



**St. Alban's Earsdon**

# **CHURCH VIEWS**

**April  
2025**

**£1.00**



**St. John's Backworth**



**Immaculate Heart of Mary,  
Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea**

# THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

## April 2025

Easter Sunday is on 20<sup>th</sup> April – it's very late this year, isn't it? And on Easter Sunday, the people who don't go to church very often (me included) fill up the pews for one Sunday only.

There was a form given out at St Alban's church a few weeks ago. You had to fill in this form if you wanted to be on the Electoral Roll – the list of people considered to be members of the congregation, and who have the right to vote at church meetings.

To be allowed on the list, you had to either live in the parish or be a regular churchgoer.

Well, I don't live in the parish, and I don't go to church very regularly at all. Maybe I'm lazy, maybe I'm disorganised, maybe I'm very busy, but one thing is for sure: I'm just Not Very Good At Going. But is there any way I could describe myself as a regular?

My dad, as a child, would tease his grandma when she said that she ate prunes to "keep her regular". "What do you mean, regular?" he would ask her, with a cheeky glint in his eye. "Regular at what??", he added. It didn't go down very well.

A very kind woman at St Alban's, Sarah, told me that I am a regular churchgoer. "You come at regular intervals" she said. She's right. I go about once every six months. And when I do go, I get a lot out of it: spiritually, socially, and educationally.

And those are three things which I think are really important about going to church, and which feed you when you go to church regularly, in the sense of habitually. In fact, let's use the word 'habitually' rather than 'regularly'. That's actually the word which was used on the form I was talking about: 'habitually'. Let's talk about having a habit of going to church – or, of course, taking part in online live-streamed services when possible.

- Habitual churchgoing is good for us, spiritually. I feel more connected with God and with the Christian church throughout the world when I make it my habit to go to church.
- Habitual churchgoing is good for us, socially. I catch up with my fellow Christian friends when I make it my habit to go to church. They look out for me, and I for them. There is a sense of social belonging connected with habitual churchgoing.
- Habitual churchgoing is good for us, educationally. When I don't go to church much, I can easily tell myself that I know what's in the Bible, and what Christianity is all about, but the more I go to church, the more I learn. Biblical truths become clearer to me, and I'm more likely to remember the Bible's teachings in my everyday life, if I make it my habit to go to church.

There are probably many more ways in which habitual churchgoing is a good thing. If you aren't a habitual churchgoer, have a think about what you would get from attending church more often. Or, if you already go habitually, think about what you would lose from going less often.

I'm going to try to make churchgoing my habit – are you?

Best wishes, Gillian France.



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## **Holy Week and Easter at St Alban's and St John's**

**April 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Palm Sunday**

9.00am Holy Communion for Palm Sunday at St John's

10.30am Holy Communion for Palm Sunday at St Alban's

4.00pm Children's Church Easter Special, at St John's

**Monday April 14<sup>th</sup>**

7.30pm Holy Communion for the Monday of Holy Week, at St Alban's\*

**Tuesday April 15<sup>th</sup>**

7.30pm Holy Communion for the Tuesday of Holy Week, at St Alban's\*

**Wednesday April 16<sup>th</sup>**

9.30am Holy Communion at St Alban's

7.30pm Holy Communion for the Wednesday of Holy Week, at St Alban's\*

\*These three simple, spacious, said services will feature the story of Holy Week according to Luke

**Thursday April 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Maundy Thursday**

7.30pm Holy Communion at St Alban's, followed by Gethsemane

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* If you have any suggestions, comments or requests \*  
\* regarding the magazine, or for anyone thinking of \*  
\* sending in their contribution for publication, please email \*  
\* it to **magazine@StAlbansEarsdon.org.uk** \*  
\* or call **Jean** on **0191 2377273**. \*  
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## **Meeting Farmers in Tanzania**

**by Rev'd Tim Mayfield**

At several of our Harvest Festivals, we have supported farmers in Tanzania. Tanzania has been especially hit by the climate emergency. The usually rainy season, in January and February, has seen prolonged droughts. This has an impact on what farmers can grow, and therefore on the food security of their people.

