

**November
2024**

this month's theme.

'No'

Faith in the Moor



News, Views and Information



50 pence

This month's theme **"No"** was inspired by the poem *November*, by Thomas Hood. You can read the full text on p. 4. Whilst the poem is obviously rather tongue-in-cheek, it will strike a chord with any who find Autumn melancholy and November cold, grey and dreary – to say nothing of the dread of Winter just round the corner.

It set us thinking about our reactions to that word **"No"** – Denial? Lack? Restriction? Deprivation? Rejection? – It can mean all of those things. But even the seeming negative of a "No" can in fact be a blessing in the long run. Richard Pattison (p. 24), Mary Elliot (p. 12) and George Mullard (p. 26) give examples, whilst Dave Smith looks at the mathematical importance of "the nothing that is" (p. 5).

There's news from Knarsdale and Nenthead, reports on the Deanery Pilgrimage and the Confirmation Service in St. Augustine's (on Michaelmas, which Richard Pattison explains on p. 7) and much more. In fact once again ideas exceeded the available space!



The poem emphasises the negative aspects of the month, whilst ignoring any of the positives, such as the lingering beauty of Autumn leaves which, even when fallen, can still glow. On p. 11 you can read how a café in Hexham is helping former addicts rebuild their lives and realise their potential.

ES

Remembering our loved ones with hope

This morning, I opened the front door early to collect the milk. It was dark and raining heavily. Not the most positive scene and not the greatest start to the day! After a summer of generally disappointing weather, it was a further reminder that Autumn and Winter are with us and we'll have to do our best to live these seasons faithfully. However, someone reminded me how beautiful a crisp, dry afternoon can be with the Autumn shades and colours!

Part of this time of year for me is about remembering loved ones who have died. Two of my closest relatives died at this time of year, one in mid-October, the other on Christmas Eve. Nationally, we have Remembrance Sunday, Armistice Day and the Poppy Appeal to honour the sacrifices of those who have died in the World Wars and subsequent conflicts in our history. As we look at the world scene now, we have before us the continuing horror of war in the Middle East, Sudan, Ukraine and the places that don't make the headlines. Innocent children and adults are the victims of so much violence perpetrated by the politically powerful.

The efforts on Alston Moor to support the soldiers in Ukraine with used candles that can be made into trench candles, and other practical goods, is indeed a sign of hope in a very dark situation. Details about this have been well publicised. The initiative came from Viv and Colin Marston of St. Andrew's in Penrith who asked me if other church communities would be able to help?

A sign of hope in a very dark situation – what can we do this winter to be light and warmth for others? The Service of Light and Hope held annually at St. Augustine's, Alston, is one such event that helps the bereaved around the liturgical feasts of All Saints, and All Souls, providing a place and a context to remember loved ones. In the Appleby group of Churches, to which I also belong, we are looking into a holding a similar Service near to Christmas at the Sands Methodist Church. The approach to Christmas can be very emotional for the bereaved and a Christian context can be helpful.

The Hospice Movement too acknowledges the need to remember loved one at this time of year and arranges events. I'd like to acknowledge the wonderful work of our hospices, hospice at home groups, Macmillan

Cancer Support, Marie Curie and all who help people that are terminally ill to live with true dignity until the Lord calls them home.

In St. John's Gospel we hear the words of Jesus to the disciples before he ascends to his Father— *'I am going now to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am you may be too.'* Thomas questions Jesus: *'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?'*

Jesus said: *'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me'*. I wonder how many people, through the ages, have heard these words and found great hope and meaning in them?

These words are for *us* today!

Fr. John Winstanley, St. Wulstan's Alston, Catholic Parish of St. John Boste



November by Thomas Hood (1799-1845)

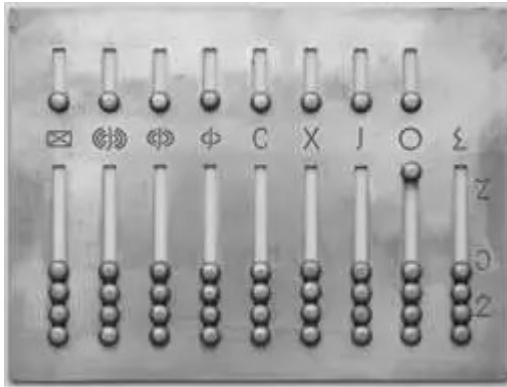
No sun – no moon!
No morn – no noon –
No dawn – no dusk – no proper time of day.
No sky – no earthly view –
No distance looking blue –
No road – no street – no "t'other side the way" –
No end to any Row –
No indications where the Crescents go –
No top to any steeple –
No recognitions of familiar people –
No courtesies for showing 'em –
No knowing 'em!
No traveling at all – no locomotion –
No inkling of the way – no notion –
"No go" by land or ocean –
No mail – no post –
No news from any foreign coast –
No park, no ring – no afternoon gentility –
No company – no nobility –
No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,
No comfortable feel in any member –
No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees,
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds,
November!

