

22nd – 28th June 2025 TRINITY I NEWSLETTER

For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbour as yourself." (Galatians 5:14)

Dear friends, Among the events that remain in the news is the tragic Air India crash. While we quietly give thanks that we are not directly affected on this occasion, we acknowledge its devastating reality – that it could have been any aircraft and any flight, and we could have been among those who lost their lives or were maimed or whose dearest loved ones perished in such a terrible way. A friend posted on social media **a Christian's Reflection on The Air India Crash**, and I share it here.

The Air India plane crash – to some, just another breaking news story. To me, it was a soul-stirring reminder of how fragile and unpredictable life really is. **Four lives. Four stories. Four powerful lessons** that changed how I see time, purpose, and the grace of each moment.

1. First: A family who had waited years to fulfill their dream of migrating to the UK. Life kept getting in the way, responsibilities, delays, decisions. They finally made it onto the plane... but never reached their destination.

And I realized: We carry so many plans for "someday." But if we keep waiting, someday becomes never.

2. Second: A woman who was supposed to be on that flight. She arrived late. Missed the check-in. Pleaded to get on board but was denied. She was frustrated, angry, defeated. Only to later realize: that delay was divine protection.

We don't always get what we want, because God sees what we cannot. Sometimes, His "no" is what keeps us alive.

3. Third: A man who survived. The plane split in half and he happened to be in the section that didn't catch fire. He walked away, dazed and alive, from something no one thought survivable.

It wasn't luck. It was purpose. And I was reminded of the verse: "*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.*" (Ecclesiastes 3:1) It simply wasn't his time.

4. Fourth: And then those who didn't make it. People with dreams. People with families. People with unfinished stories. They kissed someone goodbye that morning... not knowing it was the last time.

Their lives remind us that time is not guaranteed. We're not promised old age. We're not promised later. What we have is now. A breath. A heartbeat. A chance.

Summarising the reflection: So while you still have today, while you're still breathing, still strong, still able, don't waste it. Don't wait for the "perfect" moment. **Love now. Apologise now. Forgive now. Dream now. Speak now. Because life doesn't always come with warnings. And sometimes... "next time" never comes.**

A Call for Parochial Church Council (PCC) members and especially CHURCHWARDENS:

On Thursday 26th June, churchwardens elected for 2025-26 will pledge to serve their parishes and churches at a special service. Sadly, no one offered to serve at **Staindrop St Mary**, which is legally only continuing at the discretion of the Vicar and permission of the Archdeacon. For a significant church with 3 churchwarden posts to be filled, this is an urgent need. **Ingleton St John the Evangelist** has 2 churchwarden posts and only one is filled. I appeal to church members of these 2 parishes to step forward. Please get in touch with me, or Linda Hausmanis (linda.hausmanis@gmail.com) and Judith Pressley (pressley.j@hotmail.com).

SERVICES THIS SUNDAY (PROPER 7)

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

11am Ingleton St John the Evangelist

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

Advance notice for Sunday 29th June, there is NO SERVICE at Gainford St Mary – the congregation are invited to join Winston St Andrew, 9.30am, or Ingleton St John (joint service with Staindrop St Mary), 11am, with Rev'd David Spokes.

Those who are right with God will live by faith. (Galatians 3:11b)

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

NOTICES

† **ORDINATION:** Please pray for our Ordinand **CLAIRE MEAD** will be ordained deacon in Durham Cathedral at 10am on The Feast of St Peter, Sunday 29th June 2025. **ALL WELCOME.**

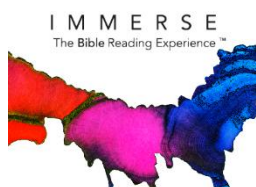
† **Festal CHORAL EVENSONG** on Sunday 29th June 5pm at Gainford St Mary. This is the only sung Prayer Book service in our parishes, supported by our St Mary's Choral Evensong Quire. Everyone is welcome.

† **WEDDING:** Pray for James McGonagle and Alice Hodgson married on Saturday 21st June 1pm at Gainford St Mary's.

† **CONFIRMATIONS:** Are you baptised and would like to be confirmed? Do you feel prompted to receive Communion? Teenagers and Adults are welcome to be Baptised and Confirmed at the same service. Please speak to your churchwardens, Missioner Sarah, or young people minister Paula, young people's leader and GATHER lead Sheila.