My brother Andrew brought this to our attention. Andrew works as Business Advisor to Dickson Chilongani, Bishop of Central Tanganyika (DCT). The DCT works to support its farmers, teaching them techniques to improve the yield of their harvest. Those attending our Lent Course in 2024, 'Act on Poverty' were unanimous that we should look to build on our links with Tanzania. And thanks to my brother's extraordinary generosity, I was able to spend an unforgettable fortnight in the country in February.

Several days' running, Andrew and I and members of the team piled into a dusty white Land Rover. We bumped our way over unmetalled roads to five different remote villages. The story was the same in each. The team's arrival would be welcomed with exuberant drumming and singing. Generous food would be laid before us. And when we went out into the fields, some were parched and dry while others were busy producing a promising crop.

Andrew had already told us about airtight grain storage, to prevent hard-won harvests from being eaten by insects. He had explained how some crop, grown at the edges of fields, was not for eating, but for ploughing back into the soil as fertiliser. Now we saw other techniques: a ground-crop grown alongside the tall maize to keep in moisture... two-wheeled tractors to help speed up



farm labour when the rains do come... small kitchen gardens which require very little watering.

Our guides in all of this were the very people you have supported through your Harvest giving. They are given the name 'Conservation Agriculture Animators', and they are on the front line of efforts to combat the climate emergency. It was quite something to meet for real the very people we have supported from a distance.

Our visits to the villages complete, Andrew and I went our separate ways. Andrew was based in the capital, Dodoma, with the DCT team. I spent two days lecturing at a nearby Bible College. It was very moving to speak about climate change to the whole College community gathered in the chapel. It was a rare opportunity for me from the Global North (which has created the climate disaster) to speak to people in the Global South (who are bearing the brunt of it).

My time in the Bible College may well bear fruit in the future. Bishop Dickson has asked if we will consider partnering with the parish of St Andrew's Majeleko. Conversations about this are ongoing. But if we enter into this partnership, and if at some point in the future a group from Earsdon and Backworth goes out to visit Majeleko, the Bible College has kindly offered accommodation.

A support group is being formed to oversee a possible parish-to-parish twinning, and we hope to have fuller news in future editions of 'Church Views'.

*See pictures on next page.*

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thrives →



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tractor ←

A kitchen garden  
→





## **Weather Outlook for the month of April 2025.**

### **Direct from the Captain's Charts.**

The Northern Hemisphere welcomed the Spring (Vernal) Equinox on the 20<sup>th</sup> March. This natural event heralds new beginnings and traditions of rebirth including the promise of more clement weather to come.

### **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March to Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025.**

The end of March will likely see a transition from unsettled conditions to predominantly dry weather. Drier conditions gradually spreading in from the south, how quickly this transition occurs is currently unclear and it may well be that the start of the month sees further rain in places. Into the first week of April, settled weather is expected to cover much of the UK including the Northeast of England. Most places are expected to be dry with clear or sunny spells and light variable winds. Some periods of unsettled weather could develop at times and if this happens any rain or showers are most likely to affect southern areas.

Temperatures will likely be close to normal overall, cold nights are possible at times.

### **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.**

Slow-moving (or blocked) weather patterns are most likely through the middle of April.

High pressure located to the North of the UK will probably be dominant for much of the time, bringing a lot of fine, dry weather and light winds.

More unsettled weather in the form of rain will likely affect the south of the UK. Temperatures possibly close to or slightly above average overall, although some cold nights are possible.

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# CHURCH VIEWS FOR APRIL 2025 FROM THE PARISH OF OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA

## Memorial Service, 103<sup>rd</sup> (Tyneside Irish ) Infantry Brigade



The Tyneside Irish were four ‘Pals’ Battalions of the Northumberland Fusiliers formed in 1914 and remembered on the War Memorial panel in St Edward’s Church, serving together as the 103rd Infantry Brigade. The Irish connections of those who served in it were not only Roman Catholic. George Livingstone, a leading member of the civilian organising committee, was Head of the Loyal Orange Institution in Newcastle, and two fellow chaplains serving with Fr. George McBrearty were Anglican Rev. Ernest Duncan MC (killed in action in 1917) and Methodist Rev. Stanley Hinchcliffe. After 1918, the four Battalions’ Colours were laid up in St Nicholas’ Cathedral, Gateshead Parish Church and Newcastle Town Hall as well as St Mary’s Cathedral.