Much Ado About Nothing

How many words are there to express no quantity at all: nothing (obviously), nil, naught, zilch, nada, emptiness, vacuum. Any others? For scientists, engineers and accountants, the most important additional word is “zero” and, in particular, the accompanying number 0. In his play *King Lear*, Shakespeare called zero “an O without figure” in order to stress its emptiness. We are all familiar with zero from our schooldays: if you add it to anything, there is no change and if you multiply it by anything, the answer is zero, so what’s the point of it?

A lot of ancient civilisations such as the Babylonians, Egyptians and Romans felt the same. None of them had a specific number to represent zero and, more often than not, simply left a blank space if recording “nothing at all”. This works for, say, a list of goods bought and sold but, even for relatively straightforward calculations, things get very messy, especially as these civilisations all used symbols to represent their numbers. The Roman numbering scheme results in strings of letters and is clumsy in comparison to our familiar numbering scheme, where the position of a digit in a number tells how many times a given power of 10 (1, 10, 100 etc.) is present in that number. For example, the number 2984 tells us it comprises 2×1000 , 9×100 , 8×10 and 4×1 . To add any two numbers, you simply align the digits from right to left and add them vertically, with any sum over 10 carrying over into the next column and, importantly, a zero appearing where the column is an exact multiple of 10. For example, $2984 + 116$ gives the answer 3100. Multiplication and division of any two numbers also follows simple rules.

In Roman numerals it’s a different story. The above sum now becomes MCMLXXXIV + CXVI. The individual numbers can no longer simply be aligned one above the other and there is no way to record the “carrying over” once a multiple of 10 is reached. Even if you can see how to make an attempt at this addition (the answer is MMMC by the way, which has “invisible zeroes” after the C), imagine how complicated it gets to multiply or divide two numbers in Roman numerals.



The Romans had a practical answer for this problem which involved using a hand-held reckoning board (or abacus) such as that shown opposite. The seven left-hand columns represent powers of 10 (e.g. 1, 10, 100 etc.) and, using small limestone pebbles (“calculi” in Latin, so “calulare” came to refer to mathematical operations)

placed in the grooves, any number up to 10 million can be represented. If a particular power of 10 doesn’t appear in a number, then the column has no pebbles (it’s empty, essentially representing our zero). In effect, the reckoning board converts the Roman representation into the numbering scheme we are all familiar with today (including zeroes) but the result of any calculation would then be converted back into the clumsy Roman notation!

The well-known numbering scheme we now use is based on the digits 0,1,2 up to 9 was initially conceived in India and used as early as 200 AD. Through trading routes, this idea was taken up by the Arabic world and reached Europe through the Islamic conquest of Spain in the 11th Century. It became known as the “Arabic” numbering system (despite its origin in India) and was used in Italy from the 13th Century onwards. However, in much of Europe (especially in Britain), the old Roman system for representing numbers was still in widespread use until the 15th and 16th Centuries.

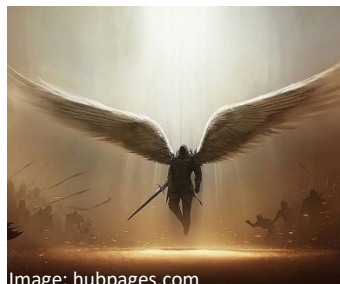
Whilst every one of us probably looks back on those school-days of learning times-tables and churning through multiplication and long division with horror, be thankful for the adoption of the Arabic numbering system and most, of all, be thankful for the existence of zero - “The Nothing That Is” according to Robert Kaplan’s book on its history. Maybe we should view the oft-used phrases “Thanks for *nothing*!” and “Nothing *really* matters” in a new light ...

Dave Smith

Michaelmas

The Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, or Michaelmas, is celebrated on 29th September, and because it falls near the equinox, it has come to be associated with the beginning of autumn and the shortening of the days. The Feast was instituted in the 5th Century following the dedication of a church near Rome to St. Michael. Observance of the Feast spread across Europe, and in 1014, our own Saxon King Ethelred commanded it to be celebrated in England.

Michael is mentioned by name five times in the Bible: Jude 1:9. Daniel 10:13, 10:21 and 12:1, 13; the last reference to him is in *Revelation* 12:7-9, which, in



fact, gives us the New Testament reading for his feast-day. It describes Michael and his angels contending against the 'dragon', who is identified as the Devil and cast out of Heaven. Wherever Michael is referred to in the Bible, he is seen as a protecting angel; the reason he has been chosen as the patron saint of the military, the police, fire officers and those who work in dangerous conditions. His name means 'Who is like God?', showing his closeness and loyalty to the Lord; this has led some heretical sects to teach that it was Michael and not God Himself who became incarnate as the person of Jesus.

In the Roman Catholic and High Anglican traditions, Michael's aid against evil is invoked with the following prayer:

Holy Michael, Archangel, defend us in battle.

Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil.

May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

For those interested in the culinary aspect of saints' days, goose is a traditional Michaelmas dish. This appears to stem from the fact that Queen Elizabeth I was eating goose on Michaelmas Day when the news was brought to her of the defeat of the Armada, and she resolved to eat goose at Michaelmas ever afterwards. In Scotland a *Struan Micheil* or St. Michael's Bannock, a large scone-like cake, is cooked from cereals grown on one's own land, representing the fruits of the field.