DISCIPLESHIP AND FELLOWSHIP



GATHER LIFEGROUP meets fortnightly on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays 7pm usually at 32 North Green, **STAINDROP**

info@gatherchurchteesdale.com. Transport is available from Gainford, Winston, and Ingleton. New members, most welcome. **EXPLORE FAITH THROUGH SHARING & BIBLE READING** with **GATHER**

ADVANCE NOTICES

Pray for our **CHURCHWARDENS** who pledge to serve their churches and parishes at the **VISITATION SERVICE** Thursday 26th June 7pm All Saints Church, Blackwell, Darlington:

Everyone is welcome to support our churchwardens by coming along to our Archdeaconry's Visitation Service.



Looking for the perfect retreat getaway?

Discover one of the most beautiful areas in the county. Learn about God within His Creation. Take a pause from hustle and bustle of everyday life



Our retreat offers:

- ✓ Breathtaking Scenery
- ✓ Fellowship
- ✓ Scripture and talks
- ✓ Pilgrimage



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Based in the Durham Dales

CONTACT US TO RESERVE
A PLACE

GAINFORD OPEN GARDENS

SUNDAY 6TH OF JULY

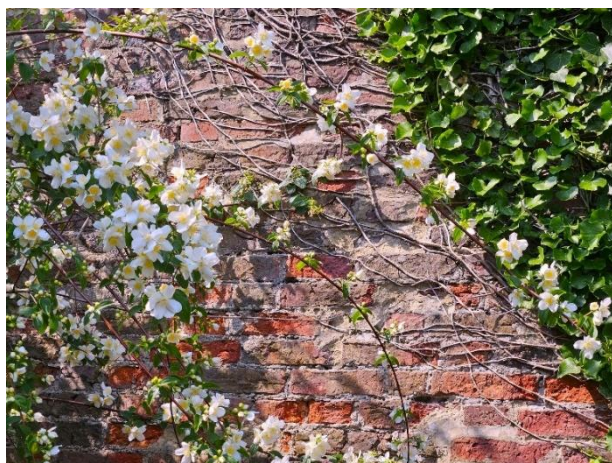
2pm - 5pm

Tickets £5 on the green

Children free

Teas in St Mary's Church Gainford

Proceeds for St Mary's Church DL2 3DS



COLLECT for 1st SUNDAY after TRINITY

O God,
the strength of all those who put their trust
in you,
mercifully accept our prayers
and, because through the weakness of our
mortal nature
we can do no good thing without you,
grant us the help of your grace,
that in the keeping of your commandments
we may please you both in will and deed;
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

Eternal Father,
we thank you for nourishing us
with these heavenly gifts:
may our communion strengthen us in faith,
build us up in hope,
and make us grow in love;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

First Reading (TRINITY I): Galatians 3:23-29

²³ Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. ²⁷ As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

The Gospel (TRINITY I): Luke 8:26-39

²⁶ Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷ As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me'— ²⁹ for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) ³⁰ Jesus then asked him, 'What is your name?' He said, 'Legion'; for many demons had entered him. ³¹ They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

³² Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. ³³ Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

³⁴ When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. ³⁵ Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. ³⁶ Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. ³⁷ Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. ³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹ 'Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.' So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

SERMON ON TRINITY SUNDAY on John 16:12-15 – Tom Deakin, Authorised Minister of the Word, preached at Winston St Andrew and Gainford St Mary

Now, let's set the scene a little. This passage comes towards the end of what we often call the 'farewell discourse' – Jesus' final extended conversation with his disciples, beginning back in John 13, just after the foot-washing at the Last Supper. It's intimate, it's packed with theology, and it's emotionally weighty. And now, in chapter 16, we're reaching the crescendo.

Jesus knows what's about to happen. He knows the betrayal is close, the cross is coming, and that these friends of his – fragile, hopeful, confused – they're about to grow through a storm. And yet, he also knows there's more they need to hear.

But it's too much. They can't bear it. Not now.

And maybe you recognise that feeling in your own life – that moment where life is already overwhelming, and someone wants to pile on more. And in God's kindness, sometimes the message comes instead: "Not now. You're not ready. But I'll help you get there."

Which brings us to the heart of this passage. Because Jesus doesn't leave them – or us – without help. He makes a promise.

"When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you in all the Truth". John 16:13

Now let's pause here – not rush past. *"When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all the Truth"*. This is one of the richest and most beautiful promises in all the New Testament because it's not just about receiving information; it's about being guided – about someone walking with you, leading you, unfolding truth bit by bit, according to your capacity to bear it.

