverty and to alleviate their circumstances.

God's Word is spiritually powerful and real, but it also presents tough truths for our way of life as Christians.

Our reading from Romans speaks to us as Christians today and how we *'love our neighbour as ourselves'*. The Apostle Paul wrote: *'We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Each of us must please our neighbour for the good purpose of building up the neighbour.'*

The world's way is for any sensible person to steer clear of neighbours or people in our families or workplaces, who are difficult. That's what it means by *'the failings of the weak'*. These are people who exhibit difficult behaviour or attitude due to spiritual weakness. Instead of following the human instinct for self-preservation, to leave well alone, Paul says that we who are strong (that is who know we can draw on God's spiritual strength) must do something that helps that difficult person. We are to love such persons in spirit and in truth. To be honest, this is for some of us like walking into the lions' den or going where angels fear to tread! A sort of 'kamikaze mission'. So, what should we do? In our Romans' passage we learn at least 2 things:

Firstly we are to search the scriptures for guidance:

'For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.'

Secondly, we are to pray for discernment AND thanksgiving, because Jesus is with us. Every insult we receive, every time our sincere efforts are rebuffed, these insults and rebuffs are borne by Jesus. Jesus is right beside those who follow him. He is our shield and our strength, every time we *'put up with the failings of the weak'* and help to build up that wayward person.

Prayer is the first action. With all sincerity and persistence, prayer is more powerful and lifechanging than any human doing.

The way of Christians is not the way of the world that denies God and denies the Holy Spirit's power. The way of Christians is to follow Jesus. To this end, I am always grateful for our late Queen's personal testimony. One way that is not the world's way, is to trust God's Word. May we choose God's way. Amen