We cannot talk about Michael's feast-day without mentioning the Michaelmas Daisy, which flowers late in the growing season between the end of August and early October, providing colour and warmth to gardens at a time when the majority of flowers are dying off. The daisy is probably associated with Michaelmas because St. Michael is celebrated as a protector from darkness and evil, just as the daisy fights against the advancing gloom of autumn and winter.



Historically, Michaelmas was observed on 10th October in Britain, and marked the end of Harvest. This tradition was broken at the Reformation, which is the reason that British churches now keep Harvest Festival around this time of year instead.

Richard Pattison.

“Seasonal” weather

In the *‘Pennine Way North’ National Trail Guide* Tony Hopkins writes:

“On a bright sunny day Alston has the air of a hilltop village in Andalusia or Catalonia and should be explored in the same relaxed way.

Even on the other 364 days, of icy winds or misty drizzle, it is worth walking up the cobbled main street from Town Foot, detouring past the Market Cross to the Butts or around Back o’ the Burn to Town Head.”



Did the embroiderers who worked the kneeler in front of the High Altar in St. Augustine's church have those lines in mind, I wonder?

ME

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“Just say no” ... and what then?

“Just say no” was the slogan of an anti-drugs campaign initiated in the 1980s and ‘90s in America by then First Lady Nancy Reagan. It became a widespread movement, also in the UK, and variations of the slogan are still in use today in campaigns against drugs, knife crime, smoking and other issues. It’s a simple, snappy slogan. The associated campaigns are well-intentioned and may well have prevented many young people from taking up potentially dangerous habits. To anyone already in the grip of an addiction, however, being told “just say no” must feel extremely insensitive, as well as being a gross oversimplification of what are often complex and deep-rooted problems. After all, even if we are not personally affected by addiction, how many of us can honestly say we *always* manage to say no to things which are not good for us?

In their book *“12 ‘Christian’ beliefs that can drive you crazy”*, psychologists Dr Henry Cloud and Dr John Townsend examine a number of false assumptions about the Christian life, including, in Chapter 10, the premise that if only we would make the right choices, everything would be fine. Referring to the “Just say no” slogan, and the way it is often promoted as a solution to problems as diverse as anger management, depression, addiction or abusive relationships, the authors expose the flaws in the argument. Whilst it’s true that the Bible speaks often about the need to make choices, to decide *for* what is right and *against* what is wrong, it’s much more than a question of will-power. In fact will-power alone is never enough. Even the Apostle Paul had to admit in Romans 7 v. 15 “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do, I do not do. But what I hate, I do.”

Thankfully, there are organisations which recognise the complexities of problems such as addiction or abusive relationships and who offer practical help and care rather than mere words. One such organisation is Betel, a Christian charity working with people in social difficulties including homelessness, drug and alcohol abuse or long-term unemployment. Begun in 1985 in Madrid, Spain, Betel is now an international organisation with centres in 23 countries, including the UK.

Betel offers safe accommodation and a structured, supportive, environment in residential communities to help people with drug and alcohol addictions to start to rebuild their lives. Residents are encouraged to contribute to the life of the community. They are given the opportunity to learn new skills, such as furniture restoration, cooking or catering, and – crucially - are able to put those skills into practice in one of the charity’s businesses. The charity receives no government funding and meets its



costs largely through their businesses, which are operated by the residents themselves. One such business is the **Rising Cafe** in Beaumont Street, Hexham. In a pleasant location opposite the Sele Park, the cafe is both comfortable and attractively furnished and decorated. The food is excellent too, from Afternoon Teas to healthy salads, burgers,

sandwiches and toasties – not to mention the delicious (and huge) cakes. All proceeds from the cafe go directly towards the vital work of the charity. On a recent visit I mentioned to one of the staff that I was planning to write about the cafe in Faith in the Moor. She would of course be delighted to welcome any new customers, but asked above all that we remember them and their work in our prayers.

ES

When God says, ‘No’ – some biblical examples

Fairly early on in my Christian life I was told that God always answers prayer. Sometimes he says ‘Yes’; sometimes ‘No’ and sometimes ‘Not yet’. This always seems way too simple for me but I accept that I am not God and I trust him. There is a mystery about unanswered prayer. While it is a fact that God sometimes says ‘no’, there are times in the Bible when the reason for the refusal is given. We can see this in the life of several biblical characters. Take Moses. We are told that the LORD would speak to Moses face to face as a man speaks with his friend yet this great man

was denied entry into the Promised Land because his behaviour was dishonouring to God. He was told 'Because you did not trust in me enough to honour me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.' (Numbers 20:12) This says to me that we can be unconcerned about sin but God is too holy to overlook it. I am so glad that, years later, Moses talked with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Another giant of the Old Testament is David. David sinned and his story tells us that sin has consequences not just for ourselves but for others too. In chapter twelve of 2 Samuel David repents but then, despite his earnest prayers, the child from his illicit love affair with Bathsheba dies. His reaction is to accept this from God's hand and turn to life again. Similarly, when he conceives the idea of building a magnificent temple for God and God says 'no' because David's life had been occupied with war, he does not sulk but does everything he can to make it possible for his son to complete the task well. When God says 'no' it doesn't mean he doesn't love us.

