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St John's and St Luke's Together

St John's Church



July 2024

60 pence

St Luke's Church



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LETTER FROM SIMON OUR RECTOR

Dear friends

I haven't actually counted, but I think I've written in the region of 50 clergy letters for the Focus magazine over the past almost 10 years, but sadly this will be my last (ahead of my last Sunday on 4th August when there will be a joint service at St John's)! As most of you will know, I am leaving the wonderful parish of Bilton to move on to what I hope is the equally wonderful parish of Easby, Skeeby, Bolton on Swale and Brompton on Swale (ESBB),



situated between Richmond and Catterick in beautiful North Yorkshire. The vicarage is situated near the river Swale in Brompton and is south facing!



THE PARISH OF EASBY, SKEEBY,
BROMPTON ON SWALE AND BOLTON-ON-SWALE



You might be wondering why I felt it was the right time to leave – well, I have been in Bilton for almost ten years now, and there have been many blessings and indeed a number of challenges, not least coming through COVID together, and it has been a privilege to live and work here, but at the start of the New Year I had a strong inner, hopefully God-given, conviction that it was right to look for a new challenge. In some respects, the timing of this conviction was odd because when Laura was appointed back in the early autumn, I had expected we would work together for

many years (sorry Laura!!!), but it did not go away and so I began looking for what God might have in store. Wanting to stay in the area, the options were limited, but the ESBB parish vacancy caught my eye, and the rest, as they say, is history. It will be very different, with a smaller congregation and a more rural feel, but it is not what I would call deeply rural, if only because the A1 goes right through the middle of the parish. I'm excited by the new challenge and hoping to see God very much at work and finding ways to join in. Fiona and I will be sad to leave a place where we have made many friends and put down deep roots, but it had to happen at some point!

And so you will be facing a time of vacancy – yes, Laura will still be around, but she cannot and will not be doing the work of two people, so now is the time for people to step up and ask how they can help in the coming months (realistically, given the way the C of E works, a new rector won't be in place for a year). And research has shown that vacancies are indeed a time when people's gifts can be released and churches can grow. So, I simply encourage you, yes in the midst of the busyness of life, to be prayerfully asking, 'What might God be wanting me to do in this season?' Equally, it may be that some things may have to be paused, so please pray for discernment for Laura and the PCC at this time. Thankfully we are blessed in having four retired clergy in our midst, and they will be invaluable, but they are retired, so we shouldn't be thinking 'This is an opportunity for them to step up more!'

There are many lessons I have learnt over these past ten years, but one I want to draw to your attention is the need for us, the church, to inhabit the space where we are seeking the delicate balance between offering spiritual opportunities and challenges on the one hand, and not putting too many demands on people whose lives are already full on the other. As someone once put it:

'Church should be a community that is deep enough at its centre to nourish and challenge the committed, and light enough at its edges to allow access to the curious, the confused, the needy and the hurt.'

To say this more succinctly, I have found that church needs to be both a place of healing and a place of growth – and so I would urge you to keep looking and working for both, against the backdrop of a new insight I gained recently. In the encounter recorded in John 3, Jesus tells Nicodemus, 'You must be born again' meaning that we need to come alive spiritually – but He must mean more than simply being born spiritually – because as we all know, birth is followed by growth into a richness or fullness of life – and I therefore simply encourage you to keep on seeking to grow, to keep on seeking the abundance of life that Jesus offers us – as we do so, we will be blessed and be a blessing.

God bless you all

Simon

SAYING FAREWELL
SUNDAY 4TH AUGUST

Joint All Age Worship
at St John's
at 10.30 am
on Simon's last Sunday
followed by
a Bring-and-Share lunch
Everyone is invited



CAN YOU HELP?

Setting up or clearing up - Serving drinks
- Washing up

Offers to the Church Office please



On the eve of the “Big Help Out” (7th to 9th June 2024) 1st Bilton Guides and 4th Bilton Brownies went litter picking round Bilton. Who knew that litter picking could be such good fun, time would pass so quickly, or how much rubbish we would actually find!



Well done to all the girls on the 8 bags of rubbish which were filled.

