



NEWSTAND

THE MAGAZINE OF ST. ANDREW'S URC



Waiting for new life

Volume 90 Issue 2 — February 2024

St. Andrew's United Reformed Church

Eastfield Avenue, Monkseaton, Whitley Bay, NE25 8LU

<http://standrewsmonkseatonurc.org.uk>



monkseatonurc

Church Contacts

Minister	Revd Louise Sanders louise.sanders208@gmail.com	01670 225539 /
	6 St Leonard's Walk, Lancaster Park, Morpeth, NE61 3SZ	07537 848492
Secretary	Mr Raymond Hammond, anrray@talktalk.net	252 3319
	3 Cauldwell Close, Whitley Bay, NE25 8LP	
Assistant Secretaries	Mrs Ann Hammond	252 3319
	3 Cauldwell Close, Whitley Bay, NE25 8LP	
	Miss Carole Mallett	252 1723
	54 Brantwood Avenue, Whitley Bay, NE25 8NJ	
Treasurer and Gift Aid Secretary	Mr Kevin Ames	251 3016
	17 Kelso Drive, North Shields, NE29 9NS	
Assistant Treasurer	Mrs Jenny Hooper	—
	15 Brislee Ave, Tynemouth, NE30 2SQ	
Hall Lettings	Ray & Ann Hammond, anrray@talktalk.net	252 3319
	3 Cauldwell Close, Whitley Bay, NE25 8LP	
Newstand Business Manager	Miss Carole Mallett	252 1723
	54 Brantwood Avenue, Whitley Bay, NE25 8NJ	
Newstand Editor/ Web/Social Media	Tim Cooke, standrewsnewstand@gmail.com	01670
	4, Kingfisher Way, Blyth, NE24 3QR	354834
Safeguarding Officer	Lucy Cooke, cookelucy@live.co.uk	01670
	4, Kingfisher Way, Blyth, NE24 3QR	354834

Musing from the Manse

Signs of New Life



Spring is one of my favourite seasons of the year. This photograph was one I took in February 2021 to use during worship at college and remains a firm favourite of mine. I'm not sure that February counts as Spring officially, but it is definitely when we see the earliest signs of new life in the garden as the spring bulbs are flowering in shaded spots.

I love their resilience, knowing that they have been hidden and forgotten for months, then, no matter how hard the ground, they burst forth and display their glory. And they do so at the time of year when so many people are looking for signs of an end to winter and a hint of warmer days to come. Everywhere we look we see trees and plants that look dead, our gardens look somewhat neglected and forgotten. This is exactly when we are in need of a sign of hope, and that is exactly what they give us.

As Christians our hope is the sure and certain hope of resurrection to eternal life. We hope that death is not the end and that instead it is a new beginning made possible

through Jesus Christ. We believe that God can change the shadow of death into the brightness of a new morning.

In Paul's letter to the Romans we read, '*We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*' (Romans 6:4)

This month sees the beginning of Lent, a time to reflect on the death and resurrection of Jesus. A time to look around at God's wonderful creation, at the many signs of new life that are emerging all around us, and to thank Him again for the gift of His Son. For through his Son's death and resurrection, we who believe, can have hope in the life eternal.

As you look upon the signs of new life emerging in the coming weeks, may this renew your hope that death is not the end but a new beginning with God.

Louise

Activities Team update

More things to look forward to!



Coffee Morning – Saturday 3rd February, 10 am – 12 noon

This is one of our regular monthly Coffee Mornings but this month it will also be an Ecumenical Coffee Morning. This provides an opportunity for us to meet friends from other churches: St. Peter's and St. Alban's Parish Churches, the Immaculate Heart of Mary RC Church and Monkseaton Methodist Church.

Film Club – Friday 9th February 2.00 pm

This month *'The Great Escaper'* (12) starring Michael Cain and Glenda Jackson will be shown. The film is based on a true story that made national news about pensioner Bernard Jordan who, in 2014, absconded from his care home in Hove, Sussex, to attend an event in Normandy commemorating the 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings.

Ceilidh with a Scottish theme – Saturday 10th February, 7 pm.

Tickets are now selling well for this event which promises to be a fun-filled evening of dancing with the Whole Shebang Ceilidh Band and the Whistler School of Highland Dance.

Tickets at £20 (children £10) include traditional Scottish food. If you feel unable to dance don't worry, it will be an evening of entertainment watching others and listening to the music.

Play Reading Evening – Saturday 17th February, 7.00 pm

We have another opportunity either to take part or just listen to a play, usually a comedy, being read and these evenings are proving to be entertaining and sociable occasions. Tickets are available at £5 (to include wine/soft drinks and nibbles).

