

Will taking different paths get us to a common destination?

Volume 89 Issue 08 — August 2023

St. Andrew's United Reformed Church

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Time for new beginnings

Who will we be offering the warm hand of welcome to?



By the time you read this (except possibly for the proof readers and anyone that manages to see it on the website before Saturday), we will have been delighted to have welcomed Louise Sanders both as a newly ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament, and as the Minister at St. Andrew's, I'm sure it will have been a wonderful service and celebration afterwards, and that we can look forward to many years of Louise's ministry with us.

This new beginning gives us time to reflect on how we as individuals and a church have welcomed our Ministers, worship leaders and all those who have been tempted to open the door to St. Andrew's, whether coming to bring others a better understanding of our Christian lives and how we should treat others. coming to seek God and answers to questions, or just to find which room their activity or group is in this week.

I've written previously about the renown of St. Andrew's welcome, but also whether that welcome had vet been extended to all. I've written about how we as a church have put off difficult decisions for fear of offending and potentially losing some church members (ironically, not making those decisions has the same

effect on others and causes them to question whether St. Andrew's is where they want to be). I've written about how our lives as Christians in the world of this century are vastly different to how they were in the last, and how we need to find ways of linking the two. I've also written about how we need to be not just looking inwardly at the care of our own members and trying to resolve all our issues, but sharing our faith with the wider world and seeking the knowledge and support we may not be able to provide ourselves. All those are a message about making St. Andrew's a more inclusive church, a church with a mission to welcome ALL into God's house, and a church that can use the gifts of time, talent and money to further God's kingdom and share his love for all (something we are seeing in many other much smaller churches in the Northern Synod and beyond).

I hope and pray that with Louise's guidance we can finally make those decisions and seek out new life, boldly going where few have gone before. I'll be encouraging Louise to write for Newstand from next month, but don't expect me to disappear completely! Blessings, and as always: God is with us. Tim

Activities Team update

More things to look forward to!



Granny's Attic Coffee Morning – Saturday 5th August, 10 am – 12 noon

We're hoping lots of folk will turn up for this Coffee Morning which will have extra stalls of bric-a-brac, jewellery, books etc. Do come along if you can to browse, meet friends and hopefully buy!



Alistair McLellan / Pixabay

Film Club - Friday 11th August, 2 pm

This month's film is Molly's Game (15). It tells the true story of Molly Bloom, a beautiful, young, Olympic-class skier who ran the world's most exclusive high-stakes poker game for a decade before being arrested in the middle of the night by 17 FBI agents.

Dates for the Diary

Coffee Morning

- Saturday 2nd September

Film Club

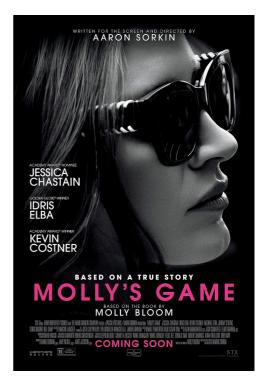
- Friday 15th September

Poetry Evening

- Saturday 16th September

Art Exhibition

– Saturday 7th October



Ann Hammond

Midweek Prayers at 10

Bringing warmth and light to the troubled world



OPENING WORDS

God at this present moment, reach out and touch us.

May we feel Your presence around us, holding us, comforting us, filling us with Your love and Grace.

God at this present moment, in the stillness of this time
You meet us
and we know we are loved. **AMEN**

Prayers of Confession

Lord God, as You look upon us open Your arms to us, forgive us for the things for which we are sorry: the words spoken without thought -

causing hurt to others;
forgetfulness of those in need;
hurried conversations;
those whom we have neglected for
the busyness of our lives;
Lord God, forgive us.

We ask these prayers in the name of Your Son, our Lord and Saviour,
Jesus Christ.

AMEN

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. **AMEN**

Prayers of Intercession

Trusting in our faithful God, we pray.

Faithful God, we pray for the gift of deeper faith in You, so that we trust You in a way that alters our dependence on everything else and allows us a clearer vision of where You want us to be.