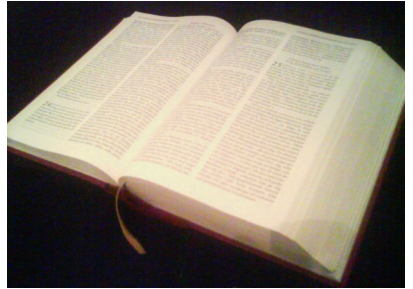
QUESTION CORNER



Q. The Bible is God's word. But there are many harsh and cruel laws in the Old Testament. How can we understand God in this?

A. The Bible tells of God's relationship with his people, sometimes good and sometimes bad. The culture is often barbaric, as

tribes made war on others around. They are in a state of transition, from making sacrifices to other gods to worshipping the one true God. So there is much bloodshed (human as well as animal). It took a long time to learn that God is not an angry figure to be appeased by sacrifices, and they added many harsh laws to those given by Moses – and presented as though from God himself!



But Jesus criticised such harsh teaching which gave a wrong idea of God. He said in effect 'You know what our forefathers said, but I'm telling you something quite different.' That includes things like 'an eye for an eye', often quoted to justify taking revenge on someone. (See Matthew 5: 38-48)

Yes, the Bible IS God's word (MESSAGE) but not always God's WORDS. Old Testament themes like the shepherd king and the suffering servant point forward to Jesus himself. But the message is difficult to find in the sections on law – which are NOT God's message today.

Critics will say that we only select the good bits. But having faith does not mean abandoning our (God-given) reason, and we MUST put things in context. Jesus said that we have to discriminate. And he came to show us what God is like, and to bring us into a relationship with him as a loving and caring father.



Helpful Bible Reading Fellowship notes are used by people in this parish. If you would like to join the scheme, contact Jenny Caldwell (521300)

David



COFFEE MORNINGS

There is NO coffee morning this month,



but we'll be back again in August, raising money for John and Vikki Wright, our link missionaries working with YWAM in Uganda.

They particularly need our support and prayers at the moment after the traumatic events earlier this year, when John had an eye operation, and many of their friends in YWAM were involved in a tragic road accident.

The Africa Europe Cohort for the Masters' Program after the accident having lost ten members.



The Wright family on their last visit to Bilton

John and Vikki will be talking at our services at both churches on Sunday 7th July

THE WORD

After reading this poem in Focus last month, Anne sent the following:

*This poem is the most poignant poem I have ever read. It shot a dart straight into my heart for its truth is indisputable; not only [and crucially] in man's loneliness for God but in man's loneliness for fellow man. It is an inspiration to truly love our neighbour as ourselves and (from one of Simon's sermons) to "love one another as if your lives depended upon it."**

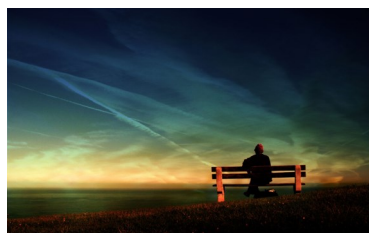
**The Message Bible.*

Here's the poem again:

A pen appeared, and the god said:
'Write what it is to be
man.' And my hand hovered
long over the bare page,

until there, like footprints
of the lost traveller, letters
took shape on the page's
blankness, and I spelled out

the word 'lonely'. And my hand moved
to erase it; but the voices
of all those waiting at life's
window cried out loud: 'It is true.'



– RS Thomas, 'The Word', in *Collected Poems, 1945–1990*



PEOPLE

MARRIAGE

CONGRATULATIONS TO

Ryan Michael Nicholson and Abbie Mae Dodsworth

Sebastian James Avery and Cordelia Anne Yarborough



BAPTISMS / BLESSINGS

WE WELCOME INTO THE CHURCH FAMILY

Emmie Rose Ramshaw

Roberta Violet Smith

INTERMENT OF ASHES

WE OFFER OUR SYMPATHY TO THE

FAMILIES OF

Marina Simpson

Stella Thurley



FUNERALS/ MEMORIALS

WE OFFER OUR SYMPATHY TO THE FAMILY

OF THOSE WHO HAVE RECENTLY DIED

Ethney Anne Woodrow

SUNDAY 14th JULY

is Copy Date for
AUGUST 2024 FOCUS

Items for inclusion to:

SJSLFocus@gmail.com

or Editor, 6 Old Trough Way,
HG1 3DE

or leave them in the drawer at the
back of St John's Church

St John's & St Luke's

**CHURCH OFFICE OPENING
HOURS**

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY

9.30am to 1.00pm

TUESDAY 11.30am to 1.00pm

FRIDAY CLOSED

565129 (+ Answerphone)

church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk



ROGERS ALMSHOUSES

What is an Almshouse?