Dates for the Diary

- **58 Society Coffee Morning – Saturday 2nd March**
- **Film Club – Friday 8th March, 2.00 pm**
- **Tynemouth Choral Society Concert – Saturday 23rd March**

Ann Hammond

Prayers at Home

*Bringing ourselves together
in a moment of peace*



Opening Words

Gracious and loving God,
through these dark months of winter
fill our lives with Your light and love.
Be with us as we come to You in
prayer, as we come to You to find
quiet and peace. **AMEN**

Prayer of Confession

As we come to You God,
in the quiet
we bring our brokenness to You.
We ask Your forgiveness
for the words we have said,
the words we haven't said,
the things we have done
and the things we have left undone.
In the quiet of Your presence here
grant us the faith and reassurance
of healing, and making us whole.
Take our confession offered with our
hands stretched out, and bless us
with Your grace and peace.

AMEN

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but
deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the
glory are yours now and forever.

AMEN

Prayers of Intercession: our concerns for the world, the church, our communities and ourselves

God of now and always, we come
before You with our prayers for the
world;

a world that would seem to be
tearing itself apart with wars,
destruction, terror and hatred among
nations;

a world where at ground level wars
and destruction result in the
brokenness of the lives of ordinary
people, of families split apart,
and the loss of lives amongst the
destroyed buildings that war creates.

God of now and always, we pray for
those who have suffered loss and
injuries; for those who are now
displaced people in their homelands.
May they feel Your presence and
strength.

We ask Your blessings on them.

We ask You to bless those who
struggle through the destruction to

rescue and heal and to those who search for peaceful solutions among nations, for an end to the wars and destruction.

May the light of Your love shine through the darkness.

God of now and always, we bring to You our prayers for our nation.

A nation coping with the consequences of shifts in economic and social policies, where the infrastructure of support services is stretched, and for people on their own and those with families that are struggling to keep warm and have enough to eat.

We pray for those who have no homes and live on the streets and shelter in doorways in the harsh winter weather.

God of now and always, may they feel Your presence and strength; we ask Your blessings on them in their despair and we ask You to bless those who search for ways forward; for the care and the need of those who are striving to cope.

May the light of Your love shine through the darkness.

God of now and always, we bring to You those who are in sorrow through the passing of loved ones.

For those who have loved and cared through sickness and in health for their dearest loved ones.

We ask Your blessing on them in their sorrow.

May they feel Your love and strength around and within them in their loss.

We ask Your blessings on those who are in pain and anxious in their care for their loved ones, when nothing seems to be going forward in their care.

We ask Your blessing on those who nurse and support in the health and care services. May they feel Your strength and love in their work to care and heal.

May the light of Your love shine through the darkness.

God of now and always, we bring these prayers in the name of Your Son our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **AMEN**

Closing Words

As the snowdrops come full of hope and new beginnings may they be a glimmer of hope in the darkness that cannot be put out.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each one of us now and those we love, now and forever more.

Ann Sinclair

The Nativity Story

*The Story is for all ages,
not just for children*



Over the month of December, I was out and about to other churches from Northgate, Darlington to West End, Fenham, to St Andrew's, Monkseaton. One comment recurred over this period and also came from Jesmond URC Messy Church, where St Andrew's help out with the Nativity story costumes. The comment among them all: 'we had no children to join in with the story of the Nativity so we had to ask adults to join in'. And this has been from churches where children do generally attend the service. At St. Andrew's, Monkseaton, one Brownie did join in and in West End URC, two boys joined in.

So, what happened? That could raise a very lengthy debate. However, taking a simple approach -did the lack of children mean there was no Nativity story enacted? Well, no, adults joined in and recalling the comments I heard that has had a remarkable outcome. For example from a longtime member at one church, they commented they were absolutely delighted to take the part of a main character in the story. They had never before reached the heady heights of a main character in the story; their lifetime's achievement beforehand had been at a school Nativity story as the second innkeeper. Christmas was made for this person and there could have

been others in other church Nativity stories where adults took on the roles in the Story. This was happening across so many URC churches, and there could have been other denominations also. What a gift, what an opportunity to be part of this Story, a Story repeated across so many churches and schools, in so many lands a story that generally has children taking the roles.

