

inter **MISSION**

PRUDHOE METHODIST CHURCH
May - June 2023



Ascension Thu 18th May Pentecost Sun 26th May

Front cover picture:

The statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, is seen standing above the cloud layer. It reminds us of Christ's ascension to heaven.

EVENTS

Christian Aid Week 14-20 May

and Christian Aid Big Brekkie 20 May. The envelopes have arrived and again we are appealing for help. Would you be willing to take part in this collection or just deliver envelopes whilst you are out for a walk or walking your dog? Please speak to Anne Chapman today.

A huge thank you to those who have volunteered; you will need to take away a badge of authority with the envelopes. Everyone can help – with prayer. There are several daily devotional booklets in the foyer for you to take away. Thank you everybody.

HOLIDAY CLUB 24th - 28th July

Will you be involved in RESTORATION STATION this year's ecumenical Holiday Club that will take place in this church entertaining 100 children? Save the date! The club will run 24th - 28th July 2023. The theme is based on the Repair Shop; we will be looking at some miracles of Jesus to show how God wants to fix/restore us. Planning is going well, and now we're ready to put our volunteer's team together. Thank you so much for all your efforts in previous years, and thank you in advance for this year - the club truly couldn't happen without you!

Every Monday 7:15 – 9:00pm Prudhoe Gleemen practise in the chapel at PMC. We are always ready to welcome new members to our male-voice choir. Absolutely no pressure, just come along on a Monday evening (except some Bank Holidays) and find out more about us.

Bookings: Our premises are available to book for community meetings & events: Please call (01661) 833465 or 832066

PMC Services



Please note that Sunday services begin at 10:30am

Sun 07 May

Ruth Johnson

Sun 14 May

10:45am @ Wylam

Sun 21 May

Ian Warburton

Sun 28 May

Local arrangement

Sun 04 June

TBA

Sun 11 June

TBA

Sun 18 June

TBA

Sun 25 June

TBA

For full circuit plan

<https://www.tynedalemethcircuit.org/plan.htm>

HC = Holy Communion

Bairns & Brews at PMC

Thursday (in term time) 10:00 to 11:30

Ascension Day

Thursday 18th May 2023 (Ascension) and Sunday 28th May (Pentecost) are important days in the Christian Year.

Pentecost has been the focus of earlier issues of interMISSION, but this spring we consider the Ascension of Jesus to heaven.

- Rev James Laurence explains



Luke 24: 48-51 Jesus ascends to heaven.

Today's great miracle, of Jesus ascending into heaven, is one of a number of stories in Scripture that I find difficult to comprehend; hard to really get my mind around. Today's great miracle is one of them, but it's not the only one.

How about Jonah being swallowed by a large fish? How did he survive that? How could he breathe in the belly of that fish for three days? Or how about Noah? How could he fit all of those animals on the ark? How did he keep the animals from killing or trampling each other? How could he feed them all?

Today we celebrate the miracle of the Ascension of Our Lord; and this is one of those stories that is hard for me to get my mind around. What does it mean that Jesus was "carried up into heaven"? How did this happen? And is Heaven really "up"? What does that mean? If we had a large enough telescope, could we look to the skies and actually see Heaven?

For me, this story is one of many stories in Scripture that I accept on faith – not because they make sense to me, or because I can figure them out – but because it is God's Word to me. And because I trust God's Word. I don't have to be able to get my mind around it to accept it on faith.

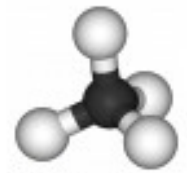
But, when you think about it, this isn't just true of the stories in Scripture. There are things all around our world that are difficult to comprehend, hard to get our minds around. For example, I am told that the galaxy we live in – the Milky Way – has somewhere between 100 and 400 billion stars, our sun being one of them. That is a lot of stars. But I am also told that there are at least 200 billion galaxies in the visible universe. And that there are more stars in the universe than there are grains of sand on all the earth's beaches. That's really hard for me to get my mind around. And as if that's not amazing enough, the next time you are at the beach – or even at your sink – cup your hand and scoop up some water, and you will have in your hand far more molecules than there are stars in the visible universe and grains of sand in the world combined! That's *really* hard for me to get my mind around! But here's the thing – I *believe* those numbers; at least I believe that they are good estimates. I trust the scientists who came up with these estimates, even though I don't actually know who they are.

