

## From the Registers

### **Wedding at St John's Church**

27<sup>th</sup> Nov. Sean Anthony Brown & Emma Louise Burton  
4<sup>th</sup> Dec. Liam Scollen & Ashleigh Millington  
11<sup>th</sup> Dec. Craig James Eaglesham & Amy Robinson

### **Funerals at St. John's Church**

23<sup>rd</sup> Nov. Miriam Victoria Tulloch  
21<sup>st</sup> Nov. Joseph Pratt



## Church Services

At present our services are somewhat restricted by the Covid regulations. Face masks are required, including during singing, and we are asked to sign in when we arrive.

Details of changes will be announced on the church website, Facebook and on the church notice boards.

**Ash Wednesday** is 2<sup>nd</sup> March – advance notice of the Ashing Service, probably at the usual St. John's service at 9.00 am and in the evening at 7.00 pm.

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** starts on 18<sup>th</sup> January. There will be a service, details to be announced on weekly notice sheets, Facebook and website.

**Please pray** for our churches, for all members of our congregations and for the difficulties that we face at this time of change. Pray that we will be inspired by God's Holy Spirit as we seek to carry out God's mission to our communities, families and friends and pray for Fr. Carl and the PCC as they lead us.

# Brandon Parish Magazine

## Jan/Feb 2022

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



***Services are now taking place in St. John's and St. Catherine's with Covid-19 safety regulations. Details are:***

**St. John's: Holy Eucharist** on Sundays – 9.45 am, Mondays – 7.00 pm,  
Wednesdays – 9.00 am

**St. Catherine's: Holy Eucharist** on Sundays – 8.45 am, Thursdays – 9.30  
**Morning Prayer** Thursdays – 8.45 am

**Tuesdays and Fridays:** Fr. Carl leads Morning Prayer on zoom at 8.45  
Contact Fr. Carl for an invitation.

### Contacts

**Fr. 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/Stjohnschurhhallmeadowfield>  
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/StCatherinesChurchNewBrancepeth>

## Events

**PCC Meeting:** Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> January, 6.30 pm in St. John's Church.

**Prayer for Our Churches:** Wednesdays, 1.30-2.15 pm, 26<sup>th</sup> January and 23<sup>rd</sup> February. 26<sup>th</sup> January will be on Zoom, location of February meeting to be decided. Further details will be on the church website and from Bill Offler, williamoffler@outlook.com and 0191 3782883. All welcome.

**Churches Together in DH7 Meeting:** Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 7.30 pm on Zoom. Details from Bill Offler.

**Thursday, January 27th 4.30pm** Antiques Roadshow is on BBC One featuring St John's and our Harrison organ. This was filmed a few months ago

### **Epiphany of Our Lord – Sermon by Fr. Carl**

There are certain places, for whatever reason, that have a draw on people. Places that people want to go to. Sometimes they might be going for the first time, or perhaps they visit this certain place regularly.

In the Christian world, there are places and events that have a draw on people. It might be a holy shrine like Walsingham or Lourdes. Or maybe Greenbelt, New Wine or The Keswick Convention.

During the season of Christmas, we celebrate the Epiphany ('Revealing') of our Lord, when we remember the Magi, or the wise men or three kings, who travel from the East to pay homage to the child who has been born King of the Jews. As we hear. *'For we observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage.'* The Magi didn't exactly know where they were going, although a child born king of the Jews would have given them some rough geographical idea. But no, in the story of the Epiphany, they follow the star. They put their trust in something they know not the end to. Where exactly will they end up? What will it be like to behold this special child and in what kind of place will he be?

Well the King of the Jews wasn't in Jerusalem and he certainly wasn't in the household of King Herod, whom we hear is intensely jealous. After meeting with King Herod, whose intentions we know are not good, the Magi are directed to take the route to Bethlehem and so off they go, continuing to follow the star. The Magi can't really begin to know just how special the child is and they continue to put their trust in the guiding light that is the

star. Most certainly they want to see this child whom we know has been called Jesus, whatever they understand of him. And when they reach their destination, *'when the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.'* Then we hear. *'On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.'*

Apart from returning to their country by another road, we don't know what happened to the magi after this. All we know is they wanted to see this special child who was king of the Jews and when they saw him he filled their hearts with joy. Indeed they were overwhelmed even before they entered the house! The pilgrimage to that ordinary, humble but special place, which was unknown to them, was worth it.

**Perhaps from that moment on the child Jesus became their king.** The guiding light having led them to the light. We hear the prophet Isaiah say in our first reading. *'Arise shine for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.'* Then the prophecy. *'Nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn.'*

Many who went to the Jerusalem of old, beheld a great city and temple, whatever state it might be in. For there the Lord dwelt. But now that prophecy had come to true fullness in Bethlehem, where the invisible God was made visible in the Christ Child. As we hear in Colossians, *'In him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell; and through him God was pleased to reconcile all things.'*

**So now through the Magi, the king of the Jews was revealed to all nations. The Christ child would become king to all people. A king like no other.**

In our broken and divided world we need the Prince of Peace as much as ever, that all people and nations might be united. And in the brokenness of our own hearts and lives, we might just want to make that pilgrimage, feel our need to make that journey, to the place of the Christ Child, whose radiance will fill our hearts with joy! We don't have to go to Bethlehem, special as that would be, **we can do it right here now**, as we come to the crib, kneeling before him, **offering our hearts to him. And making him our king.**

Amen