This isn't a download. It's discipleship.

Let me give you an image. Many years ago now, I took up hill walking – mostly in the Lakes and a bit in Wales – and I quickly learnt a few things. One, walking uphill with the wrong boots on is a form of penance... and two, that on a foggy ridge in an unfamiliar area you need a guide who knows the way.

There was a day we set up for Helvellyn, and the fog came down – one of those thick, soaking, soup-like mists where you can't see 5 feet in front of you. But we had a seasoned friend with us who'd done the route a dozen times. He didn't give us an OS map and wish us luck; he led us, slowly, one step at a time.

That's the sort of image Jesus gives of the Spirit's work. Not a SatNav, not a fact-sheet, but a presence, a guide, someone who walks with you into deeper truth. Because we don't just need truth, do we? We need to be led into it. Our hearts have to catch up with our heads.

"He will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come." John 16:13

Here, we get this sense of unity in the Trinity – that the Spirit isn't off freelancing; he's drawing from the very heart of God. He speaks what he hears. And that's reassuring, isn't? In a world where we're bombarded by voices – news feeds, politicians, influences, algorithms – it's hard to know which voice to trust. But the Spirit speaks with the authority of heaven. What he says is in harmony with the Father and the Son.

And notice, the Spirit declares the things that are to come – which isn't just about prophecy about end-times, but a deeper awareness of the ongoing work of God in the world. The Spirit doesn't just look back at what Jesus did – he enables us to see what Jesus is still doing.

And that matters today. Because Truth, real Truth, isn't just a set of doctrines to recite; it's a living encounter. It grows. It deepens. We come to understand it more richly as life unfolds.

Think of how your understanding of love, or grace, or forgiveness has changed over the years. You might have known, intellectually, that God forgives – but then you walk through a season of deep failure and suddenly that Truth doesn't just sit in your head; it sinks into your bones.

That's the Spirit's work guiding you into Truth – not just knowledge, but transformation.

Now, the final verse of our passage seals this altogether.

“He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare to you”. John 16:14

What's the Spirit's ultimately aim? To glorify Jesus. To shine a spotlight, if you like, on the Son. The Spirit doesn't draw attention to himself – he draws us to Christ. Every whisper of comfort, every moment of conviction, every deepening insight into scripture – all of it is meant to bring Jesus into clearer focus.

Some of you may know C.S Lewis' line – from 'Letters to Malcolm' – where he says that praying in the Spirit is a bit like looking at a beam of light rather than at the source. The Spirit illuminates, but doesn't insist on being seen. His joy is in revealing Jesus.

“All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”
John 16:15

Here we come full circle – Father, Son, and Spirit, bound together in mutual love and self-giving. The truth we're guided into isn't a narrow; it's the very life of God. The Spirit takes what is Christ's and what is Christ's belongs to the Father – and that is what is declared to us.

Which is astonishing, really. That we – ordinary, muddling, limited people – are invited into the shared life of the Trinity. Not as spectators but as participants.

So, what do we take from this, in our world today?

Well, for one – we need to cultivate patience. Jesus didn't dump all his teachings on his disciples in one go, and we shouldn't expect instant clarity in our own faith journeys. We live in an age of immediacy – where answers are Googleable and gratification is fast – but God works more slowly. Truth is revealed over time, in relationship, with space for reflection and the humility to say, “I don't fully know – yet.”

Secondly, we need to trust that the Spirit is still guiding. In a world full of change, division, and confusion – especially in the Church – we may find ourselves longing for certainty, for the kind of clarity that removes all doubt. But Jesus promises not a list, but a guide. And that means we can walk forward even if we don't see the whole path.

And finally – we're called to listen. Not just with our ears but with our hearts. The Spirit speaks, yes – but are we attentive? Are we carving out the quiet, the Scripture-soaked time, the prayerful reflection that allows that voice to be heard?

In a world of noise, Spiritual attentiveness is a counter-cultural act. But it's essential, if we want to be led into truth.

So friends – if you find yourself confused, or tired, or uncertain – take heart. The Spirit hasn't stopped speaking. Jesus hasn't stopped guiding. And the Father hasn't stopped loving.

You may not be ready for everything just yet – but that's alright. The God who knows your limits also walks beside you. One step at a time, one truth at a time, with grace enough for the day.

Amen