

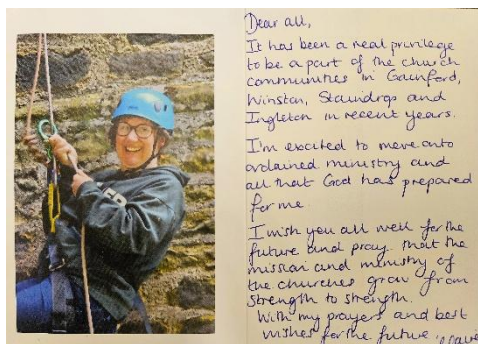
ASCENSION NEWSLETTER

1st – 7th June 2025

While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up to heaven. (Luke 24:51)

Dear Friends,

I was reminded that our farmers have asked that we pray for rain. On a beautiful morning with lively birdsong, standing amongst shallow puddles and light rain, **12 disciples gathered by Gainford's riverside to recall Jesus' Ascension into heaven**, lifting in word and song our prayer and praise. I wonder what the conditions were like on that day when Jesus was taken up to heaven.



Dear all,
It has been a real privilege to be a part of the church communities in Gainford, Winston, Staindrop and Ingleten in recent years. I'm excited to move onto ordained ministry and all that God has prepared for me. I wish you all well for the future and pray that the mission and ministry of the churches grow from strength to strength. With my prayers and best wishes for the future.
Claire



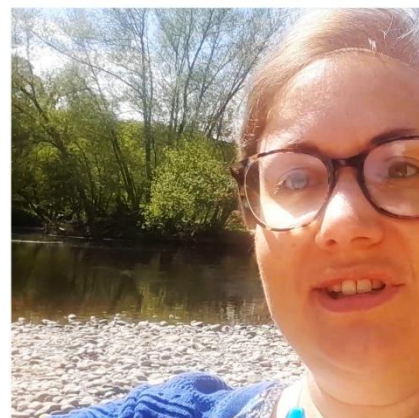
For many special memories...

Last Sunday, we gave thanks and said our farewells to Ordinand in residence Claire Mead at a joint service in Gainford St Mary's. Having followed God's prompting to come to us 4 years ago as Covid restrictions eased for in-person church services, Claire discerned God's call to Ordained Ministry while serving as our children, young people, and families Missioner, and as one of GATHER church's leaders. She trained with Cranmer Hall, Durham while in residential placement in our parishes. As God prepared Claire for her vocation, our whole ministry was blessed with fruitfulness: we transitioned from 2 parishes to 4 parishes, and one school to 3 church schools; Youth Saints was renewed and Messy Church launched; followed by the birth of our church on the move, GATHER. Others were encouraged into their vocations too, so that from having no lay licensed ministers, we now have 5. We shared God's purposeful reality afresh. Claire will be ordained Deacon on the Feast of Sts Peter and Paul, Sunday 29th June in Durham Cathedral at 10am.

Claire Mead

To serve St. Luke's and All Saints Stranton in Hartlepool

Claire's journey to ordination has been a long one. She has served for many years in a lay capacity through youth and schools work, even starting the discernment process more than ten years ago in a different diocese. More recently, while worshipping at St. Mary's Gainford, Claire felt God nudging her to return to discernment.



During the 9 days between Ascension to Pentecost, we are invited specially to pray for the powerful revival and coming of God's Kingdom, on earth as it is in heaven. There are people on our hearts and minds who need to be comforted, or whose lives need re-igniting with hope, or who yearn to have purpose and to know God's loving intentions for them. We are invited to pray for them, and to renew our own confidence and faith in God. Jesus has arisen and now ascended to his and our eternal home, so we reflect on all that Jesus taught by his life, his words and his deeds, and consider the coming of the Holy Spirit with all God's power for us. **There are prayer booklets in each church** for you and anyone you know who would like to pray. **Please help yourself to them.**

SERVICES ON THE SUNDAY AFTER THE ASCENSION (Communion)

9.15am Staindrop St Mary

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

9.30am Winston St Andrew

Rev'd Moji Jaiyesimi

10.45am Gainford St Mary

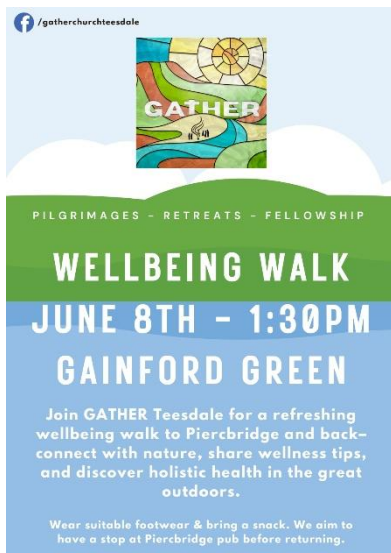
Rev'd Moji Jaiyesimi

...as the morning stars sang together, all the angels shouted for joy!
Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

NOTICES

Our Young Organist LLEWELYN BLEZARD-GREENWELL, Senior Organ Scholar at RIPON CATHEDRAL, is giving a recital there on THURSDAY 5th June 1pm.

Presently using his half-term break to tour 9 European countries with his Mum Felicity to play on 16 cathedral and abbey organs, Llewelyn (who plays at our churches in Ingleton and Gainford) would be delighted to see our parishioners at his recital.



Come along on an afternoon's **PILGRIMAGE WALK** from **Gainford to Piercebridge along the River Tees, Pentecost Sunday 8th June.**

Meet at **1.30pm** on Gainford's Green in front of St Mary's Church **returning around 4.30pm.** Come with footwear suitable for slightly rugged terrain, bring water and a snack.

CONFIRMATIONS: Are you baptised and would like to be confirmed? Do you feel ready to receive Communion? Adults and teenagers are also welcome to be Baptised and Confirmed at the same service. Please speak to your churchwardens, Missioner Sarah, or young people minister Paula and leader Sheila.



DISCIPLESHIP AND FELLOWSHIP

The next GATHER LIFEGROUP meets on THURSDAY 5th June 7pm.

New members, most welcome.

EXPLORE FAITH THROUGH SHARING & BIBLE READING with GATHER fortnightly 1st and 3rd Thursdays 7pm at 32 North Green, STAINDROP info@gatherchurchteesdale.com



Our Parish Churches of Gainford and Ingleton are both represented at **GAINFEST** and **INGLETON FAYRE** on **Saturday June 14th 1-4pm.** Come along with friends and family for an afternoon of fun.

Helpers appreciated for Gainford's Tea and Cakes Tent, and at Ingleton St John's stand and in church.



COLLECT for Sunday after The Ascension

O God the King of glory,
you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ
with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:
we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,
but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us
and exalt us to the place where our Saviour
Christ is gone before,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Eternal God, giver of love and power,
your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the
world
to preach the gospel of his kingdom:
confirm us in this mission,
and help us to live the good news we proclaim;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

First Reading (EASTER 7 Sunday after The Ascension): Acts 16.16-34

¹⁶ One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave-girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. ¹⁷ While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, 'These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.' ¹⁸ She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour.

¹⁹ But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market-place before the authorities. ²⁰ When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, 'These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews ²¹ and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe.' ²² The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. ²³ After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. ²⁴ Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. ²⁷ When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul shouted in a loud voice, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.' ²⁹ The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ Then he brought them outside and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' ³¹ They answered, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' ³² They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. ³³ At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. ³⁴ He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

The Gospel (EASTER 7 Sunday after The Ascension): John 17:20-26

²⁰ 'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

²⁵ 'Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.'