Pictured at the 2025 Memorial Service on St Patrick’s Day on 17 March at the Eldon Square war memorial in Newcastle are the Mayor of Gateshead, Councillor Kath McCartney, the Consul General of Ireland for the North of England, Ms Sarah Mangan, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, Commander Edward McNaught, and Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Councillor Rob Higgins.

The service opened with Bill Wotherspoon piping ‘The Minstrel Boy’, the Brigade march, and standards were marched to the front of the memorial. The service was conducted by Fr Paddy Jackson. The Act of Remembrance ended, very movingly, when the Last Post was sounded by two buglers of the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers Association, followed by a two minute silence, and a piped Lament. Fr Jackson then led the assembly in the Lord’s Prayer before the service closed with the National Anthem.





## Spring is Springing



As his Pilgrims talked their way to Canterbury, Chaucer welcomed 'April's sweet showers' changing the world. A peasant without Chaucer's fine cloak might not have agreed on the sweetness, but he would have welcomed Spring. We certainly welcome the colour and variety already brought to our churches by our gardeners, but we remember too those who made sure other things grew in the darker months - our food bank donations increased, our Luncheon Club blossomed, and our beautifully-kept churches still offered their quiet peace. So let's thank God for this Spring, and remember a prayer for those who make our parish such a

true haven through the whole year.

## Easter Services

The parish Easter Services will all take place in St Edward's, to accommodate those attending from all our churches.

*Gerry Latimer, Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea*

## Parish Mass Times:

*St Edward's: Sunday 9.30am, Tuesday and Friday 9.30am*

*Immaculate Heart of Mary: Saturday 6.00pm, Wed 9.30am*

*St Mary's: Sunday 11.00am, Thursday 10.00am*

*St Oswin's: Sunday 9.30am, Tuesday 10.00am*



More news from St Alban's and St John's churches...

## Meet our new Parish Safeguarding Officer – Tracey Gray



When my husband Peter and I first ventured into St Alban's with our three sons and partners it was Christmas Eve 2012. We had just moved into the village of Earsdon and wanted to attend the local church to remember the birth of Christ. We belonged to Acorn Elim church at that time.

Over the next few years we occasionally visited at Christmas time - enjoying the Christingle or Christmas Day services.

During COVID we, like many others, had a period of reflection and felt that we should return to worship at our local church here at St Albans. We feel very much at home here and everyone has been so welcoming and friendly.

In 2022 Peter and I took early retirement from full time work and we started to enjoy a more relaxing life. We now have 4 beautiful grandchildren - Georgina, Hattie, Oscar and Ruben and spend many happy hours with the family - at home and out and about.

We also decided to complete the Wainwright challenge of climbing 214 peaks in the Lake District. We invested in a second home to assist with the many trips - a fabulous tent complete with air mattress and super warm duvet!

Now that we are well settled into retirement life the time was right to offer up my skills in service and when Tim asked if anyone would like to take up the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) I felt that was how I could serve the congregation here at St Albans and St Johns.

I have many years of leadership experience including safeguarding and HR during my time as a Director in a large secondary school. I am delighted to be here now as PSO to offer advice and support to anyone who has a safeguarding concern- whether it be about vulnerable adults or children.

Please do ask me anything - if I don't know the answers I will find them for you. Safeguarding is here for the whole community to ensure our parish welcomes and supports all in a safe and loving way.

Tracey Anne Gray

## **‘Time and Tide’ – a Quiet Day by the sea**

Is life too busy all the time? Do you feel the need to stop for a bit and take stock? Then why not book for ‘Time and Tide’...