Remind us that it is Your church, and not ours; Your work, Your power and Your kingdom.

Lord our God: let only Your will be done.

Faithful God, as we think of the stormy areas of Your world, the destruction and insecurity, the confusion and bewilderment, the power and the fear, let Your calming and reassuring presence be sensed and recognised, bringing peace, righteousness and hope.

Lord our God: let only Your will be done.

Faithful God, we place into Your loving keeping all those who have died,

we thank You for them and their gifts to Your world and the gifts they gave to us.

Let Your presence be felt with those who are struggling with ill health. We pray for their families around them that Your loving keeping enfolds them in their times of anxiety and sorrow. Lord our God: let only Your will be done.

Faithful God, Your promises stand sure for ever.

Fill our hearts with thankfulness as we recall Your faithfulness and we live in Your Love.

Merciful Father accept these prayers For the sake of Your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

AMEN

Prayer of Dedication

As we welcome Revd. Louise Saunders to Ministry at St Andrew's URC we hold her, Julian and their family in our prayers. May the Lord bless Louise and enfold her in the grace and love of God as she answers the Call of God to the folks and community of St Andrew's **AMEN**

Lord of every human heart, take our stumbling generosity and simple acts of kindness and use them for Your purposes of love. **AMEN**

Concluding Words

May the wings of the living Spirit shelter each of us and enfold us all our days and nights with God's peace. **AMEN**

Blessings, Ann Sinclair

Inspired by Bare Feet and Buttercups, Ruth Burgess, Candle in the Window, Peter Millar & Living Stones, Susan Sayer.

A "useless, incompetent" Gran?

The ongoing ramblings of an old woman



Well, folks, I haven't written for the magazine for a bit, what with Covid then being asked to preach in different churches and then doing a few more patrols with Street Pastors, time seems to slip away each week. So with the risk of boring you I would like to reiterate a few experiences I've had in the last two years.

About two years ago my son Roy asked if Michael and I would be prepared to look after the boys, Jared then six, and Jonah then 4 years old, as Martina, my daughter-in-law, would like to do the 'Marathon des Sables' - running across the Sahara!? Two years previously she and Roy had done it, however she lost her way and ended up behind the back marker a camel! And so for her safety she was rescued; needless to say Roy completed the marathon. So this was her, having another go!

Michael and I jumped at the chance - whether we were fit enough, well that was another matter. The routine was simple – we took the boys to Breakfast Club at 8.15 am every school morning and collected them at 5 pm following the After School Club. They attend the village school - 10 minutes from where they live. Not a problem!

Now, you're going to say, "Hold on! I've heard this somewhere before". Well, yes, I actually wrote a similar article for Newstand about 18 months ago. This was pointed out to me by my proof reader. No names mentioned! That article was about being lost on a diversion and ending up being surrounded by tanks, on Salisbury Plain, much to the delight of Jonah, but much to the despair of Jared. But during our stay there were several 'interesting' incidents apart from the tank incident! Although it did raise the question from my son "Were we capable of being in charge and keeping his sons safe?" Answers on a postcard!

Another amusing incident during our stay was when I was supervising the boys getting ready for school. It was all very well organised - supposing I say so myself - school bags packed and ready in the hall, school uniforms laid out the night before, breakfast set out and eaten before leaving. No Problems! Oh! Did I tell you the boys wear identical shoes? Except Jared's were two sizes larger than Jonah's. Well, this particular morning Jared put on his PE shoes. And yes, you've guessed it – Jonah put on Jared's shoes - unbeknown to me. We arrived at school - the boys jumped

out of the car and Jared ran into school while Jonah shuffled up the pathway – it still hadn't dawned on me what had happened! Until we came to collect them at teatime and I was pulled to one side by a member of staff – it was "pointed out" to me that Jonah had "shuffled around" all day – insisting he keep "his" shoes on. Oh dear, what it is to be a "useless, incompetent" gran!

Have I scarred these children for life? No I don't think so, as they still reiterate the story with great amusement as well as the "tank" incident.

