

Winter / Spring 2024

# ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH NEWBOTTLE



**NEWS**  
*FROM THE PEWS*

*You are the light of the world.  
A city on a hill cannot be hidden  
Matthew 5 v14*

## Parish of St. Matthew's Newbottle Diocese of Durham

### Church Services

#### Sunday Services

9.45 am Family Worship-  
Holy Communion

#### Wednesday

10.00 am Holy Communion

#### Church Open

Tuesday 10.00-11am

Wednesday 10:30- 11:30am

#### Church Hall

Church Hall Bookings by Email:

stmatthewshallbookings@gmail.com

#### Churchwardens

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Joy Warren

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#### Editorial team

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Vera Marshall, Charles Martin

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### Weddings

7<sup>th</sup> Nov. '23

James Gillibrand  
and Katie Coates

### Funerals

2<sup>nd</sup> Nov. '23

Gloria Turton Bellamy

2<sup>nd</sup> Nov. '23

Lydia Appleby

2<sup>nd</sup> Feb.

Nora Waterston

7<sup>th</sup> Feb.

Joseph Orrell

20<sup>th</sup> Feb

Susan Holmes

### Burial of Ashes

30<sup>th</sup> Nov. '23

Lydia Appleby

7<sup>th</sup> Jan.

Dorothy Mallaburn

*Be still from all activity and rest in the love and presence of God. There is no need to do anything to make God come, for he is with you always; relax and make room in your life for God. Know that God's with you at this very moment, for he is always with you. Know that God loves you and cares for all that is happening in your life. Rest for a few moments in his loving presence. Allow God to give you his peace.*

#### Note from The Editorial Team

We would like to know if you are enjoying the magazine and if you would like to be involved? Do you have some stories or interests you would like to share?

# *Churchwardens' Chat*

It's amazing how time is flying this year. At the time of writing, it was only seven weeks since Christmas, one week since the start of Lent, and just over six weeks to Easter Day. Weather wise, we are all probably wondering if its ever going to stop raining. Unfortunately, since Christmas our church hall Jubilee Room has been out of use owing to rainwater leaking into the roof and ceiling.

Repair work has been undertaken and hopefully, very soon, those who use the Jubilee Room can happily return to enjoy their activities there. A big thank you to all involved in the substantial amount of remediation work.

Our Christmas services this year were again very well attended in our beautifully decorated church.

A lot of folk said how much they enjoyed our services and this is always good to hear. But as you can imagine preparing for our Christmas celebrations is not easy. Just like in our homes, it takes a lot of preparation and time. The reason so many enjoyed our services is down to a lot of people who worked really hard in the background, at a very busy time of the year, and we would like to thank everyone for their support and hard work.

This work, for our parish and community, is an expression of our faith, and it's a precious gift to God.

We feel we have been blessed with the service leaders and preachers we have had over the past months. We have been challenged in our faith, in looking and planning ahead and in both deepening our commitment to God and being thankful for God's great blessings here in Newbottle.

At Easter time we put three crosses up in the churchyard. These crosses, made out of our Christmas trees from past years, signify the close relationship between Christmas and Easter. Christ was born to live among us on earth; He died for our sins on the cross and was raised from the dead. This year we are again lucky to have Rev. Michael Beck with us for our Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day services. Details of our weekly services and our Easter services can be found in this magazine. If you would like to learn more about Jesus, His love and His promise to each and everyone of us, (regardless of who we are or what we have been in the past), there's no reason to wait for Easter, why not come and join us at St Matthew's where everyone is assured a very warm welcome.

# Weddings

at St. Matthew's Church, Newbottle



*The wedding of  
Katie Coates and James Gillibrane on  
7th November 2023*

## ***Mango & Passion Fruit Eton Mess***



This is a really easy and very tasty dessert.

For 4:

1 mango diced

2 passion fruit

4 small meringue nests

Small carton double cream

### **Method:**

Peel the mango, remove all flesh & dice it small.

Cut the passion fruit in half & scoop out the pulp.

Break the meringues into bite-sized pieces.

Whisk the cream until it has soft peaks.

Leave until ready to serve. (The meringue will disintegrate if mixed too early.)

Mix the cream & meringue pieces gently.

Divide half of the mango between the 4 glasses. Top with about half of the cream & meringue mix. Repeat, leaving a little mango for the top, then spoon over the passion fruit & top with a few pieces of mango. Delicious!



# Newbottle Village

## First Christmas Tree



Thanks to the local council, Newbottle village had its first Christmas tree in 2023. On Friday 1st December, after some very seasonal snow, lots of villagers met in front of The Sun Inn awaiting the grand switch on of the lights. It was a huge tree and it was so lovely to see it lit up. It was arranged between St. Matthew's and the council. It was such a big tree and it really did make the village feel Christmassy. Afterwards many of the crowd tramped through the snow to the church hall, where there were hot drinks, mulled wine and mince pies on offer.

