

From the Registers

Funerals at St John's

29th October - Mary Mains

Funerals at Crematorium

3rd September - Laurence Whitehill

18th September - Linda Robinson

16th October - Kitty Dowson

19th October - John Wilson

30th October - Susan Davies

Special Services

Special services and events along with Fr. Carl's sermon will be posted on the Website and communicated by phone to those not on-line.

Thursdays at St. Catherine's: Fr. Carl will say Morning Prayer at 8.45 am before the Eucharist. All are welcome to join him.

All Souls Day Mon. 2nd Nov. 7.00pm: Zoom Holy Eucharist where the names of those who have died this past year will be read out. The names from the list in church will be read out the previous day (All Saints Day) in church. Contact Fr. Carl for a Zoom invitation.

Remembrance Sunday, 8th Nov. No special service at St. John's, but 12.00 ceremony at the Brandon Village Memorial. At New Brancepeth, a short ceremony at 11.00 at the War Memorial will be held.

Other Services: With present uncertainties, plans for other services, St. Catherine's Day, Carol Services, Christmas Services, and other services (such as St. Stephen, Holy Innocents, New Year) are on hold. Details as they become clear will be posted on the Web Site and Facebook pages.

Churches Together 'Watchnight' Service: Planned for 12.00 noon on 31st December, probably at St. Andrew's and on Zoom. Details later.

(Another take on putting the clocks back and the end of 2020!)



Brandon Parish Magazine November/December 2020

St. John's Church, Brandon &
St. Catherine's Church, New Brancepeth



Services are now taking place in St. John's and at St. Catherine's with Covid-19 safety regulations. The Eucharist services will be shorter than normal with no singing or sermon. Details are:

St. John's: Sundays – 9.45 am **Holy Eucharist**

Wednesdays – 9.00 am **Holy Eucharist**

St. Catherine's Sundays – 8.45 am **Holy Eucharist**

Thurs. – 9.30 am **Holy Eucharist**

– 10.00 to 11.00 am Church Open

Rev. Carl Peters: The Clergy House, Sawmill Lane, Brandon, Durham, DH7 8NS. Tel: 0191 6803875, revpeters28@gmail.com

Other Contact Telephone Numbers

St. John's: David (Churchwarden) – 3789718; Carolyn – 6803875

St. Catherine's: Joe – 3739927; Liz – 3731554

Website <http://www.brandonparish.org.uk/Welcome.htm>

<https://www.facebook.com/StJohnTheEvangelistChurchBrandon>

<https://www.facebook.com/Stjohnschurchhallmeadowfield>

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/StCatherinesChurchNewBrancepeth>

Reports

PCC: In the last magazine the topic of 'guided pledge' was mentioned as the new system of helping parishes decide their Financial Share for the Diocese in 2021. You were asked to pray for the PCC as they decided what response to make. The guide figure of £22,715 was more than twice the share we are giving this year. It was decided to offer £13,286 for 2021. Even so it will be a big challenge for us next year to meet our offer.

APCM: The annual meeting took place on 28th Oct. having been delayed for April. About 12 people were present. Key points were: David Jocelyn and Charles Andrew elected Church Wardens; Four members elected to PCC, meaning there are several vacancies. There is also a vacancy for Deanery Synod representative (who is also on PCC). If anyone is interested in filling one of these positions, please contact Fr. Carl. At the short PCC following the meeting, Ian Carter (Deputy Warden) and Carolyn Peters (PCC Secretary) were co-opted and Linda Eales was appointed Treasurer.

Various reports were presented including the Annual Accounts for 2019, which showed a small deficit for the year. We ended the year with a total of £12,014 in our accounts. However there was anxiety expressed about the finances for this year (2020) as our income has dropped with churches being closed for part of the year.

At the Annual Meeting It was suggested that as St. John's cannot hold a Christmas Fayre, we could hold a **special appeal** to encourage people to give in compensation. Envelopes will be at the back of the church and could be delivered to and collected from those who are unable to come to church at the moment. The gifts will be presented and blest on Advent Sunday, 29th November.

Fr Carl's report as Priest in Charge is given in this magazine, so that those not at the meeting are able to read it.

