

1st – 7th March 2026 Second Sunday of LENT – NEWSLETTER

'So Abram went, as the Lord had told him' (Genesis 12:4a)

Dear friends,

When meeting parishioners casually – visitors to our churches, dog walkers, chatting at the pub – their reply to my invitation to join us on a Sunday is often *"I'm not religious"*. I wonder if they mean any of the definitions given by Thesaurus: spiritual, sacred, devout, pious, holy, and dutiful? When I've paused to take in their response, some offer a clarification, *"I'm spiritual but not religious"* or *"I believe in God but Church is not for me"*. I suppose Abram by any definition would be considered *religious*. He was certainly a man of faith so firm that he packed his things and beckoned his family to go with him when God told him to leave his country, his family community, and his home to an unknown land. So, here's a Lenten question: **Do you consider God in your big decisions as well as your day-to-day decisions?**

In my non-parochial ministry, I seek justice for those who have followed God's call to a land foreign to their homeland being tested beyond what many would consider bearable. They have followed God into their wilderness, and we pray they would be led as Jesus had been to have victory over the Devil.

Last Tuesday, 15 parishioners from Gainford's Roman Catholic Church and from our congregations came to listen to **Darlington Assistance for Refugees**. Here are light-hearted suggestions of how we may welcome the stranger and the refugee (like Abram and his family) to our country or parish but in a strange land.

BLESSINGS ON **ST DAVID'S DAY** especially to our Welsh readers and parishioners!

SERVICES ON SUNDAY 1st March 2nd Sunday of Lent

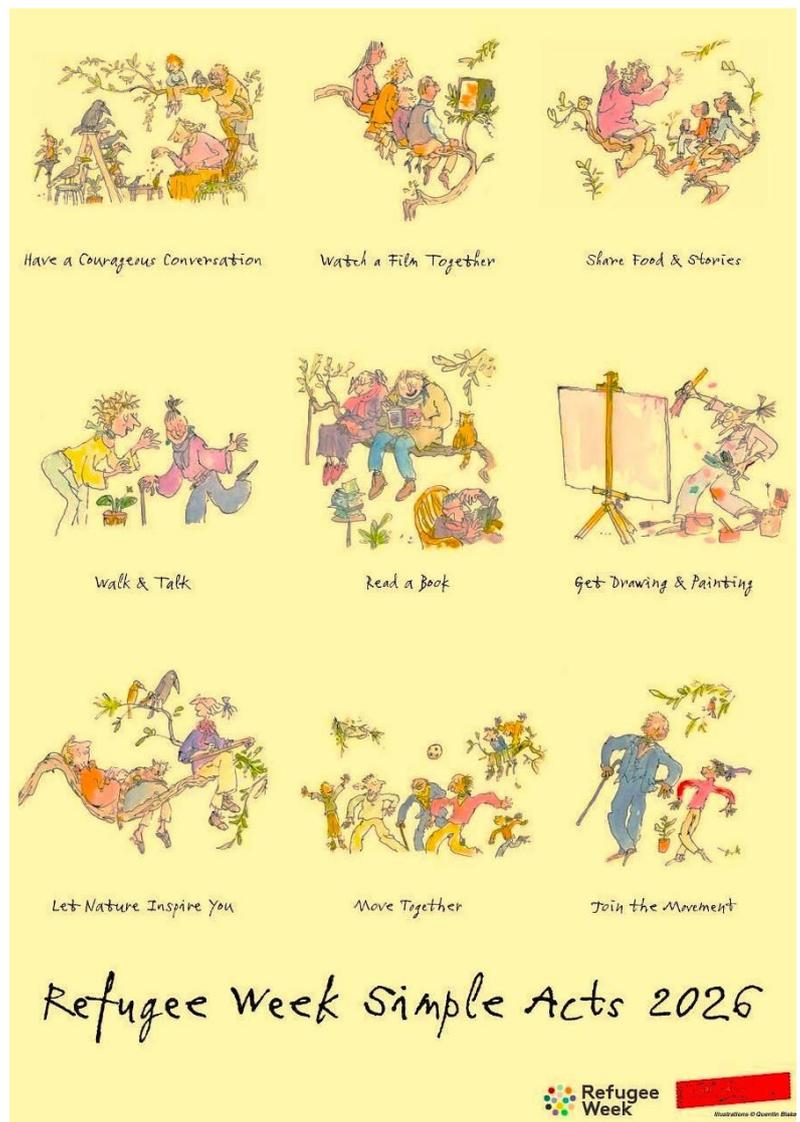
9.15am Staindrop St Mary
Service of the Word led by the Worship Group