Turning to the New Testament, perhaps the most well-known 'no' in the Bible is that given to Paul when he asked God three times to take away the 'thorn in his flesh' but the Lord said 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Paul believed the 'thorn' was given to stop him becoming conceited. What is wonderful about this story is that we do not know what sort of affliction the thorn represents so that the account has given comfort to people in all sorts of different situations. Another prayer repeated three times was Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. 'My father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.'

God's 'no' to this prayer tells us that it was not possible. We rightly sing 'there was no other good enough to pay the price of sin; he only could unlock the gate of heaven, and let us in'. James tells his readers, 'When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.' In contrast, the fact that Jesus goes to the cross for us is the supreme example of unselfishness. There was no other possible way for us to receive forgiveness and be restored to a right relationship with God.

In conclusion, sometimes the reason that a prayer is not answered positively is clear; sometimes not. But I can't help thinking the greatest reason for disappointed hopes is that the prayer has never been prayed. As James says, 'You do not have, because you do not ask God'. *ME*

Hexham Deanery Pilgrimage 2024

This year's pilgrimage had the grand title of 'Camino de San Cuthbert'. It continued west along the 'Parishes by the Wall'. We started with prayers outside St. Cuthbert's church in Haydon Bridge. The route then took us over the South Tyne River on the old Haydon Bridge on to the school where we prayed for pupils and staff. Further on we paused for prayer at a local farm. We then climbed to a higher vantage point overlooking the valley where we prayed for all



who lived there and passed along A69 road and railway. The route then dropped down to skirt the National Trust's Allen Banks and Staward Gorge before we arrived at the beautiful little church of St. Cuthbert Beltingham, which serves Bardon Mill. This was a chance to have lunch and enjoy the peaceful church and church yard with its ancient Yew tree. Our route then took us into the Site of Special Scientific Interest at Beltingham River Shingle where I learnt a new word 'metallophyte', meaning plants that can tolerate high levels of heavy metals. These botanical rarities can thrive on the lead pollution washed down from the former mines. The final part of our journey took us on a long foot bridge over the South Tyne again, along the railway platform and into Bardon Mill with a choice of refreshments before boarding the bus back to our starting point. Thanks to Revs. Steve Wright and Martin Naylor and friends for their organisation and to Steve for the picture (taken by Dave Smith).

Richard Glover

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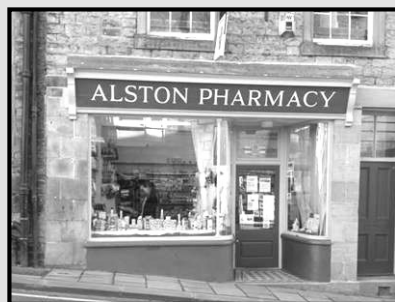
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Church Steward: Mr John de la Mare ☎ 01434 382338

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Parish Priest: Fr John Winstanley (usual day off: Monday)

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Methodist Services



All services at 11 am in St Wulstan's unless otherwise stated.

3 Rev Mary Elliot

3 pm Service of Hope and Thanksgiving in St Augustine's

5 pm Nenthead The Hive Pennine Praise

10 Remembrance Sunday

10.45 am at St Augustine's

2 pm Nenthall War Memorial

17 Rev Dave Milner Holy Communion

24 Mr David Pepin

Quaker Meeting for Worship



Quaker Meeting for Worship continues to take place every **FOURTH SUNDAY** of the month at 10.30am, throughout the year

Everyone most warmly welcome to join us for an hour of silent, reflective worship at this time.

Roman Catholic Mass

St Wulstan's, Kings Arms Lane, Alston, CA9 3JF

Vigil Mass every Saturday at 6.00 pm
with Confessions available from 5.30pm



Ecumenical Service at Grisedale Croft

'A wonderful addition to our community' GM

A relaxed, informal service, on a Thursday afternoon:
1.30pm on Thursday 21 November

Mondays, 6.30pm **Parish Prayer Group** Old Meadow Barns, Alston
for the St Augustine development project and mission.
Meet at David Pepin's home, contact Richard Pattison.