Almshouses represent the oldest form of social housing in the UK. For over a thousand years, Almshouses have been providing a unique form of warm, safe, secure homes for people in need.



The spirit of Almshouses can be found in the traditional values of compassion, companionship and community and offer independent living. For people who are in true housing need, Almshouses can provide a life changing opportunity.

The occupation of an Almshouse is under a 'Licence to Occupy' as a beneficiary of the Charity.

What is the history of Rogers' Almshouses?

A gift in 1868 of George Rogers, the Bradford Textile Manufacturer and Harrogate Philanthropist. Today they are run by a Board of Trustees, all of whom are volunteers. Located in central Harrogate on Belford Road with easy access to transport links, amenities and shops.

Property vacancies at Rogers Square

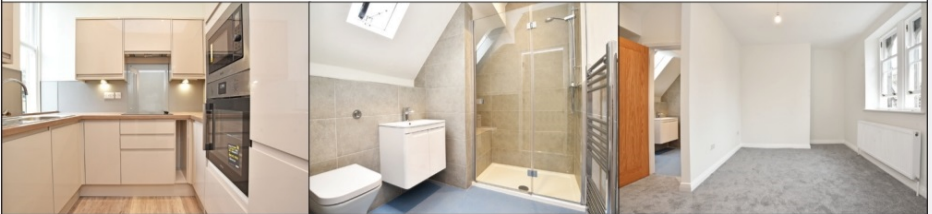
Two properties will be available late Summer 2024 onwards and applications are invited from eligible applicants.

Our Charity criteria stipulates applicants must have a true housing need, be over 60, have a clear connection with the administrative area of Harrogate Borough (as defined in 1974) or Bradford Metropolitan District Council and be capable of independent living.

Maintenance Charge (rent) payable in the region of **£695** per calendar month. Residents are responsible for Council Tax & Utilities (excluding water). Maintenance charges are reviewed each April.

To obtain an application pack, please telephone the Charity Administrator on **07536 187 626** or email **vacancies@rogersalmshouses.org.uk**

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to a property viewing and interview with a panel of Trustees. Due to high demand, it may be necessary to stop accepting applications. If this is the case, applicants will be given the opportunity to remain on file for future vacancies.



Rogers Square, Belford Road, Harrogate, HG1 1HZ
www.rogersalmshouses.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 236424

photos for example only – properties vary

JULY'S CALENDAR

Monday 1 st	9.30am-4.00pm	Food Safety Level 2 Course (SJ)
	7.30pm	Baptism Information Session (SJ)
Tuesday 2 nd	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	4-5.00pm	4twelve (Year 7+ Youth Group) (Harrogate Chocolate Factory)
	7.00pm	Alpha Course (SJ)
Wednesday 3 rd	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 4 th	9-9.45am	Morning Prayer General Election Focus (SJ)
	9.30-11.30am	Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group) (SL)
Friday 5 th	1-3.00pm	Wellbeing Café (SL)
Sunday 7th	9.00am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Parade Service (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SL)
	6-8.00pm	Youth Worship Night at Kennel Hall Farm, Killinghall
Monday 8 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	7.30pm	Rhythm of Life Meeting (SJ)
Tuesday 9 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	10.00am	Walking Group (SJ)
	2-3.30pm	Comfort Café (SJ)
	4-5.00pm	4twelve (Year 7+ Youth Group) (Harrogate Chocolate Factory)
	7.30pm	PCC Meeting (SJ)
Wednesday 10 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
	12.15pm	Community Lunch at Bilton Community Centre
Thursday 11 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	9.30-11.30am	Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group) (SL)
Friday 12 th	1-3.00pm	Wellbeing Café (SL)
	6.30-7.15pm	Junior Choir Practice (SJ)
	7-7.45pm	Adult Choir Practice (SJ)
Sunday 14th	9.00am	Holy Communion (SJ)

