



## **Vicar's Letter April 2021**

Dear Friends,

One of my regular walks is along the River Caldew by Cummersdale Holmes. In the last four and a half years I have been fascinated to see how the river has been reshaping the landscape. The river has moved more than thirty feet to the west, washing away the footpath and trees, whilst creating new land on the eastern bank, which is quickly being colonised by plants and trees.

For me this is a metaphor for the changes that we are facing in society and as a church, as the Greek philosopher Heraclitus (535BC-475BC) said "the only constant in life is change." Covid has reshaped the landscape in which we live, and as much as we may like things to go back to how they were before Covid, this is not going to happen (just in the same way that the changes to the River Caldew cannot easily be reversed).

For example the use of technology, how people work, our shopping habits, and the way we worship has all changed during this past year, and in many cases speeded up the changes that would have happened eventually. It is only as we slowly emerge out of this pandemic that we will discover the true impact these changes will have on our world.

As Mary Magdalen and the other women approached Jesus' tomb on the first Easter Sunday, little could they have known how much their lives, and the world would be changed by what they were to discover. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the most important event in the history of the universe, and continues to shape and affect our world today. Although the future may be uncertain and change can be unsettling, as Christians we follow an unchanging Christ who is 'the same yesterday and today and forever' (Hebrews 13:8).

At the New Wine Leaders Conference a few weeks ago, one speaker said that they believe we are entering a new era full of opportunities and challenges for the church. I don't know what the future holds, but I do know in whose hands that future rests, and I am excited to see what God is going to do.

As the Lord said through the prophet Isaiah, 'Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.' (Isaiah 43:18-19).

## **Easter Services**

Please join us for services at St. James during Easter. These services will also be streamed on Facebook.

### **MAUNDY THURSDAY**

7:30pm Holy Communion in St. James - a simple service of Holy Communion.

### **GOOD FRIDAY**

10:00am Experience Easter - come to church between 10am and 1pm where there will be a series of interactive and creative activities suitable for all ages, retelling the story of Holy Week .

2:00pm An Hour At The Cross - a quiet, reflective service for Good Friday.

### **HOLY SATURDAY**

4:00pm Messy Church - on YouTube

### **EASTER SUNDAY**

10:00am All Age Worship in St. James - a lively informal 40 minute service suitable for all ages.

11:15am Holy Communion - a service of Holy Communion for Easter Sunday, in St. James and streamed on Facebook.

6:30pm Easter Praise - on Zoom.

### **Service Survey**

Thank you to the many people who have filled in the worship survey, if you haven't yet completed it please do so by Easter Sunday. I know there will be many who would like us to go back to our pre-Covid worship pattern, but after a year of disruption (which also saw the closure of Cummersdale Church), we have a unique opportunity to try different ways of worshipping together. So in the coming months we will be experimenting with different services styles and times. Please keep an eye on the weekly e-bulletin and our website for further updates.

## **Luminosity 5-8th August (Ruth Scholes):**

Luminosity is a 4-day Christian festival that is a part of New Wine and their young adult program. I have had the opportunity to get to know some of the organisers over the New Wine Leadership conference and I have continually been impressed with both their work and their dedication. After discussing with Simon and Nina, we think that it would be a really good idea to take some of the young people from St. James.

I plan to take anyone in year 9 or above on the final session, **5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> August 2021**. The event is part of their big young adult conference Sixty One, with a separate space for teenagers. They have lots of information about the event on their website ([www.weareluminosity.org](http://www.weareluminosity.org)).

I attended Soul Survivor when I was 16 and it was a life-changing experience. I went with my youth group, and it was the first time that I really saw lots of Christians my age, all with a passion for God. I heard people speaking in a whole new way, and this experience helped me take my parent's faith as my own. It was also a really great bonding time with people I only saw once a week at Church. I feel privileged to be able to take these teenagers to Luminosity.

I am currently estimating that the cost of the trip will be £180 per child. This includes all food, accommodation, and transport down to Peterborough. I am hoping that once I know how many people want to come, we will be able to figure the best way to get everyone there and back and will be able to finalise costs. As a former girl guide, I grew up fundraising for different trips, and I am keen to do this now. I think fundraising is both a great way to bond the group before the trip, as well as helping the teens understand and appreciate the trip more. If the cost is in anyway a hindrance, please do get in touch with Simon or myself. We want everyone who wants, to be able to go, and we both feel that investing in the young people is vital for the Church.

As of now, planning is still in the early stages, but if you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to get in touch (email [ruth@stjamescarlisle.org.uk](mailto:ruth@stjamescarlisle.org.uk) or call 07528 495288). I am really excited about this opportunity and think that it will be an amazing trip for those who go.

## **Morning Prayer**

One of the positive things to come out of the last year is the growth in the number of people who meet on Zoom every Monday to Friday at 8:30am to pray together. We spend around 35 minutes reading the Bible, sharing and praying. One person who recently joined morning prayer, said that being able to pray with others each morning had revitalised their spiritual life. The good news is if you don't have internet access, you can still join the prayer meeting via the telephone, details overleaf:

**Meeting ID:** 998 637 5276

**Passcode:** 032020

To join by phone dial:

+44 203 901 7895

+44 131 460 1196

### **Cornerstone & OpShop**

Cornerstone and the OpShop will be reopening on Monday 12th April. Please support them, and if you would like to join our team of volunteers please contact Andy on 01228 549796.

### **The Bereavement Journey**

The Bereavement Journey, postponed from earlier in the year, will be running online on Tuesday afternoons from 2pm to 4pm, starting Tuesday 27th April. This five week course is open to anyone who has been bereaved at any time and in any way. By means of a series of films and discussion groups it gently guides bereaved people through the most common aspects of grief, enabling them to process the implications for themselves and discern next steps. For further information please contact [shelagh.goldie@gmail.com](mailto:shelagh.goldie@gmail.com) or visit [thebereavementjourney.org](http://thebereavementjourney.org).

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Simon', is positioned below the text 'Best wishes'.