

March 2024 ----- **BENEFICE NEWS** ----- March 2024

For enquiries please contact Revd Dr Robert Brown

Priest-in-Charge, Bewcastle, Stapleton and Kirklington with Hethersgill

A: Greenholme, Bewcastle, Cumbria, CA6 6PWT: 016977 48438

email: Robert.Brown@BewcastleHouseOfPrayer.org.uk

Date	Sunday	Bewcastle	Stapleton	Hethersgill	Kirklington
3 rd Mar	Lent 3	10 am Matins (BCP)			
10 th Mar	Mothering Sunday				10 am Mothering Service
17 th Mar	Lent 5		10 am MP		
24 th Mar	Palm Sunday			10 am Service of the Word	
29 th Mar	Good Friday	2 pm Deanery Service at Lanercost Priory			
		4 pm Dream of the Rood			
31 st Mar	Easter Sunday	6 am Sunrise Service	10 am HC		
7 th Apr	Easter 2	10 am HC			

HC = Holy Communion, MP = Morning Prayer, BCP = Book of Common Prayer

Knowe United Reformed Church, Bewcastle

2.15 pm

Prayer for the Month – the Mothering Sunday Collect

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

From the Registers

Funerals:

Stephen George Firth (67) of 12 Rose Tree Lane, Blackbank, at St Cuthbert, Kirklington on Monday 5th February

Sunday 3rd March 10 am – 1pm Kirklington with Hethersgill PCC Big Breakfast in Hethersgill Hall. £10 and under 5's free. To book a seat ring Sandra 01228 675510, Irene 01228 675389 or Margaret 01228 675652. All are welcome.

Monday 4th March, 7pm Stapleton PCC, Stapleton Hall

Monday 11th March, 7pm Kirklington and Hethersgill PCC, Blackhill

Monday 18th March, 7pm Bewcastle PCC, Murray Holme

Maundy Thursday 28th March, 1.30pm Shankhill School Easter service, St Mary's Stapleton

Good Friday 4pm, Bewcastle. Outside round the Bewcastle Cross (or in the church if the weather is inclement), a service of meditation listening to a reading of the 'Dream of the Rood'. It will probably take around 15 mins to read, and will finish with a period of silence. The whole service will last about 30 minutes. I'm not aware of this having been done before, but I'm sure it must have been. For those who don't know it, the Dream of the Rood has been described as 'one of the greatest religious poems in English literature' and is one of the earliest Anglo-Saxon poems in existence. A section of it is inscribed in runes on the Ruthwell Cross in south Dumfriesshire, not far from the Solway coast. In fact, these runes are the oldest Anglo-Saxon poetry anywhere in the world. The Ruthwell and Bewcastle crosses are closely-related sister crosses that both date from the early 8thC. It is likely that they were either inspired by the poem, or inspired the author(s) of the poem, as they are more or less contemporary with it - the close relation between them being evident through the runic engraving. The poem is about an elderly monk who dreams about the cross (the 'rood') in his sleep, and as he meditates the cross begins to speak to him about the events of that day. It is typical Johannine Anglo-Saxon theology, in that creation speaks of God's presence to those who pray, and the colour, holiness, glory, majesty, wonder and awe flow back and forth through the poem as the Christ climbs up to mount his victory throne, which is, of course, the rood. We will be gathered, praying around perhaps the actual cross that 'speaks' in the poem. If you would like to be seated outside you will need to bring your own furniture.

If anyone would like to receive communion at home because they find it difficult to attend a church service, or knows of anyone in this situation, please do get in touch with me and I will arrange a date to come round. Similarly, if you know of anyone who would appreciate a visit from their parish priest for whatever reason, do please let me know.

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2023 was not a good year for me healthwise.

Boring problems - mostly to do with getting old - resulted in a prostate operation, but not before 3 short stays in different hospitals. Such experiences are sobering. Nobody likes to be "Off Games" or to admit to their limitations. It hurts.