It made me think very seriously that it really doesn't matter whether it is adults or children taking part, it doesn't matter what age those taking part are. Each and every single one of us is a child of God, together in God's family, and we can help tell the story of the birth of Jesus Christ - the celebration of the story of the Nativity of the angels and shepherds of the glory of God in coming among us as a helpless baby... because this is our story too in the 21st century. We are human beings with a unique set of genes in the image and likeness of God whatever age, sex, marital status, young or older, fit and healthy or struggling with health issues, we can come to be part of the Nativity Story. This is a story for all to share with those around them - the wonderful gift to hear again this story and share in the joy of the Nativity. The re-telling of this story and the joy we share is to spread the story, of the joy of the

coming of Christ the Lord... our strength and shield... our heart's desire... our King.

Age is no barrier to his voice of wisdom.
Wisdom knows no boundaries.
Forgive us, Lord.
It is we who put barriers up and boundaries in place.
Forgive us for the obstacles between the generations.
Forgive us for our lack of

understanding, our ignorance, our lack of patience, our judgemental behaviour.
Open our eyes and ears to discern your wisdom in others, no matter what age they are.
Help us to see beyond our own lack of imagination or understanding.
In Jesus' name. Amen.

Ann Sinclair

What Money Can't Buy

It can buy a house
but not a home.
It can buy a bed
but not sleep.
It can buy a clock
but not time.
It can buy you a book
but not knowledge.

It can buy you a position
but not respect.
It can buy you medicine
but not health.
It can buy you blood
but not life.
It can buy you sex
but not love.

So you see, money isn't everything.

And it often causes pain and suffering.

*Source Unknown
from Bursting at the Seams by Killy John
and Alie Stibble*

St. Andrew's 100 Club

You have to be in it to win it!

The December draw took place on 31st December when Margaret Varley drew the following numbers:



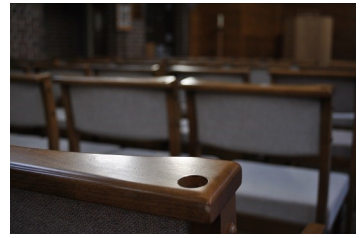
1) No 105	Neil Cockburn	£121.50
2) No 79	Pat Peel	£60.75
3) No 40	Rhoda Lee	£20.25

With £202.50 going to Church Funds.

Kathleen Hopper

From the Worship Group

A few updates to our church life



The '**Let's Sing**' service and **Prayer Group** (both led by Mandy Watson) are moving to a different day and time. Instead of taking place at 9.30 am on the second Sunday of the month, 'Let's Sing' will move to the third Sunday at the later time of 10.00 am, and the Prayer Group will follow, on the third Sunday at 10.30 am.

At the recent Worship Team Meeting it was proposed that there would be an opportunity for time and space before Sunday services to come, in preparation of worship, to pray. From the first Sunday in February the Meeting Room will be available to give people that quiet time to do so. There will be no leader, people can come and go when it is suitable for

them. They can choose if they wish to say prayers and share with others or pray quietly. The room will be available from 10.30-10.45.

Before Covid, once per month, we used to have a short **Communion Service** at 9.30am lasting 30-35 minutes. These services are to be resumed starting on the 28th April and after that on the 4th Sunday of every month. The usual communion service on the 1st Sunday at 11am will continue.

Louise is also willing and able to offer **home communion** for anyone unable to make the services at church. Please contact her directly or via your Elder.

Church Register

DEATH

WATSON Keith Brian, aged 87 years, on 30th December 2023.
Committal at Whitley Bay on 19th January 2024, followed by service at St Andrew's, conducted by Revd Louise Sanders.

WEDDING BLESSING

POPOV Joanne (nee Lynch) and Evgenij
In church, on 6th January 2024,
by Revd Louise Sanders.

Some words of thanks

From them to you



June Laves / Pixabay

Another year has gone by collecting stamps and coins for the benefit of St. Oswald's Hospice in Gosforth.

My grateful thanks to all who have contributed by leaving small quantities in 'the pot' in the reception area of the Church.

In addition I must thank those who have provided old albums, possibly found in a loft or stamps / coin collections from deceased relations.

I am glad to report that after all the above were sorted and counted, plus a large quantity from St. Oswald's themselves I managed to raise the sum of £ 720.95 this year. A very satisfactory result considering the downturn in stamp and coin donations these last few years.

In addition, St. Oswald's have received a very large anonymous gift of old pre decimal GB coins. After sorting and conveying this donation to my dealer we have received a cheque in the sum of £ 985. in favour of the Hospice !!

It goes without saying that the Fundraising Department at the Hospice are always delighted to receive the above mentioned cheques.

It takes a lot of time and effort to raise these funds but I am glad that I can still do it and why I am so appreciative to everyone who has helped to support this worthy cause.

Thank you once again.

Neil Cockburn

Thank you so much for all the flowers, cards and kind messages that have been sent to me over the last few weeks. I hope to be back with you before too long.

