

23rd – 29th November 2025 CHRIST THE KING NEWSLETTER

*Christ did not think of equality with God as something to cling to.
Instead, he gave up his divine privileges (Philippians 2:6)*

Dear friends,

We end the Church's season of Ordinary Time, focused on our discipleship in the world by acknowledging **Christ the King of heaven and earth**. There is never a time when the world near and far hasn't troubled us and threatens to steal or suppress our joy. Wordsworth's poem comes too often to my mind:

*The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!*

Then I am reminded that however challenged we feel in our earthly lives that '*Christ (is) in us, the hope of glory*' and '*hope does not disappoint because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who is given for us*' (Romans 5). Therefore this Sunday, let us lift up our hearts and re-commit ourselves to the One in whom hope is assured and is '*the way, the truth, and the life*', as we celebrate the Feast of Christ The King.

Forecast to be cold, wet, and blustery, our first **GATHER with The HEARTH Pilgrimage** day began with uncertainty. Unexpectedly 2 leaders down – one



with chicken pox afflicting his child, and the other in pre-op preparation – we had to reshape our day instantly. But God gathered the dozen of us, many meeting as strangers from Lancashire, Easington, Weardale, Lake District, and ourselves, and we were greatly blessed. 21st November Friday evening's gathering has had to be postponed, but all agreed that we dearly desired to do this again. Thanks be to God.

ADVENT beckons from next Sunday. A time of preparation before Christmas, we have begun our **EVENING SESSIONS STUDYING THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK** prepared by Licensed Lay Minister in Training Peter Craig. Sheila Jones, GATHER'S co-lead conducted a session on Thursday 20th November at 2 Academy Gardens, and Sarah Fells Ordinand in Discernment has begun the 1st of 4 Tuesday evening sessions **at 2 OLIVERS GARDENS, STAINDROP 6.30-7.30PM. All welcome to join the remaining 3 sessions on 25th NOVEMBER, 2nd AND 9th DECEMBER.**

THE GAINFORD STAR and WINSTON'S STAR OF BETHLEHEM will be lit from Advent Sunday. These stars shine brilliantly in the darkness throughout Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, and we invite dedication of loved ones who are missed particularly during these seasons of hope, joy, and new life. You're welcome to add names to the sheets at the back of St Mary's, Gainford and St Andrew's, Winston.

This Sunday CHRIST THE KING Services:

9.15am	Staindrop St Mary	Holy Communion
9.30am	Winston St Andrew	Holy Communion
10.45am	Gainford St Mary	Holy Communion
11am	Ingleton St John the Evangelist	Holy Communion

Rev'd David Spokes
Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop
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Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop
(Peter Craig on intercessions)

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

† **Please pray for:**

- **the family of Robert Mills of South Cleathlam**, whose service was held at Staindrop St Mary's on Monday 17th November.
- **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.

GATHER for CAROLS ON THE GREEN on SATURDAY 20th December at 3pm around the warmth and glow of a firepit, and enjoy mulled wine, marshmallows, and other treats! More information contact Sheila on info@gatherchurchteesdale.com



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 CHRIST THE KING

Eternal Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of
heaven
that he might rule over all things as Lord and King;
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit
and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order to worship at his
feet;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Stir up, O Lord,
the wills of your faithful people;
that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of
good works,
may by you be plenteously rewarded;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

First Reading: Colossians 1:11-20

¹¹ May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; ¹⁶ for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

The Gospel: Luke 23:33-43

³³ When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[³⁴ Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.']] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵ And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!' ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, ³⁷ and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.'

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' ⁴² Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' ⁴³ He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

TRADITION informs that this Sunday is also STIR-UP SUNDAY
when puddings are made ready for Christmas and stirred!