### **What is it?**

A Quiet Day is an opportunity to be still with God. Prayer... silence... Bible readings... stillness... music... candles...

### **Where is it?**

We’ve booked the iconic Cullercoats Watch House. The Watch House overlooks Cullercoats Bay. We’ll be able to reflect on the rising and falling tide. We’ll have space to think about what times of ‘high tide’ and ‘low tide’ might look like in our lives. At low tide, there’ll be the opportunity to go out and explore the shoreline.

### **When is it?**

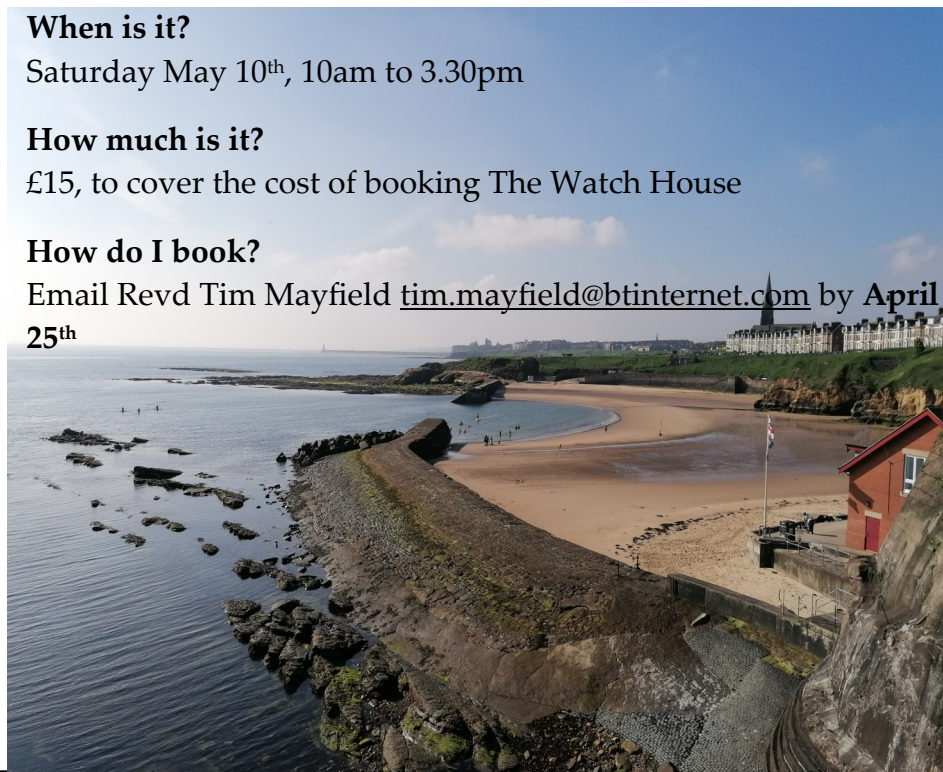
Saturday May 10<sup>th</sup>, 10am to 3.30pm

### **How much is it?**

£15, to cover the cost of booking The Watch House

### **How do I book?**

Email Revd Tim Mayfield [tim.mayfield@btinternet.com](mailto:tim.mayfield@btinternet.com) by **April 25<sup>th</sup>**



## **Did you know?**

### **Guarding the Easter chocolate**

Was there a security tag on your Easter egg this year? If so, it wasn't because high street bosses feared the Easter Bunny might take it.

It's that shoplifting has soared to an unprecedented amount. There were more than 20 million shoplifting incidents last year - an average of about *50,000 cases a day*, according to the British Retail Consortium (BRC). In all, retailers lost £2.2 billion.

And it seems that shoplifters also like chocolate. Which is why some WH Smith shops have been tagging the Cadbury Mini Eggs, and why some Tesco stores have put Quality Street chocolates under a wire net, to name but a couple of examples.

### **Lemon juice, anyone?**

In the morning, do you drink coffee, tea or freshly squeezed lemon juice mixed with warm water?

Lemon juice has recently become a fashionably healthy lifestyle choice, according to nutritionist and autoimmunity specialist V J Hamilton.