So – and this is the point I am trying to make – if I trust some unknown scientists on this, why wouldn't I trust God's Word even more? There are many miraculous stories in Scripture. And I don't understand them fully, but I don't have to – I believe them; I accept them on faith. And once I accept them on faith, then I can spend my time and energy thinking about what they mean for me, and for us, instead of trying to decide whether or not they are true. So, back to the miracle that happened on the 40th day after Jesus was raised from the dead, when he ascended into heaven. I believe this miracle, even if I can't understand it, so now I can spend my time and energy thinking about what it means for me, and for us, instead of how it happened. So, what *does* this miracle mean for us? It is an important miracle; an important event; and so, it is an important festival on our church calendar. But what does it mean that Jesus has ascended into Heaven? For me, it can be summed up in three words: Power, Promise, and Presence.

Rev James Laurence – Albemarle – North Carolina



Mention the release of methane gas and we giggle and blame cows. However, those poor maligned creatures are not the biggest contributors of methane gas by far. Statistics show that methane released from landfills is a greater risk than that from cows:



CH₄ Methane

'The most pressing environmental concern regarding landfills is their release of methane gas. As the organic mass in landfills decompose methane gas is released. *Methane is 84 times more effective at absorbing the sun's heat than carbon-dioxide. making it one of the most potent greenhouse gases and a huge contributor to climate change.* '*

Sadly, and frustratingly, there are some things we cannot recycle as yet but how much food waste ending in landfill are we responsible for? Perhaps the current cost of food rocketing has already made us all much more aware of this and hopefully this has already had a positive impact on our spending as well as wastage. Compost bins or simply a compost corner of your garden (if you have one!) are a step in the right direction.

As we try to do our bit to prevent what we can from ending up in landfill I am reminded that my home is beginning to look like 'the tip' with plant pots waiting to go to the garden centre and soft plastics ready for the supermarket collection point.

It is not easy being green. That new word I discovered and shared with you a while ago - greenwashing - appeared again in an article about vegan fashion and handbags. Which takes us back to the cows: if methane produced by cows means real leather handbags aren't great for the planet crude oil used to make their replacement is arguably much worse (Daily Telegraph 25.2.23).

No wonder David Attenborough despairs. However keep doing whatever you can as you recycle, reuse and reduce. You in your small corner and me in mine.

Recycling Rita

**University of Colorado*



A Story of Adversity

When I was about 13 a new boy joined our class, 3B, at Hookergate. He joined half way through the term as his family had moved up to the North East as his father was opening a new factory near Newcastle. He had a disability, he had no movement in his right arm which just hung down, added to this his accent was SOUTHERN, so he was not welcomed into our group in 3B. That is until after about a week after he arrived in double maths (those two words still send a shiver down my spine) we realised he was brilliant at sums and could even do quadratic equations in his head. So he became the mascot of 3B and was welcomed into our, not so good at maths company.

Because of his disability he was excused games and had to stand on the side lines while we ran about aimlessly at football. After a while the lads asked our games master if he could join us and after agreeing we found him some shorts a shirt and some boots that almost fitted him. Well as soon as he got on the pitch we realised that he was just as bad at football as the rest of us. But for the two years he was with us he joined us in most things that we got up to and I think thoroughly enjoyed his time with us.

In Grosvenor Square, London, there stands a statue of a man who helped us win the last war. He was President Roosevelt of the U.S.A. After fighting a forest fire and then going for a swim to cool off he returned home to answer some correspondence in his wet trunks. When he had finished reading he felt very cold and his limbs were numb. He was paralysed and there was no known cure but he decided to fight it. For 3 years there was no improvement. Then he heard of a young man who had been cured of his paralysis by exercising in the water at Warm Springs, Georgia. So he went and after a while he felt better.

Newspaper reporters wanted to report that he had been healed but Roosevelt fought them on this and made them print the truth. Many sufferers flocked to the springs but there were so many that there were no rooms for them. So Roosevelt had some cottages renovate to accommodate the cripples. Later he fought to keep the springs for healing and had to buy them to achieve his end. He was so concerned about the state of affairs in New York that he forgot about his hope for a cure and sought the Governorship of the town.