# St. Matthew's Church Christmas Fayre 2023

The weekend of 1st December was a very busy weekend, as it was the village Christmas tree lighting and the next day the Christmas Fayre. After serving refreshments on the Friday night the rest of the hall had to be prepared for the annual fayre on the Saturday. There were stalls to fill and decorate, cakes to prepare, drinks to organise and Santa's grotto to organise and decorate. There were many helpers from church and family members all pitching in.

It was a lovely afternoon and lovely to see many of the community again. About £1,200 was made for church funds and we will certainly need this with the size of heating bills for the church.

Thanks to all who worked so hard and gave their time, not just on the day, but also for time spent making and baking and collecting. A special thanks must go to Elishia for her tremendous efforts and commitment.



# St. Matthew's

## Christmas Elves



Children all know how the Elves help Santa with making the toys and in delivering them, but did you know about the elves at St Matthew's?

Well, these distinguished elves, who can also turn their hands to gardening, making lunches, cleaning, decorating etc etc., spent a full morning in church before Christmas, decorating the place. The elves were very busy and worked together as a good team. There was, as you might expect the odd elf that arrived late, but once there, they worked happily. A particularly tall elf made sure the huge tree was well secured, hung the baubles on the higher branches and secured the star at the top. The other elves gazed in awe! They weren't jealous, they had other tasks to do.

Of course, after Christmas these elves had to take down the tree and pack away all the decorations. Fun? Not quite as much as putting them up. There was again the rather late elf and one elf who came up with a great excuse for not being there!! The elves were, on this occasion, greatly helped by Josh & Jake, two very strong and pleasant elves from ATW Tree & Landscaping, who disposed of the tree in an ecological manner.

Joking aside, these group sessions are always great fun and are much enjoyed by everyone involved. One of many great things that belonging to the church family offers.

We'll be having special services and events and "elf" days this year. Come and join us!





# A Holly Jolly Christmas



The Christmas services at St Matthew's were jolly and moving and the church was decked out with its tree and an abundance of holly. All of our services were filled with a warmth that wasn't only the heating working well. The building was filled with love, good humour and an enjoyment at being together, not just with our normal congregation, but with many old friends and new ones from the village community and beyond.

The Carols by Candlelight had a congregation of 151, the Christingle and communion Christmas Eve service had 56, Christmas Day had 26 and the more relaxed Carols around the Tree saw 120 people enjoying the carols and refreshments. Something in the Christmas message resonates with many who don't come to church regularly. It is a wonderful message and that message is there for us every day of the year!

Thank you to all who joined us for these services and gave to our retiring collections. We donated £100 to each of the following charities: Childrens Society, Crisis at Christmas and Church Homeless.

One very memorable Christmas carol – last verse of, “In the Bleak Midwinter”

*What can I give Him,  
Poor as I am?  
If I were a Shepherd  
I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a Wise Man  
I would do my part,  
Yet what I can I give Him,  
Give my heart.*



# Learning and Fun with Newbottle Primary Academy



Last autumn, the Reception class from Newbottle Primary came up to church as part of their school work on Harvest. Tom loves to meet with the children and as well as the children enjoying their visit Tom did too. He talked about fruit and veg and whether each one was grown above or below ground and where it came from. There were lots of questions and answers about what they need to grow and whether we need the same. They discussed who we thank for all this fruitfulness and how God provides for us all. He was delighted to receive a beautiful thank you card with self-portraits of each class member, and this now has pride of place on our noticeboard in church.

Later in the term, Tom visited Y1 at the school and worked with the two classes on their curriculum subject of the church family and what it means to belong to a Christian community. Each child was given a small hand carved wooden cross. They went on

to discuss and answer questions about the parables, and in particular the parable of the Lost Sheep. Tom found it incredible that Y1 knew so much about this and their depth of understanding. Well done Y1!

Just before Christmas was the School's Christmas Service. This is normally at church and we love to have the 400+ children there, but this year, due to the roadworks and extra traffic at the village crossroads, it was decided to have the service at school. Tom, Joy and Mike had a lovely welcome from the school and they said the children's singing was wonderful. Tom gave a talk about Christmas presents and the best gift of all, with some Christmas present props to help and to engage the children. There were things they weren't expecting, such as the present they thought was a ball, but turned out to be a cuddly toy and the panda's head! Much fun was had by all. But the simple message is Jesus is the best gift of all.



## SUSAN HOLMES

### 1955 – 2024

We were all very saddened to learn about the sudden and untimely death of Susan Holmes, a valued member of our own church family. Sue was warm, caring, joyous and very kind.