9.30am Winston St Andrew
Holy Communion Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop
with Sarah Fells preaching

10.45am Gainford St Mary
Holy Communion Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop with Sarah Fells preaching

5pm **Gainford St Mary CHORAL EVENSONG**
Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop with Peter Craig with a Lent Meditation

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop



The Vicarage telephone landline 01325 733154 has been restored! You may continue to use my mobile number 07976676098 if you wish rather than leaving a voice message on the landline. Thank you.

NOTICES:

Please pray for the families of the recently departed in our parishes, of

† **DORIS RAPER** formerly a faithful member of St John the Evangelist Church, Ingleton. Her funeral service is to take place on Thursday 5th March at 11am, conducted by Rev'd Lloyd Evans.

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP OUR CHURCHES

- ☺ **GAINFORD ST MARY'S BAND** welcomes musicians and instrumentalists to join them. A relaxed and happy group meets to play for our 10.45am Sunday service one Sunday a month. Presently 5 musicians rehearse about once a month on Monday evenings. Peter Dransfield, their band leader, would be delighted to hear from you: pd@pdmail.co.uk 01325 730450
- **PCCs: We have vacancies.** Our PCCs meet about 6 times a year. Being a member of a PCC is an important and valued role that does not require much time nor involve many tasks. PCC officers are invaluable to the running and life of our churches. **Please consider joining a PCC.** For **Staindrop St Mary's PCC** get in touch with churchwarden Linda: linda.hausmanis@gmail.com For **Ingleton St John's PCC** get in touch with churchwarden Judith pressley.j@hotmail.com or Treasurer Joyce treasurer.ingletonpcc@gmail.com

LENTEN events:

- **LENT BIBLE STUDY: TUESDAYS 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th March 7-8pm** 2 Olivers Gardens, Staindrop
- **GATHER Lifegroup fellowship and Bible study 7pm Thursdays 5th March WINSTON 4 Town Farm Close and 19th GAINFORD 2 Academy Gardens**
- **LENT LUNCHEs:**
 - **Gainford:** 12 noon Tuesdays 10th (St Osmund's) & 25th March (St Mary's)
 - **Staindrop,** 11.30am Wednesday 11th at Scarth Hall
 - **Ingleton:** 12 noon Tuesday 17th March at Ingleton Village Hall
 - **Winston:** Saturday 21st March – funds being raised for MIND – at Winston Village Hall

CHARITY LUNCH

donations in aid of



Saturday 21st March 2026

11.30am - 1.00pm

Winston Village Hall

Please join us for good food good company and making a difference

No booking required.



Home-made soups
Cheese & Biscuits
Tea and Coffee

St. Andrew's Fundraising Committee
in the Season of Lent

FUNDRAISERS for your support!

We regret that due to insufficient ticket sales, MOR-UKES is cancelled.

We look forward to strong support for our **COFFEE MORNING IN WINSTON VILLAGE HALL** in support of the MND Association on **Saturday 7th March 10am – 1pm.**

Gainford Village Hall
On Saturday 7th of March

Mor-Ukes

CANCELLED

tickets £15 from Sue
on 01325 730379

Doors open at 7pm.

£100 for Charity Other proceeds for
St Mary's Church, Gainford

Join us for a
Coffee Morning
donations in aid of
MND Association
Saturday 7th March
10am - 1pm
Winston Village Hall
Home-made Cakes
Raffle
Community get-together
See you there!

Organised by St. Andrew's Fundraising Committee

COLLECT for 2nd Sunday of LENT

Almighty God,
you show to those who are in error the light of
your truth,
that they may return to the way of
righteousness:
grant to all those who are admitted
into the fellowship of Christ's religion,
that they may reject those things
that are contrary to their profession,
and follow all such things as are agreeable to the
same;
through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Almighty God,
you see that we have no power of ourselves to help
ourselves:
keep us both outwardly in our bodies,
and inwardly in our souls;
that we may be defended from all adversities
which may happen to the body,
and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt
the soul;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

First Reading: Genesis 12:1-4

Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him.

The Gospel: John 3:1-17

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.