- as told by Allan Waters

This he achieved and it led on to his election to the Presidency of the U.S.A. in 1932. This was at the time of a world slump which badly affected the U.S.A. There was much unemployment and banks were unable to pay back the money that had been deposited with them. He arranged relief for the unemployed, and promised that banks would pay depositors. He arranged a Government partnership with industry, housing, transport and agriculture, and was so successful was re-elected in 1936.

In 1940 we British we at war to save our country and once more Roosevelt was re-elected and took steps to help us with such schemes as the Lease-Lend one that allowed us and our allies to have all we needed without payment until the war was over. In 1941 the Americans came to fight side by side with us. They were prominent in the invasion of Normandy in 1944 which began just before the end of Roosevelt's third term in office and no one was surprised when this successful fighter was re-elected for a 4th term. His last great fight was against war altogether.

At the Yalta conference with Churchill and Stalin, he sought to arrange an international conference in order to form a world organisation to settle differences between nations without going to war. Peace came soon after his death, and so this longest serving of all Presidents, this man whose life was one long fight against sickness, wrongdoing, unbelief, hatred, impatience, poverty and arrogance ended with a fight for peace and freedom.

He must have known Paul's advice to Timothy," Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, and fight to good fight of faith," for he had lived up to it all. Let us determine that we too shall fight as our faith in God tells us to do.

Prayer: O god give us such love for you that we may love goodness and truth and justice which comes from you alone, Strengthen us to fight, not one another, but all that is evil and base. Make us ever ready to help all those who suffer poverty, oppression and injustice, that our love for others may point them to him who is the king of love and the prince of peace.

HOW SWEET THE SOUND John Newton (1725 - 1807)

The Greyhound thrashed about in the north Atlantic storm for over a week. Its canvas sails were ripped, and the wood on one side of the ship had been torn away and splintered. The sailors had little hope of survival, but they mechanically worked the pumps, trying to keep the vessel afloat. On the eleventh day of the storm, sailor John Newton was too exhausted to pump, so he was tied to the helm and tried to hold the ship to its course. From one o'clock until midnight he was at the helm.



With the storm raging fiercely, Newton had time to think. His life seemed as ruined and wrecked as the battered ship he was trying to steer through the storm. Since the age of eleven, he had lived a life at sea. Sailors were not noted for the refinement of their manners, but Newton had a reputation for profanity, coarseness, and debauchery which even shocked many a sailor.

John Newton had rejected his mother's teachings and had led other sailors into unbelief. Certainly, he was beyond hope and beyond saving, even if the Scriptures were true. Yet, Newton's thoughts began to turn to Christ. He found a New Testament and began to read. Luke 11:13 seemed to assure him that God might still hear him: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him."

That day at the helm, March 21, 1748, was a day Newton remembered ever after: "On that day the Lord sent from on high and delivered me out of deep waters." Many years later, as an old man, Newton wrote in his diary of March 21, 1805: "Not well able to write; but I endeavor to observe the return of this day with humiliation, prayer, and praise." Only God's amazing grace could and would take a rude, profane, slave-trading sailor and transform him into a child of God. Newton never ceased to stand in awe of God's work in his life.

The hymn AMAZING GRACE is John Newton's own heartfelt expression of gratitude to God, who helped him turn from his profane and wicked life and eventually fight against the ills he practiced. Later in life, Newton became a supporter and inspiration to William Wilberforce who led the fight to pass the British Slave Trade Act in 1807, which abolished the slave trade.

**AMAZING GRACE, (how sweet the sound)
That saved a wretch like me!**

AMAZING GRACE

Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound)
That sav'd a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears reliev'd;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believ'd!

Thro' many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promis'd good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

And when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease;
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who call'd me here below,
Will be forever mine.

John Newton, Olney Hymns, 1779

HISTORICAL NOTE

Hymns & Psalms omits verses 2 and 6. In 1909, Edwin Excell added a final (grammatically challenged) verse adapted from Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852).

When we've been there 10,000 years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

Prayer for our World

Lord, please guide our world
away from the threat of war,
away from disasters,
both man-made and natural.

How we wish for our world
to be a better place for everyone,
especially for the children
who will inherit the world after us,
with all its challenges,
especially to the environment.

