

16th – 22nd November 2025 2nd before Advent NEWSLETTER

Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right. (2 Thessalonians 3:13)

Dear friends,

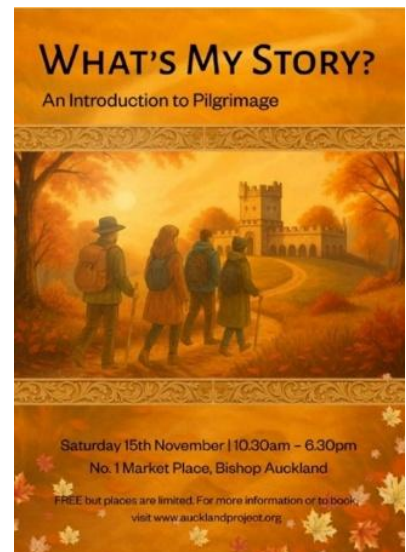
Last week on Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day, we gathered to remember the fallen, who put themselves in harms way because it was the right thing to do. It was right to stop the destruction of peaceful arrangements between nations and of people who have chosen to protect their peaceful ways of life. Peace is fragile and uncertainty is heightened in our world. Because there's the bully in the playground and the bully who has gathered a following to oppress in the work place and in the world, peace that is born of justice, which comes from loving one another, cannot be taken for granted. As people of Christian faith, who have found the reality of Christ, we are able to say: *'God has made us one in Christ. He has set his seal upon us and, as a pledge of what is to come, has given the Spirit to dwell in our hearts. Alleluia.'*



This week, some of our communities joined the television watchers across the UK to greet the **Children in Need Presenter Sarah Cox**, as she **ran through Staindrop and Winston (with Pudsey the Bear)** to raise funds for this cause. A young generation that begins in dire straits should surprise, disappoint, distress, and raise indignant action. A brave undertaking in the spotlight, Sara Cox must complete the equivalent of 5 marathons to bring attention to Children in Need, and to raise funds.

On Saturday 15th November from 10.30am to 6pm, GATHER partners with The Hearth of Auckland Project in Bishop Auckland to invite caregivers to a Pilgrimage Day, to care for themselves, to pause and take a breath, and to reflect on the gift of their caregiving. They will be treated to a journey into lives of some depicted in the paintings of the Mining Art Gallery and the Spanish Art Gallery, and into the terraces of the walled gardens layered with health in nature's edible vitamins. Walking through the park's openness and then enveloped in the mystery of Belbiurne Woods, how would participants' minds and spirits be stirred? Together with GATHER leads Tom and Sheila, I shall share in leading this day and look forward to being enlightened myself of others' stories and my own.

If you're unable to join the Pilgrimage Day, **you're welcome to hear about the art, stories, songs, and poems inspired by that day on Friday 21st November 7-9pm at The Hearth, 1 Market Place, Bishop Auckland** – next to The Tapas Bar of the Spanish Art Gallery.



Thank you to Sarah and Sheila for organising our mission evening I AM MARK at Staindrop Academy. Everyone is welcome to Bible studies featuring the Gospel according to Mark at Staindrop, hosted by Sarah Fells at 2 Oliver Gardens, Staindrop, on Tuesday evenings 18th and 25th November and 2nd and 10th December 6.30-7.30pm. Sheila is also hosted a Bible study evening on Thursday 20th November in her home, 2 Academy Gardens, Gainford.

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

† **Please pray for:**

- **the family of Colleen Dunbar** – a faithful member of St Osmund's Gainford and of Gainford Churches Together, whose Requiem Mass took place on Thursday 13th November at 1pm in St Osmund's Church.
- **the family of Robert Mills of South Cleathlam**, whose service will be at Staindrop St Mary's on Monday 17th November 11.30am.
- **the family of Geoffrey Mennell lately of Gainford**, whose service will be at Gainford St Mary's on Friday 5th December 11am and thereafter for burial in the cemetery.

† **The people of the PHILIPPINES and other places who have lost their lives**, homes and livelihoods from Typhoons and Earthquakes – please enquire at our churches how you could give towards disaster relief

NOTICES



**EVERYONE IS INVITED TO
STAINDROP ACADEMY'S
CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON TEA!**



**STAINDROP
ACADEMY**

Wednesday 3rd December 2pm

with carols, mince pies and other Christmassy food and drink prepared and served by their students. FREE TRANSPORT ALSO PROVIDED! contact@stmarysstaindrop.org.uk

GAINFORD'S CHRISTMAS MARKET will be the best yet with more stalls of local crafts, produce, and art, as well as a pre-loved stall and Youth raffles on **Saturday 6th December 10.30am**. Entrance fee £3 only! Don't miss the buzz and fun to get quirky creative gifts.

ORGANISTS WANTED! Entering a new season for several of our churches, we are looking for pianists and organists. This is such a precious, joyful, offering that has blessed us from one generation to the next. Have a chat with our churchwardens **in Winston, Ingleton, and Gainford**, if you or someone you know would welcome more information or wish to have a go on our organs (and in Gainford, the Clavinova).

PCC MEMBERS WANTED! God is revealing great opportunities for our parish in Staindrop St Mary's to engage with the schools and community, so we are praying for more members on our PCC. **We can co-opt members who may not already be registered on our church electoral roll**, if anyone is interested to work with the church to enliven and strengthen our ability to serve and bless our community. For information and a chat, contact us at contact@stmarysstaindrop.org.uk



COLLECT for 2nd before Advent

Heavenly Father,
whose blessed Son was revealed
to destroy the works of the devil
and to make us the children of God and heirs of
eternal life:
grant that we, having this hope,
may purify ourselves even as he is pure;
that when he shall appear in power and great glory
we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious
kingdom;
where he is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Gracious Lord,
in this holy sacrament
you give substance to our hope:
bring us at the last
to that fullness of life for which we long;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen

First Reading: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

⁶ Now we command you, beloved, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, ⁸ and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labour we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. ⁹ This was not because we do not have that right, but in order to give you an example to imitate. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat. ¹¹ For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. ¹² Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.

The Gospel: Luke 21:5-19

⁵ When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said, ⁶ 'As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down.'

⁷ They asked him, 'Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?' ⁸ And he said, 'Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, "I am he!" and, "The time is near!" Do not go after them.

⁹ 'When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately.' ¹⁰ Then he said to them, 'Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; ¹¹ there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

¹² 'But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. ¹³ This will give you an opportunity to testify. ¹⁴ So make up your minds not to prepare your defence in advance; ¹⁵ for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ You will be hated by all because of my name. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹ By your endurance you will gain your souls.