On that note – perhaps I'd better sign off! I might put pen to paper again to tell you about the dog food which was mistaken for "rough pâté".

Valerie Taylor

Thought for food

Recipe for a simple Summer Pudding

Ingredients: Nectarines or peaches; mascarpone cheese; crushed Amaretto Biscuits or crushed Cinnamon Biscuits.

Remove the skin from the fruit, take out the stone and cut the fruit in half. Place in a dish and spoon mascarpone cheese on top, add crushed biscuit. Delicious and takes no time to put together!

from "Under the Tuscan Sun" by Frances Mayer

Ann Sinclair

Thank You to all my friends at St. Andrew's for the flowers, kind wishes and prayers over the last 5 months. Last step to go now, hopefully, and then I will see everyone again.

Thank You all again, Marion King

A message from the Lowdon Family:

Please pass on love to all at St Andrew's who remember us.

Ann Sinclair

Joseph:

More Than a Fancy Coat

Conversations about the Joseph story



Join with others for conversation about the biblical story of Joseph, son of Jacob, and what it says to us about God and some of today's big questions.

It's a tale so good they made it into a musical! It's the stuff of dreams - or should that be nightmares? Violence, trafficking into slavery, sexual harassment, jail time, power politics, and family dysfunction.

Can dreams come true? Is God at work? Will there be a happy ending?

Then or now?

Each conversation, led by Trevor Jamison, minister at Saint Columba's United Reformed Church, North Shields, lasts for 60-90 minutes. It helps if you have read the relevant chapters of the story before the meeting, but that's not essential. Participants from any church (or no church) are equally welcome.

All sessions are done via Zoom starting at 7.15 p.m. Follow this link to join:

https://us02web.zoom.us/ j/89434071352 The dates of each session and Bible passages covered are:

24 July

Bad Dreams and Trafficked into Slavery (Genesis 37)

[you will miss this one due to the timing of Newstand publication, but will be welcome at all the other sessions]

31 July

A "#Me Too" Moment and Jail Time for Joseph (Genesis 39-41)

7 August

Joseph Torments His Brothers But Retribution Has Its limits (Genesis 42-44)

14 August

Joseph Reveals His Identity and Forgives His Brothers (Genesis 45-46)

21 August

Like Father, Like Son – Joseph Plays at Favourites (Genesis 47-50)



For peace in the world

Persecuted Sudan Christians in need of your prayers

Sudan has been in the news particularly over the last few months, with the large-scale evacuation of many British nationals and their dependents fleeing violence. Open Doors reported in April that the conflict in the country will make things even harder for the Christians in the country. Sudan is number 10 on the Open Doors 2023 World Watch List which indicates that Christians there face extreme levels of persecution. The violence in the country is over a power struggle within the military leadership. The escalation in violence between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) is spreading through the country. The number of casualties as reported in May by the Sudanese health ministry was 730 people killed and 5,454 injured but likely to be higher.

There are almost two million Christians in Sudan, but this represents just 4.3% of the country's population of 46 million. There had been progress towards religious freedom in recent years, however, a military coup occurred in October 2021. This followed an escalation of hostilities between conservative Islamists wanting a military government and those who toppled Omar al Bashir in April 2019.



After that coup, a transitional, powersharing government emerged but protests caused the resignation in January last year of civilian Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok.

Open Doors reports how Christians - especially converts from Islam - are still vulnerable to extreme persecution in public and private life. There are fears that Sudan will return to the authoritarianism of the years of the former president. This could mean that the death penalty for leaving Islam that was abolished in 2021 could be reinstated.

At the time of writing, relative calm in the capital Khartoum from a weeklong peace deal was disrupted by clashes between the Sudanese army and paramilitaries. The ceasefire had come after five weeks of warfare in Khartoum and outbursts of fighting elsewhere, including Darfur - a conflict that started in 2003.

Please pray for Sudan - for stability in the region and for a government to be established that respects equality and religious freedom. Please pray for the Christians in the land and for the work of local church partners.

