

2nd WEEK OF EPIPHANY NEWSLETTER

12th – 18th January 2025

'Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.' Isaiah 6:1



It is still 'the new year' throughout this season of Epiphany as I make my way to take my first service of 2025 at each church. I'm also catching up on many blessings from last season's services of great joy with full churches and generous donations for the needy. **At Winston St Andrew's**, the church was full even into the choir stalls, with 120 adults and 21 children; the singing was amazing and Dottie played so well. The collection for the

Children's Society raised £566.23. **At Gainford's Churches Together Carol Service**, The Children's Society, St Cuthbert Care, and Action for Children each received £96. Other charities, including CRISIS also received support from collections received at our other Christmas services. (* *Epiphany Nativity scene in Gainford St Mary photographed by Robert Elliot*)

A heartwarming relationship that began in the previous Christmas was refreshed with **Staindrop Academy's Christmas Afternoon Tea** for parishioners from our communities. Assistant Headteacher Paul Marwood exclaimed: "Let's do it every year!" **Ingleton St John the Evangelist Church** encountered an unexpected problem with the main street and pavement overly-lined with cars resulting from the excellent response to our Carol Service!



A Prayer for the New Year

Almighty God,

You are the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. As we step into this new year, we offer You our praise and thanksgiving for the blessings and challenges of the year past. Grant us wisdom to seek Your will in all we do, courage to face the unknown with faith, and grace to grow in love for You and for one another.

Renew our hearts, O Lord, that we may walk in Your light, speak Your truth, and serve Your world with joy and hope. Bless our homes, our communities, and Your church, that we may be instruments of Your peace and bearers of Your Good News.

In the name of Jesus Christ, who makes all things new. Amen

Epiphany 2 Communion and Services

9.15 Staindrop St Mary Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

9.30 Winston St Andrew Rev'd Moji Jaiyesimi

10.45 Gainford St Mary Rev'd Moji Jaiyesimi

11 Ingleton St John Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

5pm Gainford St Mary St Mary's Evensong Quire

* Pending conditions affecting Church Mews' access

Epiphany 3 Communion & Services

9.15 Staindrop St Mary LAY Service of the Word

9.30 Winston St Andrew Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

10.45 Gainford St Mary Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

3pm Gainford St Mary MESSY CHURCH Team



May God, Emmanuel, fill us with His Holy Spirit, and be with us in every aspect of our lives this year that His Righteousness and Love bless our words, thoughts, and deeds.

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

NOTICES

We pray for families recently bereaved and give thanks for the lives of

- † The Late Elizabeth Pauline Bellamy, whose life was celebrated at her funeral service in The Chapel at Darlington Crematorium on The Epiphany 6th January 2025
- † The Late William Andrew Goyder (Bill), whose funeral at Gainford St Mary's followed by a private burial takes place on Friday 17th January 2025 at 12.30
- † The Late Mrs Joyce White, whose funeral at Wear Valley Crematorium (private) and Thanksgiving Service at Winston St Andrew's takes place on Friday 31st January 2025 at 1pm

FROM OUR PARISHES

GOOD NEWS! The future of **Warm and Welcome** received a boost with Gainford and Langton Parish Council committing to funding support. Congratulations and thanks to Wendy Broderick, lead coordinator, and Geoff Taylor co-lead. Gainford St Mary is in collaboration with other community agencies, delivering this initiative that is valued increasingly by elderly and otherwise isolated members of the parish.

Invitations

† **To join our Parochial Church Councils (PCCs)**

All our churches are lovingly cared for by parishioners who step forward to serve on our PCCs. We have vacancies for PCC members, and in Ingleton, Staindrop, and Winston also for churchwardens. Our churchwardens, anyone on the PCC, and I would love to speak to anyone who is interested.

† **To join our Schools Councils and Governing Board, and Young People teams**

We have 3 church schools: Gainford; Ingleton; and Staindrop. We need church representatives on Gainford and Ingleton schools' Academy Trust council and Staindrop school's governing board. We also welcome interest to support our schools' ministry in various ways.

Contact Paula Harrison (Lay Children's Minister and Staindrop Primary Chair of Governors), Sarah Fells (Missioner and Licensed Lay Minister in Training), Sheila Jones (Youth Saints and Messy Church co-Leader), Judith Pressly (Ingleton Academy Trust Councillor and Ingleton St John the Evangelist Churchwarden), and Sue Taylor (Open The Book team leader): stmarys@gainfordwinston.church

† **To join GATHER church: God's Tent in Teesdale**

Check out <https://durhamdiocese.org/gather-a-new-rural-church-plant-for-teesdale.php>

GATHER LIFEGROUP – small groups in conversation, exploring God's word in the **Bible and fellowship over drinks and nibbles – 2nd and 4th Thursday evenings in Staindrop**; practical events including **Litter Picks around our 4 parishes – next on Saturday 25th January 10am Ingleton**; fun including Pub Quizzes. **Next Pints of View Thursday 23rd January 7pm at The Black Horse, Ingleton**. To find out more contact Sheila Jones (GATHER administrative lead) and Tom Deakin (GATHER pilgrimage lead): info@gatherchurchteesdale.com

† **To join Warm and Welcome (Gainford) and TEA & CHAT (Winston)**

A weekly time of gentle fun with tea, coffee and cake at Gainford Village Hall: contact Wendy Broderick, Lay Pastoral Minister. For Tea and Chat at Winston Village Hall: contact Val Raper.

† **To join BELL RINGING teams**

We have tower ringing teams at St Mary's, Gainford and Staindrop churches. New ringers are especially sought for Staindrop's tower team. Please contact Mark Palmer at mark@palmerfrost.plus.com

BREAKING NEWS: 2025 is STAINDROP ST MARY'S BELLS RESTORATION

CENTENARY! Plans have begun for a Festival of Bells. Get in touch with Mark Palmer if you'd like to know more and how you can help.

COLLECT for Epiphany 2

Almighty God,
in Christ you make all things new:
transform the poverty of our nature by the
riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
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

God of glory,
you nourish us with your Word
who is the bread of life:
fill us with your Holy Spirit
that through us the light of your glory
may shine in all the world.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our
Lord.
Amen

I Corinthians 12:1-11

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. ²You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. ³Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says 'Let Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

The Gospel according to John (2:1-12)

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ²Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

³When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' ⁴And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' ⁵His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.'

⁶Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. ⁹When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom ¹⁰and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.'

¹¹Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

This renowned piece by T S Eliot is one for reflection and conversation.



THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI BY T.S. ELIOT

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.'
And the camels galled, sorefooted, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
and running away, and wanting their liquor and
women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of
shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate
valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the
darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the
meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the
lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of
silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arriving at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you might say)
satisfactory.

We had evidence and no doubt.
I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.