She explains that, as well as being high in Vitamin C, lemon juice helps with hydration and digestion, and can help reduce bloating, constipation and free radicals.

Lemon juice is full of goodies: vitamin C, vitamin B6, folate, magnesium and potassium, and antioxidants and flavonoids. These all help to keep your skin, liver, kidney and heart healthy.

From Ali Griffiths, of our two Anna Chaplains...

We had a great time at Havelock Place on 25th March, and the new afternoon time seemed to work well. There were eleven who took Communion after the end of the session, and it was so busy there wasn't much time to take photos!

A big thank you as always to Anna Chaplain Liz York, and Anna Friends Janet Sigley and Linda Reynolds. You really stepped up!





## Smile-Lines for April

### What can I eat for Easter?

Can't eat beef.....mad cow.

Can't eat chicken..... bird flu.

Can't eat eggs..... Salmonella.

Can't eat pork.....fears that bird flu will infect pigs.

Can't eat fish..... heavy metals in the waters.

Can't eat fruits and veggies..... insecticides and herbicides.

Can't eat potatoes, pasta, bread, rice.....nasty carbs.

Hmmmmmmmm! I believe that leaves.....chocolate.

### Joseph's tomb

Pontius Pilate: "Joseph, I really don't understand you. You're one of the richest men in the region, and you've just spent a fortune on that new tomb for you and your family - and now you want to suddenly give it to this man Jesus?"

Joseph: "Well it's just for the weekend."

### Letter to God

A Sunday School teacher invited her children to write a letter to God. They were to bring their letter back the following Sunday. One little boy wrote, "Dear God, we had a good time at church today. Wish You could have been there."

What kind of jewellery does the Easter Bunny wear? *14-carrot gold*

What is the Easter Bunny's favourite kind of music? *Hip hop*

What do you call an Easter Bunny wearing a kilt? *Hopscotch*

What do you call a bunny with fleas? *Bugs Bunny*

# St. Alban's and St. John's

## Diary Page for April 2025

Wednesday	2nd	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Friday	4th	10.00am	Funeral Service	St Alban's
		12.00 noon	Memorial Service	St Alban's
Sunday	6th	<b><u>Fifth Sunday of Lent</u></b>		
		9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
		Followed by the church Annual Meeting, in the Eccles Hall		
Tuesday	8th	1.00pm and 2pm	Backworth Park Primary School Easter Services	St John's
Thursday	10th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's
Sunday	13th	<b><u>Palm Sunday</u></b>		
		9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
		4.00pm	Children's Church Easter Special	St John's
Monday	14th	7.30pm	Holy Communion for the Monday of Holy Week.	St Alban's
Tuesday	15th	7.30pm	Holy Communion for the Tuesday of Holy Week.	St Alban's
Wednesday	16th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
		7.30pm	Holy Communion for the Wednesday of Holy Week.	St Alban's



# St. Alban's and St. John's

Thursday	17th	7.30pm	<b>Maundy Thursday</b> Holy Communion Followed by Gethsemane Vigil	St Alban's
Friday	18th	2.00pm	<b>Good Friday</b> At the Foot of the Cross	St Alban's
Sunday	20th		<b><u>Easter Day</u></b>	
		9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's
Sunday	27th		<b><u>Second Sunday of Easter</u></b>	
		9.00am	Holy Communion	St John's
		10.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's

## Sunday Gospel Readings for April 2025 :

**6th**

John 12.1-8

**13th**

Luke 19.28-40

**20th**

Luke 24.1-12

**27th**

John 20.19-end



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Teacher: Jacob, your composition  
on "My Dog" is exactly the same as  
your brother's ... did you copy his?

Jacob: No sir. It's the same dog!

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3			2					
	8	5						
1				6	2	3		7
		3				5		
6		7	5	3				4
						7	4	
					8			3
	4		6	1				

Please note - all material for next month's magazine (May 2025) will need to be in before Wednesday 23rd April. Thank you, *Jean*.