Church of England services & events



Worship and Prayer in November

Sunday, 3rd November (1st Sunday):

| | | |
|---------|--|---|
| 9.30am | Holy Communion (BCP) | Holy Paraclete, Kirkhaugh |
| 11.00am | Sung Communion | St Augustine, Alston (<i>also livestream</i>) |
| 3.00 pm | <u>Service of Hope & Thanksgiving</u> | St Augustine, Alston |

Sunday, 10th November – Remembrance Sunday:

**** See separate page for Remembrance Sunday services ****

Sunday, 17th November (3rd Sunday):

| | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| 9.30am | Holy Communion | St John, Nenthead |
| 11.00am | Prayer & Praise | St Augustine, Alston (<i>also livestream</i>) |
| ** 6.00pm | <u>Come & Sing Evensong</u> | Holy Paraclete, Kirkhaugh |

Sunday, 24th November (4th Sunday):

| | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| 9.30am | Morning Prayer | St John, Nenthead |
| 11.00am | Sung Communion | St Augustine, Alston (<i>also livestream</i>) |
| ** 3.00pm | <u>Service of Light before Advent</u> | Ss Mary & Patrick, Lambley |

Sunday services online

- Join us at 11am weekly on **Zoom** using the app – or, with an ordinary phone, dial 0203 051 2874. The **Meeting ID code** is **357 123 751**.
- Or find us on **YouTube** – youtube.com/@AlstonMoorParishChurches
- Find the orders of service at alstonmoorcofe.org.uk/worship and the notice sheet at alstonmoorcofe.org.uk/whatson

Regular Weekday services

Morning, Evening & Night Prayer

- Morning Prayer: Wed-Sat, 9am St Augustine's & Zoom
- Evening Prayer: Wed, Thu & Sat, 5pm St Augustine's & Zoom
- Fridays, 6pm St John's, Nenthead
- Night Prayer: Fridays, 9pm Zoom

Informal Holy Communion

- Every Thursday, 12 noon Chat Room, Alston

Prayer requests and virtual candles



- If you would like someone to pray for or with you, phone Mark on 01434 382558 or email pray@alstonmoorcofe.org.uk
- Light a candle at churchofengland.org/our-faith/light-candle

Ways to support your parish churches financially


- ✓ Make a one-off donation at alstonmoorcofe.org.uk/donate
- ✓ Speak to a Churchwarden, a Treasurer or Mark about regular donations
- ✓ Join easyfundraising.org.uk and select your favourite church as your cause. *Thank you!*



November Dates for your Diary (subject to change)

Mondays, 6.30pm Parish Prayer Group *Old Meadow Barns, Alston*
 Sun 17th, 10-3pm Coffee Shop *Garrigill Village Hall*
 Sat 30th, 10am St Jude's Coffee Stop *Knarsdale Community Hall*
Postponed to 2025: Parish Generous Giving (Stewardship) Campaign

Churches Together on Alston Moor






You are warmly invited to a

Service of Hope and Thanksgiving

to remember and give thanks
for those who have died
in recent times

Sunday 3rd November, 3 p.m.
St Augustine's Church, Alston

*If you would like us
to remember someone by name,
please add them to the list
in St Augustine's,
or phone Mark on 382558*

candles  music  readings
 prayers  hymns





Holy Paraclete Church, Kirkhaugh
CA9 3LA

Come and Sing Evensong



Sunday, 17th November, 6:00 p.m.

If you'd like to sing, contact Mark asap on
 01434 382558 or vicar@alstonmoorcofe.org.uk
 Rehearsal 4:00 pm on the day


All welcome!


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News from Nenthead -A special son

On October 15th, 2024 we gathered in St. John's churchyard at a cross which bears this inscription:

**'Forgotten soldier' of WW1 and son
of Alston Moor [Nentsberry].
His personal War and suffering
continued until he died of wounds
1924.'**

**'Remembered and loved by Family
and Friends, then and now!
May his soul enjoy Deserved and
Everlasting Peace!'**

It was exactly 100 years to the day since William Morley Smith's death when, flanked by a lawn of poppies and a soldier silhouette, we came in prayer and contemplation to hear details of his life and sacrifice.



William, always known as Morley, was born in 1896 son of Thomas a blacksmith and Rosina, younger brother to John and older brother to Sarah. Both boys were to join their father as blacksmiths at the London Lead Company.

When war was declared they were eager to join 'the adventure' – 'to play their part'. Morley enlisted

with 8th [Service] Battalion Border Regiment in September 1914, while John entered the Army service corps [Remount service] in 1915 as an invaluable farrier.

'Little would they realise the horrors they were about to witness and the carnage they would experience.' Morley was to face that full horror when entrenched at the Battle of the Somme. Here he and his comrades were

tragically struck by a British shell rendering Morley the only - gravely injured - survivor.

From the battlefield Morley was returned 'home' by hospital ship to be received and assessed at a specialist neurological unit at St. Mary's Hospital, Stannington, Northumberland. Beyond further help Morley was then transferred to Sherburn Hospital County Durham, a difficult distance from his home at Clog Hall, Nentsberry, as a paraplegic suffering from extreme physical and inevitably emotional trauma. Morley's personal battle against endured suffering came to an end on October 15th 1924, eight years after his mortal wounding.

We thank Zerel [Robson] who having met Colin Hewitson, Morley's great nephew, formerly from Overwater, needed to honour Morley and arranged this sensitive gathering. Thanks to Richard Glover for leading us in contemplation and to Mary Elliot for sharing Morley's history. Thank you Zerel and friends for a day we will remember. Morley will not be forgotten. MH

When God says 'No' - a personal view

I first began thinking about ordained ministry at the age of twenty-six. At that time the Church of England's policy was to send younger men (it was, of course, all men then) away and tell them to come back in a few years' time. I can see the wisdom of this, although it has undoubtedly contributed to the shortage of priests that we are experiencing as a church now, since many of the men it was said to did not go back. I myself did not do so for another ten years, when I was told for the second time that ordination was not the right way forward for me.

