

24th – 30th May 2026 PENTECOST – NEWSLETTER

'All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit' (Act 2:4a)

Dear friends,

'When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place... devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.'
(Acts 2:1, 5)

It is interesting to me that **on the first Pentecost**, when all **God's people were represented in a large gathering in one place**, what astonished all of them was being able to hear and understand each other in their own language. This was unexpected especially for some who had been considered outsiders. *'Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.'* The first exercise of the Holy Spirit's power was to enable and inspire the unity of God's people from all races, ethnicities, tribes, nations, and places, to praise God together.



Many of you know of my ministry with the national Church – somehow, I have gained stature and a reputation for reminding the Church that Racial Justice, and ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity are God-purposed, to be raised up and valued as His Spirit's blessing. As it happens, Gainford is involuntarily hosting a contingent of Gypsy Travellers on the village green, the 1st time in my 10 years here. Our welcome isn't unconstrained, but tempered by experience and perceptions. **What we are called to be, as God's people at Pentecost, is not without challenge.** We need God's Spirit to fill us anew, and to see one another and others with the eyes of God's heart.



We are at the end of our penultimate week in my 4 parishes and in Durham Diocese. Last Sunday was my final time as Vicar of Gainford celebrating the Service of Holy Communion in St Mary's, Gainford, and Brian's last service playing as the Principal Organist there. Afterwards, Robert Elliott took this photograph to remind us of that occasion. I am most grateful to my colleague and Area Dean Alec Harding for joining me at Winston and Gainford, and for leading the service at Gainford to enable me to Chair my final Annual Meeting in Winston.

The task of moving has been occurring for several weeks, made possible by the unsolicited generosity from parishioners and GATHER Lead Tom. It has been pragmatic but tough on Brian's respiratory conditions. Today, **it's become emotional as we give up our Bechstein Grand Piano** – my gift to Brian 30 years ago when a physiological problem caused him to be housebound temporarily.



PENTECOST SUNDAY SERVICES

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

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop
Rev'd David Spokes
Rev'd David Spokes
Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop
followed by the APCM and, at 1pm, 5 baptisms

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

NOTICES:

Services next Sunday: There will be services at 9.30am Winston St Andrew's – Eileen final Holy Communion in Winston; and at 10am in Staindrop St Mary's – a lay-led joint service for Ingleton and Staindrop. There is no morning service in Gainford St Mary.



FAREWELL SERVICE 4pm TRINITY SUNDAY 31st May 2026 at Gainford St Mary followed by a bring and share tea at Gainford's Village Hall. EVERYONE WELCOME!

Gainford's Churchwardens Geoff, Sue, and Peter, requests for offers of cake, savouries, nibbles, and drinks to be brought to the Village Hall before the service – the hall is open from 2.30pm to receive them. Thank you.

APCM in our parish churches

Gainford and Staindrop St Mary's, and Winston St Andrew's have held their APCMs. **My final APCM takes place this Sunday 24th May 2026 at 12 noon in Ingleton St John the Evangelist Church** immediately following the I am morning Communion service

Baptisms in May: Please pray for these children and candidates, their parents, Godparents and friends:

- † **Daisy Todd**, at Winston St Andrew's Church on Sunday 17th May, 1pm – a joyful service!
- † **Dottie Beatrice Brown** and **Kit Michael Brown** on Sunday 24th May, 1pm together with Dottie's Godparents – **Catherine Wilson, Ellie Tinkler, and Nidhi Devgan**

Weddings in May: Please pray for our newly wedded couples, who were married on Saturday 23rd May:

- † **Marc Nicholas Guffick** to **Samantha Jayne Jewson** at Winston St Andrew
- † **Andy Joseph Greener** to **Jillian Keast Johnston** nee Greenwood at Gainford St Mary's Church

Bereavement: We thank God for

- ✠ the late **JOAN MARRIOTT**, who lived her **100-year-old faithful life**. Her funeral service will take place in **St Mary's Church, Gainford on Friday 29th May 2026 at 11.30am** followed by Cremation at Darlington Crematorium at 1pm. We hold in prayer her daughters Roberta and Lesley, Granddaughter Laura, and all her family.
- ✠ the late **Mary Stevenson from Hilton**, whose funeral service took place in Ingleton St John's on Thursday 21st May 2026. Please pray for her family.

GAINFORD'S LITTLE PRAYER BEARS



Parishioner Louise Ransom came up with a wonderful fundraising idea for St Mary's Church, Gainford – a generous ongoing gift from Louise. Noticing that many members of our community come into church for prayer and children are frequently coming in after school, she is **knitting Gainford's Little Prayer Bears for a modest minimum donation of £1 per bear** so it is available to anyone who would appreciate one.

Unbeknownst to Louise, I am a lover of bears. Encouraged by interest in Louise's bears, which have run out each week, **donations are welcome** for some of **Eileen's own bears memorabilia** available from last weekend!



COLLECT for PENTECOST

God, who as at this time
taught the hearts of your faithful people
by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit:
grant us by the same Spirit
to have a right judgement in all things
and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort;
through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Faithful God,
who fulfilled the promises of Easter
by sending us your Holy Spirit
and opening to every race and nation
the way of life eternal:
open our lips by your Spirit,
that every tongue may tell of your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

First Reading – Acts 2:1-21

¹ When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

⁵ Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶ And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷ Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?' ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' ¹² All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' ¹³ But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵ Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ "In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall
prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.
¹⁸ Even upon my slaves, both men and
women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹ And I will show portents in the heaven
above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great
and glorious day.
²¹ Then everyone who calls on the name of
the Lord shall be saved."

The Gospel for Pentecost: John 7:37-39

³⁷ On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, ³⁸ and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, "Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" ³⁹ Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.