	10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Café Church (SL)
	12.30pm	Baptisms (SJ)
	5.30-7.00pm	Ignite Summer Party (Year 6+ Youth Group) (SJ)
Monday 15 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Tuesday 16 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	4-5.00pm	4twelve (Year 7+ Youth Group) (Harrogate Chocolate Factory)
	7.30pm	Rhythm of Life Meeting (SJ)
Wednesday 17 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
	12.00pm	Thirst Table at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 18 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	9.30-11.30am	Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group) (SL)
Friday 19 th	1-3.00pm	Wellbeing Café (SL)
Sunday 21st	9.00am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	All Age Morning Worship (SJ)
	10.30am	All Age Morning Worship (SL)
Monday 22 nd	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Tuesday 23 rd	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Wednesday 24 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 25 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Friday 26 th	1-3.00pm	Wellbeing Café Summer Party (SL)
Sunday 28th	9.00am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	All Age Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	All Age Morning Worship (SL)
Monday 29 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Tuesday 30 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Wednesday 31 st	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
<u>AUGUST</u>		
Thursday 1 st	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Saturday 3 rd		Limitless Youth Camp (Staffordshire)
Sunday 4th	9.00am	Holy Communion (SJ)
	10.30am	JOINT All Age Worship (SJ)
Monday 5 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)

Tuesday 6 th	9-9.30am 12.30-1.30pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Time to Pray Lunch (SJ)
Wednesday 7 th	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 8 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Saturday 10 th	10.00am-12.00noon	Coffee Morning in Church Hall (SJ)
Sunday 11 th	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am	Holy Communion (SJ) All Age Holy Communion (SJ) All Age Worship (SL)

Office will be closed from Friday 19th July
and reopen on Monday 5th August

Office will be closed from Friday 23rd August
and reopen on Wednesday 4th September

Looking Ahead...

Tuesday 13 th August	2-3.30pm	Comfort Café (SJ)
Tuesday 10 th September	2-3.30pm	Comfort Café (SJ)
Tuesday 10 th September	TBA	Simon's licensing (TBA)
Saturday 14 th September	10am-12noon	Coffee Morning (SJ Hall)
Friday to Sunday 22 nd -24 th November		Parish Weekend at Scargill House

SUFFERING

Right at the heart of the mystery of suffering is the grace that sustains us all, carers and cared for alike. It comes as freely and as surely as the sunrise, piercing the blackness of grief and despair, restoring once again the hope of things unseen.

*from Sharing the Darkness by Sheila Cassidy, who was arrested
and tortured while serving as a missionary in Chile,
and went on to become medical director of a hospice.*

ST JOHN'S AND ST LUKE'S TOGETHER WHO'S WHO

Parish Office Phone No: 01423 565129

Parish Office email: church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

For parish information including services and events

visit Parish Websites: www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

www.stlukesharrogate.org.uk

www.facebook.com/groups/stjohnsandstlukes.harrogate

www.facebook.com/stlukesharrogate

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**Emma James—Young People's
Worker**

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YouthWork@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

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SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

Our small, friendly Scottish Country Dance group meet at St Luke's Church hall on Mondays from 7.30 to 9.30.

We welcome new members -
It is not necessary to have experience or bring a partner, just soft shoes and a sense of humour!

It's fun, good exercise and sociable.

The first night is free,
thereafter the fee is only £3.50.

We would love to see you!
Either turn up at the hall or contact:

Alan Horsfall 01423 863162
or Alan Fox 07879 715557



Bilton & Woodfield
Community Library



YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

You can use computers or find out about local events and information. We run storytimes for pre-school children and reading groups for all.

YOU could become a member of our team of volunteers

We are open five days a week:

Monday	1.00pm - 5.00pm
Tuesday	9.30am - 5.00pm
Wednesday	CLOSED
Thursday	9.30am - 5.00pm
Friday	9.30am - 1.00pm
Saturday	9.30am - 1.00pm
Sunday	CLOSED

In the grounds of Woodfield School, Woodfield Road
Telephone: 01423 564630

Email: info@biltonandwoodfield.org.uk
www.biltonandwoodfield.org.uk

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St John's Church Hall and St Luke's Church
can be hired for single occasions or for regular events.
Contact the Church Office for more information.

ROOTS & Fruits
your local
greengrocer

30 King Edwards Drive, Harrogate, HG1 4HL.

Telephone: 01423 538445

Opening Times: 7.30am-5.30pm Tuesday - Saturday

Supporting the local community