Not long after this, I began a twenty-two-year career as a lecturer in further education, using my counselling experience as a pastoral tutor alongside teaching languages. In this capacity, I worked closely with some very troubled young people, and managed to help them get their lives 'back on track'. One of these ex-students, who has been kind enough to keep in touch with me and is now a policeman, said to me recently: 'If you'd been a priest, I'd never have met you.'

Thinking about this, I have come to realise that it had not been the Church saying 'No' to me about ordination all those years ago, but God, even though *I still believe He had called me*. I cannot deny that, at the time, I

felt rejected; possibly more the second time round than on the first occasion, because I believed I had done what the Church had asked of me. But looking back, I can see how God used me during my years in education to do His work in a different way.

Since I was made redundant from my last job, I have made numerous attempts to return to teaching, none of which has been successful. Considering this theologically, I have felt a powerful sense of the Lord's saying to me: 'That part of your life is over now – it isn't where I want you.' Instead, I have been able to take up my duties as an organist again, and God has called me to a very rewarding ministry as a Reader, for which it would have been difficult to train had I still been doing my previous job. Once again, too, I am going through the process of thinking about ordination, this time with a clearer sense of being led in that direction, even though I do not yet know what the conclusion will be.

Feeling rejected by the God we love and Who we know loves us, can be deeply hurtful, as I have known to my own cost. The response of the wise and mature Christian is to ask, is this a flat 'No', or could it be, as I have come to understand through my own journey of faith, a 'Not yet'? We must trust the Almighty to reveal His answer in His own good time.

RP

Book Review: “Do Nothing to Change Your Life - Discovering what happens when you stop”

Stephen Cottrell (Paperback)

Since 2020 Stephen Cottrell has been Archbishop of York, the second-most senior bishop of the Church of England. This slim volume was published in 2007. The central message is that stopping and doing nothing very much for a few hours is good, putting life into perspective and giving opportunity for productive day-dreaming and creativity. It's written in a conversational style and includes many quotes but surprisingly few biblical quotations. When we realise that life does not revolve around us, we can, in the words of Ian Fosten, “take a back seat and simply gaze at all the wonder and turmoil that surrounds us. That way we might learn to see and watch, to notice and above all else to listen.”

Stephen Cottrell advocates some little practices to help us slow down: “Never speak of wasting time or spending time.” “Do not be a slave to the computer.” For me the most memorable part of the book was the title. If anyone would like to read it for themselves, please ask to borrow it.

ME

“No” – is not always negative

There are many “no’s” in Scripture, but through many of them we can be encouraged. The famous Bible passage on love in I. Corinthians 13, for example, reminds us: Love ... is not self-seeking, It is not easily angered, It keeps **no** record of wrongs.

In Psalm 23 v. 4 the psalmist writes, “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear **no** evil. For thou art with me.” Another Bible verse (John 6, 37) reminds us that God will never turn away those who turn to Him: “Him that cometh to me I will in **no** wise cast out.”

An old friend had been brought up to attend church, to lead a good life, and considered himself a Christian. After witnessing the suffering and death of his mother, however, he felt that he could say with certainty: “There is **no** God”. But later, having been invited by a colleague to a lunchtime Christian meeting, he began to understand the Gospel for the first time, namely that Jesus Christ had gone to the Cross to take away our sins, that Salvation is the free gift of God. It cannot be earned by “works”, by being good or religious, but only by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Bible says (Acts 4:12) “Salvation is found in **no**-one else, for there is **no** other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” That friend eventually became a Christian minister.

Most of us experience the negativity of a “**no**” at some point in our own lives. In my case it was when, in 1946, my father turned his back on the family, leaving me with no father and my mother with no husband. Years later, when I asked Liisa to marry me, she *didn’t* say no! We have now been married for over 63 years. Thank you, Lord, from both of us!

George Mullard

The Chat Room, bottom of Front Street, next to Mad Hatters. Open all year, for a safe space, a warm welcome, a cuppa and a chat. Whether you need a moment’s break from the weather, or an hour of company and deeper conversation, the hosts are always pleased to see you.

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We have a soup lunch each Tuesday at 12 noon,
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Our Michaelmas Tide Confirmation



On Sunday 29th September, St. Augustine's celebrated the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels with the confirmation of four candidates from our own congregation, Sam, Cathy, Paul and

Walter, and also of Terry, James and Malcolm from Holy Cross Church at Haltwhistle. It was a pleasure to welcome Fr. Stephen Wright and his congregation from Holy Cross, alongside friends from Alston Methodist Church and members from our other parish churches.