Colin Bailey via Association for Church Editors

A degree of praise

News of a former member of Junior Church.

Daniel (Dan) Sinclair, (my grandson), has received a First-Class Honours Degree at Northumbria University in Criminology. Dan now goes on to study for a Masters in this subject area.

As a family we are very proud of Dan. The last five years have been particularly hard for us, together with the life changes during the lockdowns with Covid 19 and in this case to ensure students received tutoring. Alongside this Dan has worked part time in a supermarket, in Newcastle, never grumbling at having to leave home at 5.30 A.M. to start work! As a family we are over the moon with his hard-earned success!

Ann Sinclair

A couple of answers

- 1. Which are the odd ones out in these sets and why?
 - a) Mount, Right, Left, Roll, Emote, Lock Emote, because you can add A, B, C, D and F to the others to get new words, (Amount, Bright, etc.), but can't add "E" to Emote.
 - b) Fort, State, Peach, Motion, Cling Peach, because if you sound out the first letter of the other words you get a new word Effort, Estate, Emotion and Ceiling
- 2. If I give Sophie four of my chocolates, she'll have the same number as me. If she gives me four of hers, I'll have twice as many as she does. How many do we each have to start with?

 Sophie has 20 and I have 28

A reflection on Luke 17: 11-17

Two small words that can change the world

When my children and grandchildren were young, I loved reading to them at bedtime, especially if it was about Winnie the Pooh. When I read the story of Jesus healing 10 lepers, I can't help thinking about Pooh's friend Piglet who once noticed that even though he had a very small heart, it could hold a rather large amount of gratitude.

Gratitude has been a moral virtue for thousands of years. According to Cicero, who was a Roman lawyer, philosopher and politician born 100 years before Christ, gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others.

Some of these other virtues that we find in the Bible include chastity, temperance, charity, diligence, patience, humility, and kindness. Kindness is closely linked to the word gratitude, which is derived from the Latin gratia, meaning grace, graciousness, and gratefulness. It can be confused with *grazie*, which means thank you. Saying thank you is the response of your grace or gratefulness.

Gratitude is a state of mind that comes from our spirit and is a combination of wonder, appreciation, and the readiness to



respond by saying thank you, which itself is an act of returning kindness to someone else.

When someone says thank you, you are usually left with a nice warm feeling that whatever you did to deserve it was appreciated.

Rabbi Harold Kusner says this about that warm feeling: 'If you concentrate on finding whatever is good in every situation, you will discover that your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul.'

How much better would our world be today if more people took the time to nurture the souls of others by simply saying thank you!

In Luke's account of the 10 lepers who were healed by Jesus only one expressed his gratitude by returning to say thank you. And he was a Samaritan who were considered as being spiritually unclean by the Jews, although Jesus thought differently. His parable of the good Samaritan being an obvious example, and his conversation with the Samaritan woman he met at a well. It's also interesting that the unclean spiritual barrier between the Samaritan and the nine other Jews that Jesus healed had been removed by their leprosy.

The Greek word for leprosy that Luke used in this story is also used for other skin diseases, so the men may not all have had leprosy, but a variety of different skin diseases. However, they would all have been treated in the same way and isolated from the world. Only those who recovered from their disease could return to their community after being checked by a priest.

For Jesus, it was not the healing of the disease that was important, for him it was their willingness, or not, to show gratitude – i.e. their willingness to show their wonder, appreciation and kindness by praising and giving thanks to God.

Luke's story ends with Jesus sending the healed Samaritan on his way, saying your faith has made you well. This can be translated from the original Greek as Jesus indicating that the Samaritan had not only been healed of his physical skin disease but had also received spiritual salvation.

We are reminded of our Christian responsibility to show gratitude – i.e. our thanks and praise to God -- every time we take Holy Communion. Our Eucharist begins with the bidding from the priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God, to which we reply: it is right to give thanks and praise, and it concludes after communion with a prayer that begins with us saying together, Father of all, we give you thanks and praise.