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## All in the month of April

*It was ...*

250 years ago, on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1775 that J M W Turner, the British artist was born. Known for his landscapes and turbulent marine paintings.

175 years ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1850 that Madame Marie Tussaud, French artist known for her wax sculptures, died. Founder of Madame Tussaud's wax museum in London.

Also 175 years ago, on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1850 that William Wordsworth died. A Romantic poet, he was Poet Laureate from 1843-50.

100 years ago, on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1925 that F Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby*, was published.

80 years ago, from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1945 that the Battle of Okinawa, Japan took place. The largest amphibious assault in the Pacific War, it was an Allied victory.

Also 80 years ago, on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1945 that Adolf Hitler, Austrian-born German Nazi Party Leader, Chancellor of Germany (1933-45) and dictator (1934-45) committed suicide along with his

wife, Eva Braun.

70 years ago, on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1955 that British nightclub hostess Ruth Ellis shot and killed her lover, David Blakely. On 13<sup>th</sup> July she was hanged at Holloway Prison, the last woman to be executed in the UK.

Also 70 years ago, on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1955, that Albert Einstein, German-born American theoretical physicist, died. Considered the most influential physicist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Known for developing the special and general theories of relativity.

65 years ago, on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1960 that Dr Martens boots went on sale in the UK.

50 years ago, on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1975 that Microsoft, the computer software/hardware company, was founded by Bill Gates and Paul Allen.

20 years ago, on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2005 that Pope John Paul II died. Succeeded by Pope Benedict XVI on 19<sup>th</sup> April.

Also 20 years ago, on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2005 that Charles, Prince of Wales, married Camilla Parker Bowles, who gained the title the Duchess of Cornwall.

# WORDSEARCH

## April 2025

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! April brings us to Easter – the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ - the triumphant highlight of the Christian year. As St Paul pointed out, unless Jesus really did rise again, our faith is useless, and we may as well forget any hope of heaven or eternal life. But because He does live, we have a sure and certain hope for our future.

passover  
 bread  
 wine  
 body  
 blood  
 betrayal  
 jerusalem  
 pilate  
 judas  
 gethsemane  
 trial  
 crucifixion  
 soldiers  
 cross  
 nails  
 vinegar  
 temple  
 curtain  
 tomb  
 angel  
 stone  
 risen  
 gardener  
 Mary



## Church Contacts

### St. Alban's Earsdon:

#### *Vicar*

Rev'd. Tim Mayfield, 5 Front Street, Earsdon, Whitley Bay NE25 9JU

Tel: 07414 601 351

#### *Church wardens*

Mr Ali Griffiths, 2B Coquet Avenue, Whitley Bay NE26 1EF.

Mobile: 0772 9805957

Mr R Gowdy, 82 Chipchase Court, New Hartley, Northumberland  
NE25 0SR

Tel: 07841 986 019

#### *PCC Secretary*

Mr R Gowdy, 82 Chipchase Court, New Hartley, Northumberland  
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Tel: 07841 986 019

#### *PCC Treasurer*

Mr R Swindells, 81 St Mary's Avenue, Whitley Bay NE26 3TS.

Tel 252 3919

### St. John's Backworth:

#### *Vicar*

Rev'd. Tim Mayfield, 5 Front Street, Earsdon, Whitley Bay NE25 9JU

Tel: 07414 601 351

#### *Church warden*

Mr Ali Griffiths, 2B Coquet Avenue, Whitley Bay NE26 1EF.

Mobile: 0772 9805957

#### *Treasurer & Assistant Church Warden*

Mrs M Oliver 10 Melrose Avenue, Backworth, Newcastle NE27 0JD

Tel: 268 4334

### Our Lady, Star of the Sea :

#### *Parish Priest*

Mgr. Andrew Faley

Church of St Edward, Coquet Avenue, Whitley Bay, NE26 1EE.

Tel: 252 8021

Email [whitleybaystedward@rcdn.org.uk](mailto:whitleybaystedward@rcdn.org.uk)

Parish Office Tel: 252 7066- open on Weds, Thursdays, & Fridays, 10am  
to 1pm.