The confirmation was presided over by Bishop Mark Wroe, Bishop of Berwick and Assistant Bishop of Newcastle. There were several positive comments after the service about his sermon, which seemed to have something to say to everybody present. It is not often a bishop comes to St. Augustine's, so it is always a joy to have one with us when they do manage to get to our parish. Unfortunately, Bishop Mark had to cut his time with us rather short as he had another confirmation later on, but we are grateful for his visit.

Thank you to everybody who supported our candidates and to all who contributed to the service in any way. Particular thanks are due to Catherine



Graham and Celia Pattison for the beautiful cakes they provided to go with the refreshments afterwards, one illustrated to celebrate St. Michael and All Angels and the other specially for the confirmation. Catherine did have some trouble making a

picture in icing of a dove, saying that the first one she tried looked like a dinosaur and the second like a duck!

This was a lovely occasion, and it was wonderful to see our church filled with worshippers; a reminder of what Church can be like. Let us all pray that, in His good time, God will bring more new members to all our churches on Alston Moor.



Richard Pattison

Another occasion for celebration was our joint Harvest Festival Service held at St. Wulstan's, where some of us had the chance to meet Dean for the first time. Dean recently started work as a Lay Pastor with the Methodist Church. He led the service and re-told the well-known story of Joseph in a way which was both dramatic and moving, reminding us how the seeming catastrophe of Joseph's being sold into



slavery was actually all part of God's plan to save His people (Genesis 45, 5-7), and giving us a new perspective on the times when God seems to be saying "no" to us.

ES



Chrissie and Mark share a joke at the Coffee Stop.

Pepin's Puzzles

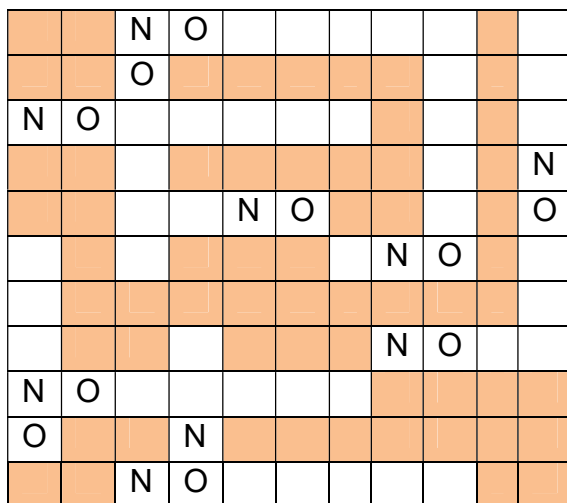
I **KNOW** how to spell **NO** when it's opposite to **YES**; and I **KNOW** how to spell **KNOW** 'cos I **KNOW** more - or less! So here is a **NO or KNOW** puzzle of well-known sayings and titles but all the vowels are missing!

N*v*r T*k* N* F*r *n *nsw*r N* H*d*ng Pl*c* Kn*w th*r*p*s
 N* p*c* f*r th* w*ck*d T* kn*w wh*s wh* *nd wh*t's wh*t
 N* r*m *t th* *nn Y** c*n b* *n th* kn*w *nd kn*w wh*t t* d*

AND HERE'S A TV WATERAID APPEAL: Thousands of children have to walk many miles daily for contaminated water because they have NO ??????; **ALSO** ... Which of the above is the title of a film based on the book *The Small Miracle* by Paul Gallico and which is a short bible text? Which is a TV Drama?

IN THIS SQUARE arrange the following selection of words:
 Some begin with the letters NO,
 some end in NO and one has NO
 as its middle letters.

**NOCTURN, NOSIEST, NOES,
 UNO, RENO, NOTABLE,
 NOMADIC, PIANO, NOTARY,
 CASINO, HYPNOSIS, VINO**



IN THIS GRID BELOW FIND 2 CITIES, a FLOWER, AND AN ITALIAN GIRL
 : example PT O = Please turn over (in bold)

| | | | | |
|---------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| GR | N | NO | L | A |
| HA | G | NO | VE | IA |
| MA | E | NO | RIN | R |
| SI | TUR | NO | B | ER |
| PLEASE | G | NO | V | LE |

FIND at least 7 misprints in this saying run together and repeated
 KNOWJUSTICE,KNOWJESUS,KNOWPEACEbutNOJUSTICENOJESUSNOPEA
 CE.KNOWJISTICE,KNUWJESUS,KNOWPEACEbatNOJUSTICE,NOJESUS,NOP
 EACE.KNWJUSTICE,KNOWJESUS,KNOWPEECEbutNOWJUSTICE,NOJESUS,
 NOPEaCE.

David Pepin

News from Knarsdale

Hello everyone, hope you are all keeping well during this very wet and dismal weather. We all hoped for some summer but that hope is now fading; we might get a few nice days before Christmas.

Back to our Harvest Festival on September 20th. This event as usual was well attended, with £108 collection going to RAB and proceeds of the Auction going for church maintenance. The September St. Jude's Coffee Stop was all about the MacMillan Cancer Research Fund, we had full house for this very worthwhile charity, as well as having our usual cakes scones and savouries etc, there were games and competitions to enter. We were able to send in excess of £550.