She was born to Wilf and Doris on 10th December 1955 and grew up in Fencehouses, with her elder sister Chris. She attended Dubmire Infants & Juniors before going to Secondary School in Fencehouses. She also did some volunteering at Burn Park Nursing Home as a teenager.

After school, Sue went to Durham Technical College and became a nursery nurse. Her first job was at Thorney Close Primary School, before moving on to the nursery at Gillas Lane. She also worked in Special Education, then took a job at St. Cuthbert's School in Grindon. Although she retired in 2014, she continued to provide cover at Barnes Infant School. Throughout her career, the safety and well being of each child was always her priority.



Sue was married to Stephen for 44 years. They enjoyed holidays on the Isle of Man and Jersey, but being a homebird at heart, she was just as happy walking in Rainton Meadow or Hannah's Meadow. She was a keen gardener, enjoyed baking and was super organised in

the house. She enjoyed dancing, had a beautiful singing voice and liked music, especially Motown and Soul, and liked going to Sunderland Empire. She also had a season ticket for Sunderland Football Club.

Faith was extremely important to Sue, and she was a regular attender and well-loved member of our church. She was also very supportive of Stephen in his ministry.

We remember the bravery with which she received the news of her diagnosis, and in the end experienced the peace that passes understanding.

God bless you Sue, we won't ever forget you and your fellowship and dedication to our church.

## BRIAN SPEAR

### 1947 – 2024

Sadly, on February 3rd Brian passed away in hospital in Sydney, Australia. Brian was the elder son of Joan and Tom Spear. Growing up in Newbottle, he belonged to the Youth Group at St Matthew's and played the organ in church. He started his career at Durham Crown Court, moved to Chester then to Cardiff and finished his working life with the Crown Prosecution Service in London. He retired and moved to Australia, 20 years ago to be with his family.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Sue, his wife and children Cora and David and grandchildren.

## NORA WATERSTON

### 1930 – 2024

We were very sad to hear of Nora's passing. She attended services at St Matthew's for many, many years and supported the church in many ways. She helped serve lunches in the church hall on a Thursday in what is now called the Lunch Club.

Nora was born in Shiny Row and attended Houghton Grammar school. She then worked at Sunderland District Omnibus Company until she married Bob in St Oswald's Shiny Row.

They moved into Gertrude Street where she lived all her life. Nora and Bob had two lovely sons David and Ian. Many of you will remember David at church where he was one of the Sunday School leaders. Nora returned to working life, with the social services department, when her boys were older. Although Nora had no Social Care qualifications, she was an experienced "people" person and understood people's needs and problems. She was soon employed as a social worker, with the title of "Welfare Officer". Nora did this job until she retired. Together with her friend Sheila they ran a Wednesday afternoon club for people with mental health issues. Norah continued to run the club even after retirement. She led a selfless life, always caring and worrying about others.

Nora has gone home to God and we will remember Nora as she was, loving and caring and thoughtful.

## TOM RITSON

### 1937 – 2023

We were sorry to hear the sad news of Tom's passing. He was a good friend to St. Matthew's and played the organ for us for funerals and weddings on several occasions. Some of our congregation are members of Burnmoor choir and Tom accompanied them. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Vera and family.

# Lunch Club highs and lows!

With the excellent meals always served and the friendly atmosphere, you might be wondering how there are any lows. Unfortunately, after the high of the Christmas lunch, sadly the Lunch club has had to close its doors for a time. With all the rain and felting, flashing and guttering problems, there has been a large amount of water ingress, affecting a good part of the roof and ceiling in the Jubilee room. The ceiling has been threatening to come down and some parts of the wall are covered with mould. For health and safety reasons the club has had to suspend the lunches until the roof is repaired and the ceiling renewed.

The Christmas lunch was yet another high. Well attended, everyone had a great time – a fab meal and party hats, crackers, gifts, chocolates mince pies and lots more. The room was decorated beautifully, as was the table. Lots of twinkling lights and happy banter.

These things don't just happen without a lot of hard work behind the scenes, so once again many, many thanks to the Lunch Club team extraordinaire, Anne, Mary, Vera and Mavis. You are simply the best!

## **MARCH UPDATE...**

We're on an up!

The roof and spout have been repaired, half of the old ceiling has been renewed and replastered and the walls and ceiling have been painted. The books have been sorted and the shelves have been re-assembled. All of this work, and it was a massive task, has been done by Dave, Mary, Anne, Marjorie, Eve and Terry. We are blessed to have these people, who have given of their time and effort, to return the Jubilee room to its former glory. It is looking marvellous!

The team are hoping to restart the Lunch Club very soon.



# BATTERED AND BEATEN

There was a lot of battering and beating going on at the church hall on 10th February and several people flipped!!! Yes, you've guessed, it was our church pancake breakfast!! No aggression at all, other than if you happened to be an egg! The headline was just a yoke!!

