

Letter from the Vicar

Have a very surprising Christmas!

Life is full of surprises, and this past year has been full of them; some good, some bad, but all surprising.

Christmas is a time of surprises; whether in the surprise that you feel at receiving an unexpected present or the surprise visit of an old friend or family member. You might love surprises, you might not; you might be disappointed by them, but it's hard to deny that Christmas is a time full of surprises.

Given all I've said about surprises it might seem strange for me to say that the most familiar thing about Christmas, the story of Jesus's birth in a stable in Bethlehem, is the greatest surprise of all.

We are so used to living in a world where some people think that if they want to be noticed they must be in the media, being as visible and noticeable as possible. Next to this, it is very surprising that God showed his love for us through the birth of a baby to a young mother, in a poor family, in a quiet back-water. The surprise of Jesus did not end there. Rather than seek influence by spending time with the rich and powerful, Jesus spent time with the ordinary people and even the outcasts of his society, to show that the love of God is a gift given to us all, no matter who we are.

The great surprise of Christmas is that its central gift, the birth of Jesus, is a gift aimed not at those who can afford it, or those who think they deserve it, but at you, me, and everyone simply because God loves us for who we are.

Whatever Christmas holds for you, I hope that you will be able to take time to appreciate all the surprises that Christmas has in store. I know that in all the Christmas services in your Parish Churches you will receive a warm welcome and a space to enjoy and give thanks for the gift of Christmas.

Above all, can I simply say have a very merry and surprising Christmas. **Benjamin**

CHURCH NEWS

PCC – Thursday 12 January at 7.30 pm in the Church Room.

MU – Monday 5 December Deanery Advent Service, Holy Cross, Haltwhistle at **2 pm**. **Wednesday 25 January**, AGM with shared supper.

Sunday 11 December at 1 pm Messy Church Christmas Party, BM Village Hall and at 4 pm, Christmas Lights (with carols) at the Village Green.

Sunday 18 December at 3.30 pm, Village Carol Service at Henshaw.

Tuesday 27 December at 3 pm 'Words and Music for Christmas' at Beltingham. Some light-hearted readings and carols.

NOTES AND NOTICES

Thursday 8 December at 7.30 pm, Shaftoe Singers at the Village Hall. £6 including supper (in aid of our Churches and the choir).

Sunday 11 December

Green Christmas Craft Fair & Farmers Market, Greenhead 10-2.30 pm.

Tuesday 20 December – 'Film & Food Night' – 7 pm General Havelock

'Christmas in Connecticut' starring Barbara Stanwyck. 'New York reporter must host a real Christmas dinner at her Connecticut farm for a returning war hero – what could possibly go wrong?' **Booking necessary - £8 for meal and film – contact Joanna on 684376 for details.**

South Tyne Wildlife Group

Tuesday 13 December – Stephen Westerberg from RSPB 'Geltsdale Reserve and Whinchats'.

Tuesday 10 January, a film 'Salt of the Earth' - life and work of photographer turned environmentalist Sebastiao Salgado.

Both at Comrades Club at 7.30 pm - £3 - all welcome.

WI – Wednesday 14 December - Party with 'Fools Gold' - party frocks, supper and the bran tub. **Wednesday 11 January** – Cloud Singh from North East Sikh Service. Hostesses: Jean Walters and Cath Thompson; competition 'a costumed doll'; stall – bring & buy.

Thank you! On behalf of everyone at West End Refugees – to all who gave donations of garden tools, your gifts have been gratefully received by our clients. Greatest need at the moment is for toiletries, socks, woolly hats, gloves, chocolates to go in the seasonal gift packs. Ring Libby (344582) if you can help.

		ROTAS		
DECEMBER/ JANUARY	CHURCH	WARDEN	SIDESMAN	FLOWERS
4 December	Beltingham	Storey	McKenna/ Walker	*Wancke/ Galbraith/ Jackson
11 December	Henshaw	Storrie	Scott/ Galbraith	*ditto

18 December	Henshaw	Adams	Rowlands/ Hewitt	Scott/ Storey
25 December	Beltingham	Galbraith	Collingwood /Palmer	Group**
8 January	Henshaw	Storrie	Hayward/ Walker	Brunton/ Hartley/ Collingwood
15 January	Henshaw	Adams	McKenna/ Rowlands	“
22 January	Beltingham	Green	Galbraith/ Rowlands	Galbraith/ Jackson
29 January	Beltingham	Galbraith	Palmer/ Collingwood	“
5 February	Beltingham	Storey	Scott/ Slater	“
*No flowers in Advent – cleaning only				
**Meet at Beltingham 10.30 Thursday 22 December				

VICAR	The Rev'd Dr Benjamin Carter The Vicarage, Station Yard, Haydon Bridge NE47 6LL. Email: revbenjaminccarter@gmail.com	688196
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Items for publication to reach editors by 22nd of the month please either by phone (344582) or to Sally Gill at sallygill@aol.com

**ST CUTHBERT'S BELTINGHAM with ALL HALLOWS' HENSHAW
Parish Newsletter**

December 2016/January 2017

	SERVICES	
DECEMBER/ JANUARY	BELTINGHAM/ HENSHAW	HAYDON BRIDGE
4 December Advent 2	9.30 am Parish Eucharist (BCP) - Beltingham	11 am Parish Eucharist + Storybook Church 4 pm Christmas Lights
11 December Advent 3	9.30 am Eucharist + Storybook Church - Henshaw	
	11 am Parish Eucharist – Haydon Bridge	
18 December Advent 4	9.30 am Parish Eucharist – Henshaw	11 am Parish Eucharist
	3.30 pm Village Carol Service - Henshaw	
	6 pm Haydon Bridge Carol Service – Methodist Church	
24 December Christmas Eve	6 pm Crib Service - Henshaw	4 pm Crib Service
	11.30 pm Midnight Mass – Haydon Bridge	
25 December Christmas Day	9.30 am Parish Eucharist – Beltingham	11 am Parish Eucharist
27 December	3 pm Words and Music for Christmas - Beltingham	
1 January 2017 Naming of Christ	10 am Joint Eucharist + Storybook Church – Haydon Bridge	
8 January Epiphany	9.30 am Parish Eucharist + Storybook Church – Henshaw	11 am Parish Eucharist
	3 pm - Epiphany Carol Service Haydon Old Church	
15 January Epiphany 2	9.30 am Parish Eucharist – Henshaw	11 am Parish Eucharist
22 January Epiphany 3	9.30 am Parish Eucharist – Beltingham	11 am Parish Eucharist
28 January	10.30 am Messy Church - Henshaw	
29 January Candlemas	10 am Joint Eucharist - Beltingham	
	3 pm Evening Worship Haydon Old Church	
5 February 4 before Lent	9.30 am Parish Eucharist (BCP) – Beltingham	11 am Parish Eucharist + Storybook Church

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