On Sunday 29th September members from various churches in the area joined St. Augustine's congregation for a confirmation by the Bishop of Berwick. It was so good to see a full church supporting the candidates, tea, coffee, wine and cake were served after the service, followed by lunch at the Cumberland. In October a service of Thanksgiving for the NHS on Friday 18th in church included Holy Communion and the Coffee Stop was held on the 26th. (See pp. 29-30.)

November's Remembrance Service this year is on 10th starting at 10.30, giving us time to walk to our War Memorial for the reading of names of our local men who died, so we might live. The Coffee Stop on 30th November is the last until the New Year, so the theme will be Christmas with food to match - a great way to catch up before the big day.

Friday 13th December is our Carols by Candlelight at 6.30pm - look out for further information on this event! TBC: Sunday 24th at 8pm Christmas Eve Communion.

Meanwhile our other organisations have been busy, with the WI's Pre Loved Sale, a visit to Hallbankgate's Birthday party, where we learned to Circle dance, a hilarious Quiz night with neighbouring WI's in the hall and a trip to the Glasgow Craft Fair. There will be an afternoon Domino drive on Friday 22nd November (all welcome) with our Christmas meal to be held on 3rd December at Brampton Golf course restaurant, rounding off a successful year.

Hall events include a Quiz on Friday 15th November with a supper of pie and pease and their Christmas Fair on Saturday 7th December with lots of interesting stalls and food. I know you will support all the events you can.

That's all for now folks,
Stay safe and look after each other.

God Bless.
Irene Boyles,

Is “No Limits” really such a good thing?

Do limits merely restrict our freedom, or can they be useful and necessary guidelines for life? Mary Elliot came across these thoughts from David Maas.

“A former homiletics [= the art of preaching or writing sermons – Ed.] teacher, also an avid skier, conveyed to his class an analogy of the Ten Commandments as the boundary markers along the ski trail. Every year, when contemplating the boundary markers at Vail or Aspen, he reflected that only an idiot would ski as close to the edge as he could. Yet this describes many practices of the scribes and Pharisees!

The legalist and the lawbreaker both have a morbid curiosity about those boundaries rather than concentrating upon the vast latitude of choices between those markers. This is reminiscent of our parents Adam and Eve developing a morbid curiosity about the one tree that God forbade, ignoring the thousands upon thousands of varieties that He did not forbid.”

NB: Next issue of Faith in the Moor will be for Dec. 2024 and Jan. 2025

ANSWERS: Sayings and Titles, Never Take No For An Answer, No Hiding Place. Know the ropes, No peace for the wicked. To know who's who and what's what. No room at the inn. You can be in the know and know what to do
WATERAID APPEAL – They have NO CHOICE *Never Take No for an Answer* was the film and *no room in the inn* is found in Luke's Gospel 2:7 and the TV Crime Drama was *No Hiding Place*
Cities: Grenoble, Hannover Flower: Magnolia, Signorina.

About 'Faith in the Moor'

This Magazine is a 'Churches Together' publication. It aims to share information useful to regular and occasional churchgoers, to the wider community, and to tourists and visitors. It reflects the life of the faith community in our corner of the North Pennines. Here people encourage, celebrate and debate their faith.

The different Christian churches who create this magazine get along very well, and work together in a spirit of openness and mutual regard. Faith in the Moor welcomes input in harmony with this open Christian Faith. Also from those whose spirituality is not focussed on a

particular religion, and those whose faith is in the Moor itself; its people, its uniqueness, its future. We support whatever enriches our community here.

*Current team: JH = Jeanette Haslam,
ME = Mary Elliot, ES = Lizzie Smith,
MH = Madeleine Harris, RP = Richard
Pattison, BNW = Bar Nash-Williams*



Dec./Jan. Theme: **'Epiphany'**

Deadline: **18th November**

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Services for Remembrance Sunday

10th November

9.00 a.m. St Augustine, Alston (Holy Communion)

10.30 a.m. St Jude, Knaresdale

10.45 a.m. St John, Nenthead

St Augustine, Alston

with procession to War Memorial at 11.30

2.00 p.m. Nenthall War Memorial

3.00 p.m. St John, Garrigill

Holy Paraclete, Kirkhaugh

St Mary & St Patrick, Lambley

"We will remember them"



St Mary & St Patrick Church,
Lambley

Sunday 24th November, 3pm

"Darkness & Light"

Looking forward to Advent –
a candlelit service
with Hymns, Carols & Readings



Everyone most welcome
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Friendship and community at the Harvest Supper at The Cumberland Inn



Three things I love about living on Alston Moor

1. The Community. I am so grateful that I only have to step outside my door to hear a friendly greeting. And an event like 'the Beast from the East' demonstrated that practical help will be offered if I need it.

2. The History. To live in an old town is to be aware of the men, women and children who lived here centuries ago and to enjoy their legacy in the architecture and artefacts left behind.



3. The Seasonal Calendar. I love the scenery of the North Pennines in all seasons and the festivals, both religious and secular that mark the cycle of the year.



ME