We had a lovely morning enjoying some delicious pancakes cooked and served by Anne and Pat and Mary. There was a variety of toppings, from lemon juice to Nutella to maple syrup. There was the usual good banter and hilarity and we raised £200 for church hall funds. We'll certainly need it as we've had quite a bit of work done to the Jubilee roof and replastering inside.

Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday, is a special day celebrated in many countries around the world. It is celebrated in English-speaking countries like the UK, Ireland, Australia and Canada. In France, the USA and other countries, it is called 'Mardi Gras' or 'Fat Tuesday'.

Pancake Tuesday comes before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. Pancake Day, Lent and Holy Week are all part of the journey to Easter Day, the biggest Christian celebration of the year. It is a time when

lots of people make time to think carefully about their life. For Christians, this means trying to live God's way and remembering all that Jesus did. Pancake Day is also called Shrove Tuesday and is one last chance for a big party before Lent begins with Ash Wednesday the next day. Long ago, Christians traditionally used up all the eggs and fat they had in store by making pancakes and feasting on them. This was because when Lent came, they would eat less food, or even fast to help them focus on God and not on the things they wanted. This tradition has been passed down the generations.

Lots of people "give up" something they really enjoy for Lent – sweets, chocolate, cakes, biscuits or even wine. It's a time for contemplation and resisting temptation.

We hope all our readers enjoyed some pancakes this year. After all life is much batter with them!

Thanks to Mary, Anne, Pat and Marjorie who not only prepared, cooked and served the pancakes, but also set up the hall and organised a raffle.





Once again, we are very fortunate to have the Rev. Michael Beck leading all our services at Easter.

Maundy Thursday - 28th March 7.00pm

Good Friday - 29th March Hour by the Cross - 2.00pm – 3.00pm Ending with,  
“When I survey the Wondrous Cross”.

Easter Sunday - 31st March Family Communion Service 9:45am

*Do come and join us*

## *Let's Get Together In Lent*

The Lent study this year is at St. Michael and All Angels, Easington Lane.

It is on every Tuesday at 10:30am, from 20th February until 19th March.

It was based on John Pritchard's book, “Twenty Questions Jesus asked – and how they speak to us today. John Pritchard was Bishop of Jarrow, then Oxford and is now an Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Durham.

The book is excellent and is definitely worth a read.



If you would like to sing and have some fun, come along to Burnmoor Community Centre on a Tuesday night at 6:00pm or ring 07790309905 for more information.



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Clubhouse Tel: 0191 5841348

Manager Paul Thompson Tel: 0779 0094 116



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# Notices & Information

## FLOWER ARRANGING ROTA

Mrs Lydiatt, Mrs French, Mrs Martin,  
Mrs Lawson, Mrs Eden  
Flower preparation 9am Friday  
morning. All welcome, no experience  
needed.

## FLOWER FUND DONATIONS

### *Sanctuary Guild*

Anonymous donation for flowers  
Christmas flowers in memory of Bill  
& Enid Towers from Denise & family.

Anonymous donation for flowers  
Donation in memory of Rita Wilson  
From husband John.

Donations from the flower box in  
Church.

Christmas memories of dad, mam,  
gran & grandad Jack & Peg Smith. Loved  
& remembered always from Carole,  
Brian & family.

Christmas memories of dad, mam,  
grandad & gran Jimmy & Ena Smith  
& also brother Brian. Loved & always  
remembered, from Shirley, Barry & family.  
Christmas memories of Brian Gould,  
From Margaret.

Anonymous donation for flowers  
Flowers for Christmas in memory of past  
members of St Matthew's church.  
Flowers in memory of loved ones.

Many thanks to all those who donated to  
our Christmas flowers. The church  
looked beautiful to celebrate the  
Birth of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## CHURCH FUNDS

Christmas memories of Brian & all  
Loved ones, Margaret.

Christmas memories of all loved ones,  
from Catherine Morton.







# St. Matthew's Church & Community Hall

...part of the local community spirit

## Weekly Timetable

DAY	TIME	CLUB
Monday	6.30pm - 8.30pm	Judo (Brian)
Tuesday	10.00am - 12.00noon	Arts & Crafts Club (Kathleen)
Tuesday	6.30pm - 7.30pm	Karate
Wednesday	6.00pm-7.00pm	Zumba
Wednesday	7.00pm - 9.00pm	Powertex (occasionally)
Thursday	12.00pm - 1.30pm	Lunch Club
Thursday	6.30pm - 7.30pm	Karate
Friday	10.00am - 11.00am	Zumba Gold
Sunday	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Karate (Ed)

\*Details correct as April 2022

For all information on St. Matthew's Church and the Church Hall

[www.stmatthewsnewbottle.org](http://www.stmatthewsnewbottle.org)

We're on Facebook



St. Matthew's Church, Newbottle