Retirement of Joseph Anderson as Churchwarden Oct. 2020

Joseph Anderson was elected to the post of Churchwarden of Brandon Parish in 2013 although Joe was more involved with St. Catherine's church. When the quinquennial inspection of St. Catherine's church in May 2013 showed a multitude of problems, Joe was determined to get the church building into a condition that the congregation and village could be proud of.

Events

PCC: The next meeting will be on Wed. 18th Nov. at 6.30 pm in St. John's.

Prayer for Our Churches: Tuesday, 17th November and also Tuesday. 15th December at 09.30 - 10.15 am, held on Zoom; for an invitation contact Bill Offler (DH7 Churches Together Secretary, williamoffler@outlook.com)

Churches Together Advent Group: Weekly starting Fri. 27th Nov. for four weeks at 2.00 pm on Zoom, following the York Course. Contact Bill Offler for an invitation.

Some of you will remember Manasseh and Catrin Tuyizere from Rwanda, though currently in Germany. They sent a link to an inspiring song of hope from the Cathedral Choir which is very moving especially in the knowledge that the choir leader lost his wife and children in the genocide:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JiOfsBbx2_Y

A Prayer of Hope: From Revd. Canon David Tomlinson

Loving Father,

even as we are called to hope, be hope in me.

Even as we are called to love, be love through me.

Even as we are called to the ordinary, be in the ordinary with me.

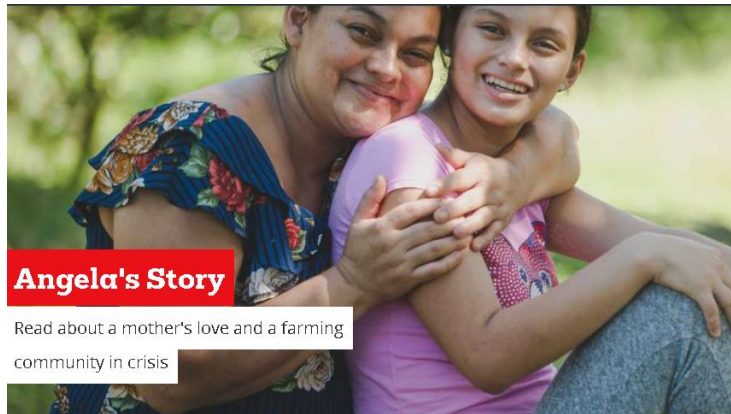
For the sake of Jesus our Lord, Amen.

Pray specifically for:

- **Our churches that we may become 'communities of hope' in this time for hardship and uncertainty for many.**
- **All who are experiencing illness, unemployment or depression.**
- **The Advent/Christmas period, that it will be a time when we, our friends and family can prepare ourselves and celebrate the coming of the Christ Child.**
- **The PCC meeting on 18th Nov. As Fr. Carl's report says may we be guided by the Holy Spirit in reaching out to our communities.**
- **Our Government and local authorities, that they may have wisdom and integrity in tackling the Covid pandemic.**

We were not able to hold our usual fund raising collection at Tesco in May for Christian Aid week. Christian Aid have launched an Autumn Appeal. Could you help? Maybe instead of a Christmas present you could tell the person that you have given an amount to Christian Aid as their present this year.

Angela's farming community is in crisis. In Nicaragua, the farming community of Santa Rosa has grown coffee for generations. Now they could be the last. This crop is struggling to grow



as the climate crisis rages on. Angela explained: 'With climate change, the coffee suffers from many diseases and pests. The sun has scorched the coffee beans, we cannot sell them and we're losing more every year because of climate change.' Angela is worried about how she will care for her daughters, Johaira and Ariana. She said 'It will be a total disaster and failure for us because as farmers, growing crops is how we survive. Where will we get our incomes?'

Will you support our Autumn Appeal?

Could you and your neighbours help more communities facing crisis around the world? Communities living in poverty face crisis every day, but neighbourly love is powerful. Just like Angela's farming community in Nicaragua whose coffee farms are threatened by climate change, with your support, people are coming together to share tools and knowledge.

One strategy is to grow cocoa instead of coffee. United, this community can make the urgent changes needed to help their family farms last for generations so their children like Ariana can thrive. For example, just £30 could provide more than 30 cocoa plants to help a family in Nicaragua start growing a better future. To give by phone ring 02075 232493 or to give on-line click <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals>

Various members of the congregation began fundraising – you may remember Joe dressed as Prince Charming at a St. Catherine's Fashion Show. Grants were also applied for and work began on the damaged roof above the vestry, kitchen and front and back porches in July 2014. The roof was finished and then Joe arranged for the kitchen to be refitted. This was finished in June 2015, the church was decorated inside and out before work started in the vestry when the walls and ceiling were repaired and new cupboards fitted.