Sue Ames

Thank you for your kind support, flowers, and beautiful cards and messages over the recent weeks. We really appreciated your contributions and loving care shown for Keith's funeral service. We all felt surrounded by your love. God Bless you all.

Barbara, Mandy and all the family

A familiar journey?

One final memory of the Christmas story in the Posada



The Posada figures, a custom each year in Spain and South America, made it to St. Andrew's, Monkseaton Christmas 2023 thanks to Hannah Middleton, one of the team on the Children's and Youth Work Committee at Northern Synod.

One set of figures - Mary, Joseph, the Baby Jesus and the manger - beautifully carved out of wood, and representing the Holy Family on their journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem went round several homes of Members of the church. Another set had a different journey.

For one week just before Christmas and the school holidays I went to Woodlawn School, a school for children and young people with additional needs, every morning. The first morning I took the figures to one of the younger children's classrooms. I spoke to the children of the story of the journey Mary and Joseph made and asked if they would look after the Holy Family in their classroom until the

next morning. The next morning, I returned, collected the figures and moved them on to another classroom and carried the story forward. Moving on from each class I left the requisite number of baubles (made by Louise and completed by the Tuesday morning Prayer Group) for each pupil to take home and hang on their Christmas trees to remind them of the story and their part in that story. The children, teachers and the administration staff were all enthusiastic at sharing in the journey of the Holy Family.

On the last morning I did go to the school Nativity Story where the younger children were involved. They all took part in the story and it was a privilege for me to be alongside them. No matter who we are we are all God's children and part of this wonderful story of peace and joy and sharing with others.

Ann Sinclair

St Andrew's 58 Society

February Meetings

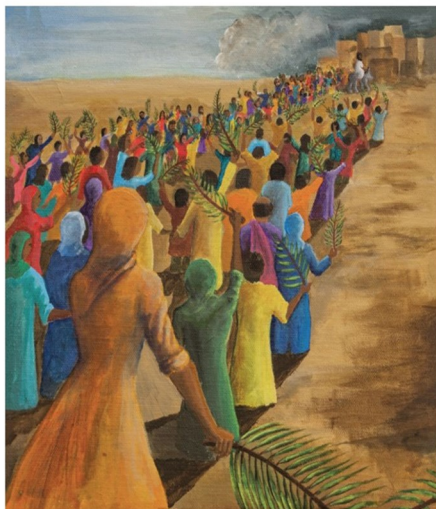
5th **Annual General Meeting** followed by refreshments

19th **Newcastle through the Ages** with Geoff Hughes.

Meetings begin at 7.30. You will be welcome.

Women of Holy Week

A 4-week Lent Course



Led by Trevor Jamison & Louise Sanders

Choose a day or venue that suits you and come along when or where you can. Feel free to mix and match the venue or time that suits your schedule.

St Andrew's URC Monkseaton: Mondays at 2pm

Feb 26, March 4, 11, 18

Online Zoom: Mondays from 7.15pm

Feb 26, March 4, 11, 18

St Columba's URC North Shields: Thursdays at 7.15pm

Feb 29, March 7, 14, 21

For more information, please contact either:

Rev Dr Trevor Jamison: minister.northshieldsURC@gmail.com

Rev Louise Sanders: louise.sanders208@gmail.com 07537 848492

The Three Bears

It was a sunny morning in the big forest and the bear family was just waking up. Baby bear went downstairs and sat in the small chair at the table. He looked into his small bowl. It was empty! "Who's been eating my porridge?" he wailed.

Daddy bear arrived at the table and sat in his big chair. He looked into his big bowl. It was also empty! "Who's been eating my porridge?" he roared.

Mummy bear put her head through the serving hatch from the kitchen and yelled, "For Pete's sake, how many times do we have to go through this? It was mummy bear who got up first. It was mummy bear who woke everyone else in the house up. It was mummy bear who unloaded the dishwasher from last night and put everything away. It was mummy bear who went out into the cold morning air to fetch the newspaper. It was mummy bear who put the cat out, cleaned the litter box and filled the cat's water and food dish. And now that you've decided to come downstairs and grace me with your presence.....listen up, because I'm only going to say this one more time.....I haven't made the porridge yet!

Northern Synod Prayer Diary

*Joining in our weekly prayers
with the wider URC*



4	Churches: Stamfordham LEP; Minister: Revd Jona Sewell. St John's the Evangelist, Kingston Park LEP; Minister: Revd Adele Moorhouse.
11	Church Action on Poverty. Work of CRCWs: Alison Dalton, Ann Honey and Fliss Barker.
18	The Trust, all members, Convenor: Revd Alan McGougan. The work of The North East District Council.
25	Fairtrade Fortnight (27 th Feb – 12 th March). Giving thanks for all those who work towards equity and fair pay for all.

