

## 14<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> December 2025 ADVENT 3 – NEWSLETTER

*“...blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me” (Matthew 11:6)*

**Dear friends,**

Counting down to Christmas is like something rolling down a hill. It draws closer faster. Each day gets more intense the more eagerly anticipated and the more occupied we are with our preparations. Even the most harmonious of families runs the risk of a falling out at Christmas. Dramatic disagreements may make for memorable stories, but they dent the spirit of Christmas joy. That peace might begin and end Christmas day or the additional Christmas days when families gather at one another's homes, may be the blessing for all of us this Christmas. Did you know that Jesus said, “*Blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me*”? Let us consider adopting these wise and practical words of Jesus for a blessed Christmas!

In the Advent spirit of anticipation, I've been drawn to cribs and nativity scenes.

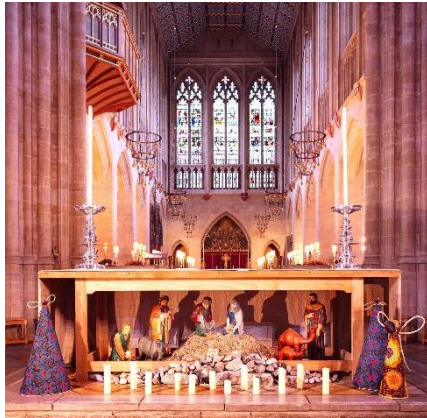


Here is the 'knitivity' built for Wendy by her grandchildren Esme and Florrie.

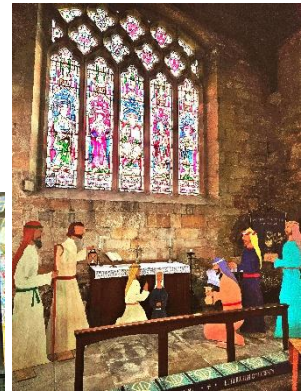
And here is the crib and the life-sized nativity in Staindrop St Mary's Church.



And an extraordinary Nativity within St Edmundsbury Cathedral's high altar.



What joy captured of Staindrop Primary's worship in St Mary's Church last Friday. They come again for the school and family's Christmas Service this Friday.



**In addition to Sunday and Christmas Communion Services, all are welcome to these**

### **Schools Christingle & Carol Services in Church**

Staindrop Friday 12<sup>th</sup> 1.30pm

Gainford Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup>  
9.30am

Ingleton Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> 11am

Staindrop Academy (Year 7) –  
Christmas Experience &  
Service Friday 19<sup>th</sup> 9.30am

### **Churches celebrate Christmas**

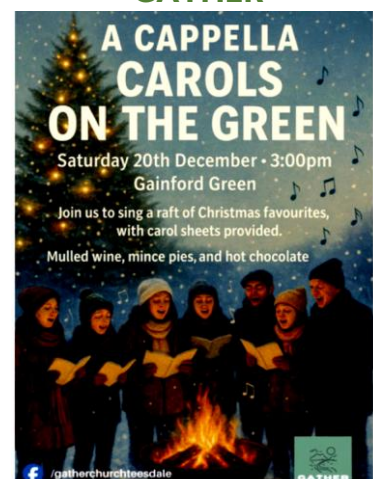
Ingleton Nine Lessons & Carols Sunday  
14<sup>th</sup> 11am

Staindrop Nine Lessons & Carols  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm

Gainford Churches Together  
Carol Service Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> 6pm

Gainford Family CRIB Service  
Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> 4pm  
Winston Carols by Candlelight  
Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> 7pm

### **GATHER**



### **Services on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of ADVENT:**

9.15am Staindrop St Mary

9.30am Winston St Andrew

10.45am Gainford St Mary

11am Ingleton St John the Evangelist

Holy Communion

Service of the Word

Service of the Word

Nine Lessons & Carols Service

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

Lay Leaders

Peter Craig with Lay Leaders

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

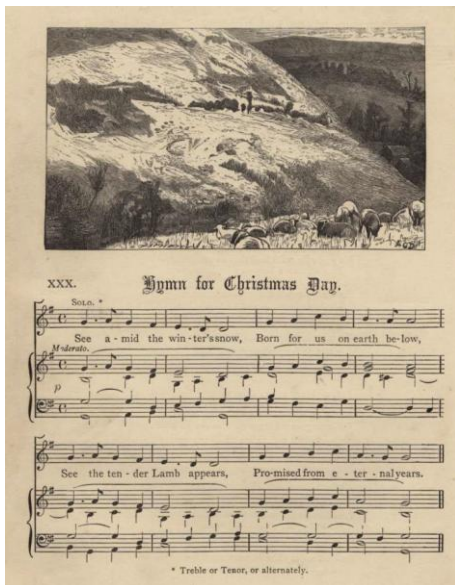
Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

† **Please pray for:**

- **Mandy and the family of the late John Waterson of Langton**, whose burial of remains takes place this Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December 1pm in Ingleton St John the Evangelist Churchyard.
- **The family of the late June Tallentire of Gainford**, whose funeral service will be at Gainford St Mary's on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 11am and therefore for burial in the cemetery.

† **The people of Japan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Philippines and other places who have lost their lives, homes and livelihoods from earthquakes, typhoons, and floods** – please enquire at our churches how you could give towards disaster relief.

† **The traumatised, displaced, and homeless in Palestine**



I found this newly written verse by a Church leader Steve Tinning compelling for the angry, noisy, threatening world around us today

**‘See Amid The Winter Snow’**

*See him born in quiet grace,  
love unarmed and power displaced;  
sent to reconcile and heal,  
not through force or threat or zeal.  
All uprooted, forced to flee,  
find in him a sanctuary;  
none need fight to prove his reign,  
grace endures, not fear and pain.*

**NOTICES**

**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).

**A Church Near You!** Each of our churches have a free web page on The Church of England's server. Research has shown how this is where many people search the internet when looking for a church to attend, or when considering where they may move to. **We need someone to help administer Gainford St Mary's 'A Church Near You' web page.** For anyone comfortable with using the computer or social media, this is an easy task that doesn't take much time or effort. It would mean a great deal to our church. Might you be able to help? **Please contact Sue 01325 730379**

**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](mailto:contact@stmarysstaindrop.org.uk)

**The Vicarage telephone landline is down. Please use my mobile number 07976676098 if you need to get in touch by phone. Thanks. Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop**

## COLLECT for the 3<sup>rd</sup> of ADVENT

O Lord Jesus Christ,  
who at your first coming sent your messenger  
to prepare your way before you:  
grant that the ministers and stewards of your  
mysteries  
may likewise so prepare and make ready your way  
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the  
wisdom of the just,  
that at your second coming to judge the world  
we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;  
for you are alive and reign with the Father  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these  
heavenly gifts;  
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit  
that when your Christ comes again  
we may shine as lights before his face;  
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.  
Amen

## First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

<sup>1</sup> The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus <sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.  
<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
<sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
'Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God.  
He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
He will come and save you.'  
<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
<sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;  
<sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.  
<sup>8</sup> A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,  
but it shall be for God's people;  
no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.  
<sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,  
but the redeemed shall walk there.  
<sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

## The Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

<sup>2</sup> When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him,  
'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell  
John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the  
deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is anyone  
who takes no offence at me.'  
<sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the  
wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed  
in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup> What then did you go out to see?  
A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written,  
"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you."  
<sup>11</sup> Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the  
least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.