In January 2016 Joe had the overgrown trees at the back of church cut or trimmed and a new hand-made noticeboard was mounted to publicize the church's activities. A new altar carpet was fitted in May 2015.

As part of his churchwarden duties, Joe regularly inspected the church and he noticed that damp had appeared on the wall near where the old boiler chimney joined the wall. Joe arranged for the chimney to be demolished in September 2017.

That work ended all the requirements of the 2013 inspection.

The land at the back of church had been landscaped and Joe thought that a smaller shed was needed. Funds were raised to have the old asbestos shed removed and replaced with a smaller new shed. A specialist firm had to be used to do this. The new base was laid and shed erected in May 2019.

One of the final acts which Joe organized for the church was to have the main roof of the church re-slatted. This was finished in July 2020 while the church was closed due to the Covid pandemic.

Although Joe did get a lot of help and support from the congregation and the villagers of New Brancepeth, he organized and oversaw all the work rigorously. He ensured it was done with the correct legal and structural regulations. For the successful completion of the extensive work on the church we all owe a large debt of gratitude to Joe.

The congregation and the villagers of New Brancepeth can now rest assured that their church is now in good repair for future regular church services as well as for the baptisms, weddings and funerals for a long time to come thanks to Joseph Anderson.

Priest's Report 2020 for 2019

As always a big thank you for all the hard work people continue to put into our churches of St John's and St Catherine's and for continuing to be a presence of God's church in this parish.

St John's and St Catherine's are physically well looked after and loved church buildings and this is because of the dedication of its members. As always there continues to be much effort in terms of fundraising/fairs etc., which people put a lot into.

This past year we have seen many familiar patterns in the life of the wider church. Patterns like our relationship with the local schools in terms of assemblies, 'Open the Book' at New Brancepeth and the schools coming into church for special festivities and educational trips.

We also continue to be here for the surrounding community as we join with them on important occasions, such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. Such occasions would be a sad absence to our community without our beautiful place of worship.

As we take up our Cross as followers of Jesus, the Cross we bear can become heavy as we meet personal and shared challenges. But that very Cross we carry identifies us with Jesus connects us with Jesus, who is with us in our triumphs and our struggles. One struggle sometimes is thinking of ways we can share the faith and be more involved with our community. A great development this past year has been the forming of St John's 0-5 (Toddler Group) in St John's Hall, which has got off very well with great attendance, providing a much needed service in our community. St Catherine's continues to serve the community with its very popular Lunch Club. What else might we be able to do? Of course many of us individually are quietly involved in the things that go on in our local area as part of that community and within our churches. I am always struck by the good pastoral heart of people who care for others, including members of our congregations. Thinking of other ways of engaging with the community is not always easy, especially when we don't have the biggest of congregations. One

thing we can do is pray and be open to the Holy Spirit. In the bible the Spirit often manifests itself as fire or wind, like the fire of the burning bush before Moses or the wind of Pentecost, which drove the disciples out to do things. Both are powerful forces of nature. Let us remember that we have such force with us in the Holy Spirit, a gift to the church. Sometimes we've just got to let it take us where it wants us to go. In John's Gospel we hear Jesus say, 'The wind blows where it chooses and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'

The more we are open to the Holy Spirit means there are more places it can take us!

So let us pray for this coming year. A year of changes with the re-shaping of the deanery and greater responsibility for me as parish priest and a priest of this deanery and diocese. And let us look for every opportunity in the places God chooses to reveal to us.

Thank you to everyone.

Fr Carl Peters

PS Let us also pray for this strange year we find ourselves in, which has affected so much of the above, as well as giving us new opportunities and ways of being church. May the year ahead see shoots of growth, in our faith and in our lives and the lives of others.

Please pray also for our PCC led by Fr. Carl as they grapple with many difficulties and uncertainties. Pray about the future for our churches as the country appears to be entering a second wave of the Corona Virus.

Remember also future working with St Paul's, Waterhouses as well as St. Luke's along with St. John's Neville's Cross, St. Brandon's Brancepeth and St. Edmund's Bearpark.