Clergy in particular (like many I guess in the caring professions) often like to think of themselves as invincible. Brilliant at sharing other people's problems. Not so brilliant at handling their own !

And often as we get older it's the seemingly small things.

Increasing weariness (often compensated by a welcome post prandial nap!) Loss of balance - a nightmare for those of us who conduct services. Going upstairs to collect something - only to discover that having got there you have forgotten what it was you needed to collect! (Solution - live in a bungalow!)

As I thought about all these things I looked back in my diaries.

When we "retired" up here 21 years ago I was made an Assistant Bishop in the Dioceses of both Carlisle and Newcastle, and so travelled constantly throughout the two Counties of Cumbria and Northumberland from Barrow in the South to Morpeth in the north.....And I loved it.

Speakings of every kind. Confirmations. Ordinations. Retreats And a great deal more.

I have been Chaplain to 3 High Sheriffs.

I have officiated in different roles in Wales, Scotland, Kent, Essex, Bedfordshire, Lancashire, Hertfordshire, Gloucestershire, Shropshire, Durham - to name but a few!

For 12 years I was given pastoral responsibility for all the retired clergy and their families in this Diocese, sharing with them the inevitable pressures of illness, bereavement or housing.

During that time I have spoken to something like 40 W.I 's or similar groups. To say nothing of local "Polyfills" in nearby churches - especially in times of sickness or during holidays. I have visited, christened, married and taken the funerals of many many families who have become personal friends. I have even lent a hand in raising money to help put our little church here in Bewcastle in better shape!

And it has been a privilege which I have loved and found deeply rewarding. Sometimes I just wonder where I found the energy to do it all.

But perhaps (coming up to my 87th birthday) the time has now come to slow down. To learn how to say " No ". To recognise that from now on most of the time it would be better for me (and perhaps for you to) if I sit in a pew rather than " up front ".

There's a verse in the Book in the Bible called Ecclesiastes which says in so many words

" There's a time to speak and a time to refrain from speaking."

Many of you must have thought "You can say that again! " when listening to one of us droning on in the pulpit But more seriously those wise words say to people like me who has blathered on now for over 60 years " Remember that Ministry can take many different forms. Perhaps now is the time to say thank you for all you have so far enjoyed, but remember that a ministry of 'quietness' can just as easily be used by God to help build His Kingdom."

It's not that I will stop trying to love and to care for people. Simply that perhaps increasingly I hope to do so in a quieter, more tabby cat way.

So that is what I intend to do. But please be assured I shall continue to love and to care and to pray for you all just the same. We can never say a big enough thank you to whoever or whatever it was that led us all those years ago to Bewcastle. This whole Benefice is the largest extended family to which we have ever belonged, and we shall for ever count ourselves lucky that you adopted us. And - well - you still know where we live!

Bishop John

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Saturday 2nd March 7.30 pm Stapleton Public Hall Dance with the Lawrie Family . Details Mary Thompson 016977 48378

Sunday 3rd March 10 am – 1pm Kirklington with Hethersgill PCC Big Breakfast in Hethersgill Hall. £10 and under 5's free. To book a seat ring Sandra 01228 675510, Irene 01228 675389 or Margaret 01228 675652. All are welcome.

Tuesday 12th March Kirklington & District WI Games Afternoon

Wednesday 13th March Stapleton WI Easter Crafting

Thursday 14th March 2pm Spring Themed Poetry, Prose & Song Afternoon in Roadhead Hall

Thursday 14th March 7.30pm Cookery Demonstration by Chris Hogg "Stepping into Spring!" With Tasters at Hethersgill Parish Hall, to support hall funds.£7 including light refreshments. All welcome.

To book, please contact Christine 07790 302016.

Thursday 14th March 8 pm Bowling in Stapleton Public Hall. This will be the last one until the Autumn

Saturday 16th March 7 pm Live Music with Jason Arnup & Band at Stapleton Public Hall. £5. Bar available. There will be hot food available; lasagne, burger & chips, pies etc.