From the Book of Remembrance

Remembering those who have gone before us

Peter Mallett
Sylvia Sadler Laws
Leslie C. Heighton
Fred Philipson Dodsworth
Beatrice Mary Dodsworth
Kenneth Roy Dodsworth
Margaret McDonald Waugh
Elsie Isobel Russell

William Mackay Adamson
George Duncan Winton
Norma Ridley
Helen Doo
John Grant Scrafton
Shirley Gibbon
Edith Corby

February Rotas

Time to Spring into action!



ELDERS:	Vestry	Bill Hopper
	Reception	Jennifer Fleetham
	Communion	Carole Mallett
STEWARDS:	Vestibule	Rhoda Lee
	Finance	Joy Campbell
Sunday 4th	Organ	Helen Storey
	Readers	Geoff Mills; Carole Mallett
	Prayers	Ann Hammond
Tuesday 6th	Prayers	Carole Mallett
Sunday 11th	Organ	Helen Storey
	Readers	Jennifer Fleetham; Marilyn Walton
	Prayers	Val Taylor
Tuesday 13th	Prayers	Sandra Pine
Sunday 18th	Organ	Paul Hartley
	Readers	Ann Stemberidge; Susan Anderson
	Prayers	Una Ketteridge
Tuesday 20th	Prayers	Ann Sinclair
Sunday 25th	Organ	Alex
	Readers	Jean Jackson; Tim Cooke
	Prayers	Hazel Hall
Tuesday 27th	Prayers	Una Ketteridge

March Newstand

The next edition of Newstand will be out on 25th Feb.
Please have contributions to Tim **by 18th February**.

Church Calendar for February / March

Sunday services are streamed 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	3	Ecumenical Coffee Morning at St Andrew's	10.00 am
Sunday	4	Communion Service; Revd Louise Sanders	11.00 am
Monday	5	Fifty Eight Society Annual General Meeting	7.30 pm
Thursday	8	Pastoral Team Meeting NOTE TIME	7.30 pm
Friday	9	Film Club – 'The Great Escaper'	2.00 pm
Saturday	10	Ceilidh	7.00 pm
Sunday	11	Morning Worship; Mrs Valerie Taylor	11.00 am
Monday	12	Activities Team Meeting	2.00 pm
Saturday	17	Play Reading Evening	7.00 pm
Sunday	18	'Let's Sing' – Mandy Watson	10.00 am
		Prayer Group – Mandy Watson	10.30 am
		Morning Worship; Revd Louise Sanders	11.00 am
Monday	19	Fifty Eight Society - Newcastle through the Ages	7.30 pm
Sunday	25	Morning Worship; Mrs Lucy Cooke	11.00 am
Monday	26	Lent course: Women of Holy Week (at St Andrew's)	2.00 pm
		(via Zoom)	7.15 pm
Thursday	29	(at St Columba's, North Shields)	7.15 pm
MARCH 2024			
Friday	1	Executive Team Meeting	10.00 am
		Ecumenical Lent Service at St Andrew's, followed by soup and a roll	12.30 pm
		World Day of Prayer Service at Hillheads Community Church, Whitley Bay	2.00 pm
Saturday	2	Fifty Eight Society Coffee Morning	10.00 am
Sunday	3	Communion Service; Revd Louise Sanders	11.00 am
Monday	4	Fifty Eight Society – Durham Cathedral. A Different Perspective.	7.30 pm
		Lent course: Women of Holy Week (at St Andrew's)	2.00 pm
		(via Zoom)	7.15 pm
Tuesday	5	Finance Team Meeting	10.00 am
Thursday	7	Lent course: Women of Holy Week (at St Columba's, North Shields)	7.15 pm

Pause in this moment

A place for
prayers,
thoughts
and poems

Snowdrops

In the dark days: under rain heavy clouds,
among broken branches,
on sodden earth,
the snowdrops light their candles.
A flame that cannot be put out
by darkness or gales or doubt.

In the salt wind,
rooks buckle like broken umbrellas,
as the bare trees
heave a sigh,
the snowdrops tremble.

But their flame cannot be put out
by darkness or gales or doubt.

Perfect, as though carved
in green veined marble,
life pulsing through tissue
delicate as eyelids
of a sleeping child,
curved like small fingers, holding on.

Their flame is steadfast:
it is full of hope and new beginnings.
Darkness of gales and doubt
cannot put it out.

Jan Sutch Pickard: Winter

(Choice inspired by Bob Corrigan)