Showing gratitude is a personal act and can only be given to others as a

gift from an individual. You can't request or demand gratitude from someone else. It is a gift that can't be exchanged, and it can't be given on behalf of someone else. All it takes to show gratitude is to say thank you. And by saying it with a smile it will be an even more meaningful act of kindness because it will make the person receiving it even happier. As Rabbi Kusner said: you will be nurturing their soul.

Melody Beattie and author of selfhelp books, says this: 'Gratitude turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, confusion into clarity...it makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.'

John F Kennedy: 'As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.'

This, of course, is exactly what Jesus was looking for, both from the lepers he healed, and from us. He wants us to express our gratitude for all the good things in life by praising and thanking God and by demonstrating that gratitude in our lives in a way that reflects his love for us in the world around us. The result will be a lot more nurtured souls in our world, which surely must be a good thing!

Bob Peters

Bob is a lay preacher at St. Andrew's Church, Sonning, Berkshire and Vice Chair of the Association for Church Editors

Time for a holiday

Did you just book it or did you Thomas Cook it?

Thomas Cook did not start his travel business with the primary goal of making money. Motivated by his Christian faith, it was to help combat the dangers of alcohol and to help the victims of alcohol misuse.

Thomas Cook was born in 1808 in Derbyshire. At the age of 20 he became a Baptist missionary and toured the region as an evangelist distributing tracts, and in the 1830s, he became involved in the temperance movement. He was a cabinet maker by trade.

With the expansion of the railway network around 1840, he had the idea of combining rail travel with the cause of temperance. He arranged to take a group of temperance campaigners from Leicester Street railway station to a teetotal rally in Loughborough, 11 miles away. On 5 July 1841, he escorted 485 people. who paid one shilling each for the return rail journey and a meal, on his first outing. Many say that this is when the modern travel industry was born. Other excursions followed, including one in 1851 for 150,000 people to travel to the Great Exhibition in London. Four years later he was running trips abroad.

By 1865 he had acquired business premises on Fleet Street, which



included a shop selling travel accessories such as guide books, luggage, telescopes and footwear. He and his wife also ran a small temperance hotel above the office. As the business grew, he built an imposing Temperance Hall and hotel in central Leicester and used much of his money to support the poor, often the victims of alcohol misuse.

In all the excursions he went on to organise, he wanted to bring people closer together and nearer to their creator by making 'God's earth with all its fullness and beauty' accessible and affordable to all.

Eventually his son, John Mason Cook, became a partner in the company and the name was changed to Thomas Cook & Son. Towards the end of his life his attitude towards profitability brought him and his son into conflict, including the issue of allowing lower fares for fellow Baptists.

He died aged 83 in Leicester in 1892. After several mergers and takeovers the company collapsed in 2019, but he had given many the opportunity to experience the beauty and variety of God's world because of his strong Christian faith.

Sally Churchus via Association for Church Editors

St. Andrew's 100 Club

You have to be in it to win it!

The June draw took place on 25th June when Joy Abbott drew the following numbers:



1)	No 95	Dawn Rudd	£121.50
2)	No 25	Christine Ridley	£60.75
3)	No 29	Bill Hopper	£20.25

With £202.50 going to Church Funds."

Kathleen Hopper

And who is this coming?

One that entices some to travel across the borders

A lady has joined Tuesday Prayers for the last two weeks. She travelled by public transport from Durham to Sunderland and caught the Metro to bring her (eventually) to the coast. This lady had met Louise at the Hub in Rothbury and wanted to meet her again, making this long journey to do so. Only Louise hasn't been there... yet. So, who is this coming to us as a Minister of Word and Sacrament? A woman with very special gifts that others will travel miles to meet again.

Ann Sinclair

- It's OK to be smarter than other people, but just don't tell them so.
- It's not what you gather, but what you scatter that tells what kind of life you have lived.
- It's very difficult to find lost time.