Sunday 17th March 10.30 am – 2 pm Bewcastle Sunday Hub at Roadhead Hall. Free entry and hot drinks. Bacon rolls and cakes for sale, craft stalls.

Tuesday 19th March 12 noon Bewcastle Primary School Community Lunch, serving roast beef with trimmings, apple crumble and custard. £5 per adult, £2.90 per child. All places must be booked no later than **Wednesday 13th March**. To book your contact the school on 016977 48662 or complete the online booking form below:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=izGTMEImPE2czcYSH5jioZLCjMQWEF9OmuS60t4F_sRU MEZGtksWUU5YQU9EN1hNWjk5V00xMII1Wi4u

Tuesday 19th March 8pm Bewcastle Heritage Society Meeting at Roadhead Hall. "Echoes Across the Borderlands" An illustrated lecture with Chris Caghill. Entrance £3

Saturday 23rd March 10.30 am – 3.30 pm Bewcastle Spinners at Roadhead Hall. Please bring your own lunch – tea and coffee available .All welcome, experienced spinners and those who want to learn. Knitters welcome too. Small charge for hire of hall

Monday 25th March 7.30pm folk tunes sessions at the Black Lion, Hethersgill. All welcome to come along and play or listen. Some tunes to ensure we have something in common to play can be found on the [Bewcastle House of Prayer](#) website. Music can be found by searching for them on [TheSession.org](#) website.

Thursday 28th March – Monday 1st April 10 am – 5 pm. Easter Craft Fair at Lanercost Dacre Hall. Admission £1, accompanied children free.

Claiming Dates

Tuesday 2nd April at 7.30 pm Hethersgill Social Committee Meeting in the village Hall. New members and volunteers welcome.

Saturday 6th April Stapleton Public Hall Dance with Brian Griffin

Saturday 4th May Hethersgill's Annual Picnic and Play Event. Fun and games for all the family at the village hall. This year there will also be a hog roast and live music. More details to follow

Saturday 7th Sept Stapleton Flower & Produce Show Open to everyone in the four parishes. Classes for Flowers, Vegetables and Home Baking. Classes for the children who attend Shankhill School. Sponsorship is welcome, for further details contact Carol Baxter on 01228 577294/ 07926758332 or Catherine Lawson on 01697748322/ 07746286311.

Line Dancing Classes: Every Monday 7.30 - 9 pm (not 4th March) at Stapleton Public Hall. Ann Robb 07855 919368

Knit & Natter: Every Tuesday 7 pm at Stapleton Hall For further details contact Carol on 01697 543094. **Yoga: Every Thursday 6pm in Hethersgill Hall** with the lovely Hilary. All ages and abilities welcome. £7 a class or 5 classes for £30

Stapleton Carpet Bowling Club: Every Thursday 8 pm (last one 14th March) in Stapleton Public Hall

March 2024-----NEWS AND THANKS----- March 2024

Treasurers of Bewcastle, Kirklington with Hethersgill, and Stapleton would like to record their thanks for the support and generosity in each parish over the last year. As bills go up, such support helps to keep the church doors open in a very practical way. But it isn't just financial support that keeps the Benefice going. There are also many unrecorded generous gifts of time and service - from baking, cleaning, admin, grass cutting and strimming, flower arranging, licks of paint, running repairs, and small expenses incurred for which a bill is never presented. The generosity is invaluable, and it does not go unnoticed.