Please, Lord, guide our world
along the path of peace.
Amen.

- sent by Margaret G

PRAYER

Lord, be my eyes when shadows fall,
My feet, when paths are rough.
Lor, be my hands to those in need,
To help when life grows tough.

Lord, be my ears to listen well.
When no-one else will hear.
Lord, be my voice to comfort them
When they have cause to fear.

Lord, most of all I pray to You
To give me of Your love,
That they may know the strength
and peace
That comes from God above.

- from "Gifts to Share"
a booklet 41 of inspiring poems
By Julie Woodford

Aldersgate Day - 24th May ...

Also called "Wesley Day" is the anniversary observed by Methodist Christians on 24 May. It recalls the day in 1738 when Church of England priest John Wesley attended a group meeting in Aldersgate, London, where he received an experience of assurance of his New Birth. This was the pivotal event in Wesley's life that ultimately led to the development of the Methodist movement in Britain and America.

In the calendars of the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the United Methodist Church the event is publicly commemorated in church services on the Sunday before 24 May (or on the anniversary itself if that date falls on a Sunday), called Aldersgate Sunday..

The "Aldersgate experience"

According to his journal, Wesley found that his enthusiastic gospel message had been rejected by his Anglican brothers. Heavy-hearted, he reluctantly attended a group meeting that evening in a Moravian meeting house (the Fetter Lane Society) on Aldersgate Street in London.[9] It was there, while someone was reading from Martin Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, that he felt that his heart was "strangely warmed". He describes it as:

I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

A poem of sobriety

One evening in October,
A man was one third sober
And was taking home a load with manly pride
His poor feet began to stutter
So he lay down in the gutter
And a pig came up and lay down by his side.
Then they sang "It's all fair weather"
And " Good fellows get together"
Till a lady passing by was heard to say
"You can tell someone who boozes
By the company he chooses"
And the pig got up and slowly walked away



for your
generosity
in supporting



☺ **THE MINER'S LAMP FOODBANK**

- collection box in the foyer at Prudhoe Methodist Church
Offers of any of the following would be gratefully accepted:
Tinned carrots, meatballs, potatoes, spaghetti, rice pudding,
custard. Pot Noodles, packet instant noodles, Smash,
microwave rice. Coffee, hot chocolate, long life milk, biscuits.
Cat and dog food. Shampoo, conditioner, ladies/men's
deodorant, washing up liquid. Washing powder.

☺ The Circuit Easter offering at Acomb Methodist Church
raised £1175.27 for World Mission, much needed in this
troubled world; a thought-provoking service arranged by
MWiB.

☺ **PRUDHOE GLEEMEN ANNUAL CONCERT** on Sat 13 May
at Highfield Middle school raised funds for British Red Cross
earthquake (Turkey & Syria) appeal.

OUR (inter) MISSION STATEMENT

- [1] To inform our local community, and ourselves, of what happens within the walls of PMC (as a building)
- [2] To inform the same parties of our organised outreach work beyond those walls (eg Open-the-Book)
- [3] To inform about individual work and witness by our members working with the Holy Spirit
- [4] To outreach our fellowship to those unable or (perhaps) unwilling to worship with us.
- [5] To spread the Good News using a fresh theme each month.
- [6] Making disciples.

Rev Rob Hawkins

PUBLICATION. We aim to distribute new issues by the first Sunday of the month.

Please send articles no later than the 3rd Wednesday of the previous month to:

intermission@uwclub.net

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www.prudhoemc.org



PALM SUNDAY AT HUMBLE'S WOOD FARM

Worshippers from six churches gathered at Humble's Wood Farm* after morning worship to remember Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. Rev Fiona Calverey led us singing Hosanna, then palms were laid on the ground as two donkeys paraded past us.

Thanks to Rev Fiona for arranging this. It brought together a good number of folk, a chance to get acquainted with one another over refreshments provided, and also to meet the other animals. The farm has been very grateful for the support from the churches and for the publicity as this is an animal rescue centre. After a few days of gloomy weather the sun shone gloriously as you will see in the photos.



*Do pay a visit to Humble's Wood Farm you will be made most welcome. It's on Moor Road beyond Ferndene hospital and on the right after crossing the narrow Surtees' stone bridge.