Northern Synod Prayer Diary

Joining in our weekly prayers with the wider URC



6	St Andrew's, Benton; Revd Gavin Hume.
13	The Roman Catholic Diocese of Middlesbrough; Bishop of Middlesbrough Rt Revd Terry Drainey.
20	The Church of the Good Shepherd, Battle Hill, Wallsend; Revd Julie Mooney.
27	West Denton.

From the Book of Remembrance

Remembering those who have gone before us

Ada Corby

Rene Bridges

George Dudgeon Russell

Annie (Nancy) Adamson

Saunders

Molly Yarrow

Robert Foster Barbour

Betty and Norman Buckle

Congratulations!

To Tim Cooke! Tim has a new job... well at the same place, BUT with a promotion — he is now the boss! A challenge Tim, but you will do well. AS

[Editor blushes...]

August Rotas

Hopefully you're not all on holiday this month!



Elders: Vestry: Ann Hammond

Reception: Hazel Hall

Communion: Carole Mallett

Stewards: Vestibule: Sandra Pine

Finance: Kathleen Hopper

Tuesday 1st Prayers Carole Mallett

Sunday 6th Preacher Louise Sanders

Organ Paul Hartley

Readers H. Hall, A. Mood

Prayers Hazel Hall

Tuesday 8th Prayers Ann Sinclair

Sunday 13th 9.30 Let's Sing Mandy Watson 10.30 Prayer group Mandy

11.00 Preacher Louise SandersReaders G. Mills, C. MallettOrgan Helen StoreyPrayers Chris Hales

Tuesday 15th Prayers Una Ketteridge

Sunday 20th Preacher Val TaylorOrgan Paul HartleyReaders J. Fleetham, M. WaltonPrayers Val Taylor

Tuesday 22nd Prayers Sue Ames

Sunday 27th Preacher Hannah Middleton **Organ** Alex

Readers A. Stembridge, S. Anderson Prayers Andrew Cooke

Tuesday 29th Prayers Sandra Pine

September Newstand

The next edition of Newstand will be out on 27th Aug. Please have contributions to Tim by 21st August.

Church Calendar for August / September

Sunday services are broadcast via YouTube for those not able to attend in person or just to watch again in your own time (search for "monkseatonurc"). Following Sunday morning worship, refreshments are served in the Main Hall.

Midweek Worship: Tuesday 10 am followed by Open Door Coffee Morning. **Open Door Coffee Morning:** Thursday 10.30 am - Noon.

Saturday	5	Granny's Attic Coffee Morning	10.00 am
Sunday	6	Singing Group meets	10.15 am
		Communion Service; Revd Louise Sanders	11.00 am
Friday	11	Film Club – 'Molly's Game'	2.00 pm
Sunday	13	'Let's Sing' – Mandy Watson	9.30 am
		Prayer Group – Mandy Watson	10.30 am
		Morning Worship; Revd Louise Sanders	11.00 am
Sunday	20	Singing Group meets	10.15 am
		Morning Worship; Mrs Valerie Taylor	11.00 am
Sunday	27	Singing Group meets	10.15 am
		Morning Worship; Mrs Hannah Middleton	11.00 am
		SEPTEMBER 2023	
Saturday	2	Coffee Morning	10.00 am
Sunday	3	Singing Group meet	10.15 am
		Communion Service; led by a combination of St Andrew's Worship Leaders	11.00 am
Friday	8	Executive Team Meeting	10.00 am

Pause in this moment

A place for prayers, thoughts and poems



Willing Witnesses

By Steven Rolling

Tune: Abridge – 'Be thou my guardian and my guide'

Water of life, river now flow From us, that others know The Spirit's touch through word and deed And to your message heed

Message of salvation to all
Who on the Lord's name call
Give us courage, boldness, that we
Not as the blocked streams be

Not stagnant, stale, but refreshing Something of God's life bring To each we meet, be large, small ways Throughout our pilgrim days

The gospel preached, teaching, healing Your name glorifying As you Christ did, so may we be Sharers of you freely

That deaf shall hear and dumb shall speak Grace to the humble, meek That sick be healed, e'en dead to rise True gospel spread, no lies