Gift Aid There are always practicalities with regard to Gift Aid that are worth highlighting each year: Yearly review. Where donations are made under Gift Aid, as a new tax year begins on 6 April, it's always a good idea to take stock. Do make sure that you are happy to carry on using Gift Aid, and that there will be enough tax in charge (either income tax or capital gains tax) to cover donations. Gift Aid declarations can be revoked, but that's something that can't be done retrospectively. Just let us know if you want to do this. Similarly, if you don't currently have a Gift Aid declaration in place, but would like to use the Gift Aid scheme, do please say, and we can provide the relevant form. Tax relief for donors. It might also be worth mentioning that higher rate taxpayers may be entitled to additional tax relief on donations. This can be claimed from HMRC - see under 'If you're a higher rate taxpayer' here <https://www.gov.uk/donating-to-charity/gift-aid>

Hethersgill social committee extend their sincere thanks and appreciation to all who supported their first Ceilidh in January. Thank you to Iain Anderson for excellent music and Margaret for calling the dances and thank you to everyone for kindly donating raffle prizes. More than 70 people came and everyone had a great time, kids and adults alike. They will be arranging another later in the year so please do keep an eye out for that.

Hethersgill Social committee are always looking for new members and volunteers to help at our events. If you would like to be involved in any way – big or small please pop along to our next meeting on 2nd April at 7.30 in the village Hall.

Hethersgill parish Hall would like to thank everyone for joining their 100 club; January winners 1st Adrian Corri; 2nd Isa Main; 3rd Jamie Armstrong. February winners 1st Malcolm Bell, 2nd Norman Armstrong, 3rd Fiona Corri

Stapleton Public Hall can be booked or enquiries made by email bookings@stapletonpublichall.co.uk or calling Eileen on 016977 3196.

Hethersgill Hall Bookings: If you would like to book the hall for an event please contact Elsie Elliott on 01228 675336

Post Office at Stapleton Public Hall on Wednesdays 1 – 2.30 pm. All usual Post Office services available, post a letter or parcel, as well as take out cash or pay in cheques.

Shankhill C of E Primary School and Nursery - places throughout school for children aged 3 - 11, free 15 & 30 hours places for children aged 3+ Mon-Fri 8.45-4.30 pm 01228 577264 office@shankhill.cumbria.sch.uk.

Shankhill Parent & Toddler Group every Wed 1:30 –3:20pm during term time. 01228 577264 Updates on our Facebook page

Shankhill Community Lunches - £5.50 for a homecooked two-course meal and open to everyone on some Tuesdays throughout term time (dates on Facebook) - call 01228 577264 or email office@shankhill.cumbria.sch.uk by 10am the Friday before to book.

Bewcastle Primary School and Nursery – places available throughout school for children aged 3 – 11. We now offer wrap around care, 8am -5pm. For further information please call 016977 48662 or email admin@bewcastle.cumbria.sch.uk

Bewcastle School Nursery – Nursery places available for children aged 3+, full and part time places available. For further information please call 016977 48662 or emailadmin@bewcastle.cumbria.sch.uk

Bewcastle Primary School Play Group - at Bewcastle School, Roadhead, Cumbria, CA6 6PF. Every Monday during term time 1.30pm – 3pm. From children aged 0–4 years along with parents/carers, are welcome to come along and join in the fun! £1 per child. For more information, contact Emma at Bewcastle School on 016977 48662 or admin@bewcastle.cumbria.sch.uk

Bewcastle Scouts Contact. Simon Barrett 01228 497970 or David Harding 07935172942 bewcastlescouts@gmail.com

Donations towards the cost of the newsletter would be greatly appreciated. Donations can be made direct to your distributor or to Tricia Coombe. Please note that we can no longer accept cheques, cash donations only. Thank you to those who have donated.

Newsletters can be picked up from: Kirklington Church porch, Hethersgill Church porch, Stapleton Church, Bewcastle Church, Stapleton Public Hall Porch, Smithfield Garage office, Garry Phillip's Garage. Or downloaded :

www.Bewcastle.com/news-events, www.BewcastleHouseOfPrayer.org.uk/parish-notice

Deadline for the **April 2024** issue is **Saturday 16th March** to Tricia Coombe, Damhead, Lyneholmford, Roweltown, CA6 6LQ. 016977 48833 or triciacoombe@damhead.me