

EASTER 4 NEWSLETTER

11th – 17th May 2025

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (Romans 12:1)

What an eventful week! Returning from a restorative break in Paphos then Northumberland, which exceeded even our hopes, I was straight into the season of Annual Meetings. Although challenges continue, I am thankful that we have new church members offering to serve on our PCCs. And amidst the demands of Church Governance, our parishes celebrated the VE 80th Anniversary. (Note: Staindrop's photograph shows VE day 1995, by permission).




Winston St Andrew's began with a VE80 service led by churchwarden Lynne, lay chair Chrissie, and Royal Maundy recipient Graham last Sunday; followed by **Gainford St Mary's Act of Worship with Gainford Primary School joining the community at the War Memorial** on VE Day; and in the morning and the same evening **Gainford St Mary's, Staindrop St Mary's and Ingleton St John the Evangelist Church's bells were rung**. Although poignant for me

awaiting the commemoration of VJ in a few months' time, I am proudly thankful to be in Britain for our powerful commemorations. Did you watch any of the national commemoration events on Television? I thought both the service at Westminster Abbey and the evening in Horse Guards Parade were outstanding. Joy and rejoicing are right amidst continuing sadness and urgent prayer for those places in conflict and strife.

'White smoke' welcomed a new Pope! We share with our brothers and sisters of the Roman Catholic church, the election of a new leader in succession to the apostle Peter, **Robert Francis Prevost**, who has chosen the name **Leo the 14th**. My particular joy is that he had professed and is professing again Jesus Christ as Lord in whose life he will continue to serve, and that humility and care for the poor and needy will continue to mark his ministry. He has set out to continue sharing the Gospel as the late Pope Francis had done. Thanks be to God!

CHRISTIAN AID week begins this Sunday, also Vocation Sunday.

Vocation Sunday is timely as we call on everyone at our Annual Meetings to consider our gifts and serving God in our churches and parishes, even as the Cardinals prayed for God's guidance on the colleague who is called to be Pope. Rev'd Moji, Rev'd Susanne, and I will feature Christian Aid as we share services in our parishes this Sunday. To donate directly: <https://give.christianaid.org.uk/donate/A002958>

**A PRAYER FOR THE NEW POPE**

Almighty God,
shepherd and guardian of all,
we pray for your servant Pope Leo.
Grant him grace to follow in the footsteps
of the Good Shepherd,
to preach the Gospel with boldness,
to build up your people in unity and peace,
and to serve them with humility and love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Special note: Due to INGLETON ST JOHN's Bell mechanism breaking during the VE80 ringing yesterday, churchgoers should use the Vestry door to come into church on Sunday. The church is closed except for services until we are assured that the church entrance is safe.

SERVICES ON EASTER 4:

9.15am Staindrop St Mary

Rev'd Moji Jaiyesimi

9.30am Winston St Andrew

Rev'd Moji Jaiyesimi

10.45am Gainford St Mary

Rev'd Susanne Jukes

11am Ingleton St John

Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

5pm **CHORAL EVENSONG at Gainford St Mary with Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop**

Lift up your heart. Lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!
Rev'd Canon Eileen Harrop

NOTICES

Baptism

Pray for Thomas Hawksby and his family as he is brought for Baptism at Staindrop St Mary's this Sunday 12.30.

Bereavements

Pray for Rodney Griffiths, family and loved ones of the late **Veronica Griffiths**, who died on Easter Monday and was buried on Thursday 8th May in Gainford Cemetery.

Pray for Betty Woodman, family and loved ones of the late **Robert (Bob) Woodman** of Balmer Hill, Gainford, who died on 25th April, whose funeral services take place on Thursday 22nd May in St Mary's Gainford and at Darlington Crematorium Chapel.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETINGS all held at each parish church
These were held: Gainford St Mary's – Sunday 4th May; Staindrop St Mary's – Sunday 4th May
To be held: Winston St Andrew's – Sunday 11th May (after church service); Ingleton St John the Evangelist Church - Thursday 22nd May 4.30pm

GATHER PILGRIMAGE WALK and GATHER RETREAT WEEKEND are open to all. The walk is this Sunday 11th May 1.30-4.30pm meet at Winston Village Hall.



Gather's Retreat is on 3 days Friday 16th – Sunday 18th May.

This residential retreat in **Buttermere** provides time for reflection, fellowship both indoors and outdoors including an evening around a firepit and by the lakeside, conversation, sharing in the cooking and gathering for meals, and worship during an outdoor Eucharist. To register, contact Shela at info@gatherchurchteesdale.com



Regular **DISCIPLESHIP AND FELLOWSHIP** opportunities:

- † **PRAY TOGETHER EVERY TUESDAY 12.30** at Jen's in Gainford jim.hindhaugh@btinternet.com for Ministry and Mission in our Parishes
- † **EXPLORE FAITH THROUGH SHARING & BIBLE READING** with **GATHER** fortnightly 1st and 3rd Thursdays 7pm at 32 North Green, Staindrop
- † **Join our YOUTH AND FAMILIES MINISTRY TEAMS:** Youth Saints meet every 2nd Thursday 6.30pm and Holiday Clubs (contact Sarah or Sheila: stmarys@gainfordwinston.church); Open The Book (contact Sue Taylor: geoffandsue379@gmail.com); Mini-Disciples at Staindrop, Gainford, and Ingleton Primary Schools (contact Sarah: stmarys@gainfordwinston.church)

FUNDRAISING SOCIALS



I hope many **COME TO SUPPORT AND ENJOY** our young organist **Llewellyn Joshua Greenwell's ORGAN RECITAL** on **Saturday 10th May 3pm** in **Gainford St Mary's Church**.

A Cream Tea with Cakes will be served. **Donations gratefully appreciated!**

Forthcoming Events:



COLLECT for CHRISTIAN AID

Lord, you are faithful to your promises.
Through the Spirit you bless us with abounding hope.
When power seeks to silence justice,
give us the courage to raise our voice.
When an end to poverty seems far off,
renew our faith in your kingdom come on earth.
When our neighbour reaches out,
inspire us to respond with overflowing love.
In Jesus' name, Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Merciful Father,
you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be the good shepherd,
and in his love for us to lay down his life and rise again:
keep us always under his protection,
and give us grace to follow in his steps;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

First Reading (EASTER 4): Acts 9:36-43

³⁶ Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. ³⁷ At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. ³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, 'Please come to us without delay.' ³⁹ So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰ Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, 'Tabitha, get up.' Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹ He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. ⁴² This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³ Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

The Gospel (EASTER 4): John 10:22-30

²² At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, 'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.' ²⁵ Jesus answered, 'I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; ²⁶ but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ The Father and I are one.'