

The Parish Church of Saint George



PARISH MAGAZINE

An open door in the heart of the City



JANUARY 2025

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CONTENTS



From The Rector's Desk	4
Parish Notices	5
Walsingham Pilgrimage by Fr Graeme Pollock	6
The Countryman by Paul McLaughlin	9
Music List	11
Calendar	13
Poets Corner	15

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Editorial Team: William Odling-Smee, Selby Nesbitt, Tony Merrick.

From the Rector's Desk



Dear Friends in Christ,

By the time you will be reading this, we will have celebrated the Nativity of our Lord. I hope that you all were able to enjoy a suitably festive Christmas Day with loved ones. However, the season of Christmas lasts 12 days and is then followed by the season of Epiphany which continues our joy in the incarnation of Christ and runs up until the feast of Candlemas on 2nd February. So may I wish you all continued peace and joy in these holy days as we continue to remember that Emmanuel means 'God with us'. May you know and believe that in your lives and homes. For so many of God's children, especially in the land of Jesus' birth, that may be a very hard truth to fully comprehend. Please remember all who suffer in Syria, Israel, Gaza, Lebanon, Yemen, Sudan, Ukraine and so many places of conflict in our world. Remember them, and particularly the hard pressed Christian communities of the Holy Lands where our faith was born, and where Christ lived, taught, died, and rose again. Remember them not only in your prayers, but in practical support as well. To that end, I commend two means of helping them. Firstly, an excellent Christian charity called 'Embrace the Middle East', which supports a wide variety of relief and development projects in the region, and which places great emphasis on reconciliation efforts between Christians, Jews and Muslims throughout the Middle East. Secondly, I would commend the work of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), which is a group of well-known UK charities including Christian Aid, Oxfam and Save the Children. Through these two groups and other responsible charities, such as UNICEF, you can contribute meaningfully to the relief of suffering.

I am also making a final call to anyone considering Confirmation, either as an adult or as a teenager. The Confirmation will take place again this year on Easter Eve, Saturday 19th April at 7:30 PM, when the Bishop will preside and administer the Sacraments. Please speak to me before 19th January to arrange the preparation.

Finally, may I also request that anyone who has not received Holy Communion at home contact me on 07902 792 080 to arrange a home Communion during January.

May God bless you all in the Holy Seasons with the grace and peace of Christ.

Yours sincerely in Christ

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Stewart".

PARISH NOTICES

Register of Vestry Members: 2025

The annual review of the Register of Vestry Members will take place during the month of February. This is a reminder of the registration process. First, if you are already registered, then there is nothing more you need to do; you can check for your name on the 2024 list of Vestry Members, which is in the narthex. However, if you are not registered and would like to be 'signed up', Forms of Declaration will be available from our Churchwardens during the month of February. Membership of the Vestry entitles you to participate and vote in the elections, which are held at the Easter General Vestry meeting.

The 'terms' for those who can be included on the Register of Vestry Members are that they must be a resident or accustomed member and subscribe to the funds of the parish by a receiptable collection. The Free Will Offering (FWO) scheme is an ideal way to subscribe to parish funds and satisfy this requirement; for further information on the scheme please consult Selby Nesbitt, FWO co-ordinator or Douglas McIlldoon, our Treasurer. If you have any general queries about the Register of Vestry Members, please speak with the Rector or Peter Hunter, Hon. Secretary.

Please note, the **Easter Vestry will be held on Sunday, 6th April at 1:00pm** after the morning service. There will be a sandwich lunch before the meeting.



WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE - 2024



On Tuesday 17th September, just as the sun was rising eight pilgrims began their long journey to Walsingham in two cars. We had a pleasant crossing on the ferry and after disembarking we made good progress along the A75 towards Gretna where we stopped for lunch at the retail park. Having been “fed and watered” we continued our journey towards our lodgings for two nights in the Northeast of England. Calling in at Hexham we made another comfort stop and visited the medieval abbey, which was founded in AD673 when Etheldreda, Queen of Northumbria, granted St. Wilfrid a patch of land on which to build a church. The first church was a wooden structure. During the next few decades Hexham grew as a religious centre and during most of the 7th and 8th centuries was the Cathedral church of the Saxon diocese of Lindisfarne. But in AD875 the abbey was attacked and burned to the ground by Halfdor Ragnorsson, leader of the area known today to historians of that period as the Danelaw and who with his army of Danes ravaged and plundered the whole of the Tyne Valley. The Saxon church and monastic buildings lay in ruins until Eilaf was appointed bishop in the year 1050. Wilfrid, as well as being a good preacher was also the leader of the Roman delegation to the Council of Whitby in the year AD665, who decided whether the English church would follow the Latin tradition or the Celtic, Peter or Caiaphas. We left Hexham at about 4.00pm. arriving at our lodgings in time for our evening meal and where we would spend the next two nights - the Old Mill at Coxhoe, 5 miles from Durham. On the Wednesday we visited the Gulbenkian Museum of Oriental Studies and of course we went to Durham Cathedral where we attended a service of Holy Communion in the Gregory Chapel. The celebrant the service was ordained at the same time as myself and afterwards joined some of our group for lunch in the Refectory. So far, the weather had been fairly kind to us but as we travelled south on the next day we increasingly met showers. However, when we reached Walsingham the sun was shining. We were joined in Walsingham by Lorraine Hunter from Hollywood. After supper we made our first visit to the Holy House followed by Compline in the Guild of All Souls chapel. And so to bed, at least for some. Others to the Bull! We said the Office of Compline together each night as an appropriate way of ending the day. Earlier we walked the Way of the Cross around the Shrine gardens During the course of the afternoon other groups arrived who would be

sharing the weekend with us. So the refectory was much noisier than it had 250 people at any one time and this weekend was no exception. On Saturday we met up with John Bannon who has recently and become a member of St, George's but has been a Walsingham pilgrim for many years In the afternoon we visited the church of Our Lady St. Mary, South Creake, a lovely medieval church about 5 miles from Walsingham. Its Vicar is Fr. Clive Wylie, an Ulsterman, who is known to several people in St. George's. We were invited to return the following morning to join the congregation for their Parish Eucharist - which we did and were warmly welcomed. The stone church was built in 1003. On Saturday before going to supper all the pilgrim groups came together for the Pilgrimage Mass in the Shrine Church. One of our pilgrims, Lorraine Hunter, read the first reading at this service. After supper we returned to the Shrine Church for a devotional address delivered by the temporary Shrine Administrator Fr. Graham Rowlands, SSC. This was followed immediately by the Procession of Our Lady when we process around the grounds with lit candles singing the Pilgrim Hymn. which tells the story of Walsingham. Processions are a distinctive feature of worship there - they speak to us of the nature of the pilgrim Church on earth, as we journey together as God's people from earth to heaven. They remind us that we are a company of people on the move. Through baptism we share a common life, and walk with one another as those called to share the gift of salvation to the world. All pilgrimage devotion flows from the mystery which is at the heart of Walsingham that "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1:14) Benediction in the Shrine Church was followed by the Ministry of Reconciliation. Touch is used by Jesus as a sign of his ministry of forgiveness, healing and restoration. Extended into the Church's ministry of healing today it is Jesus who by the miracle of sacramental sign ministers to us still. He healed many who were sick in body, mind or spirit. On Sunday after lunch we joined other pilgrims for the Sprinkling at the well which is a devotion most distinctive to Walsingham. It is a reminder of our character as Christians. This particular well is thought to date back to the 11th century and must have been used by those who knew the first Holy House. Receiving its waters connects pilgrims across the centuries. Going down to the well also reminds us of our descent into the font at baptism when we were incorporated into Christ Jesus and our Christian pilgrimage began. Sprinkling at the well is ample opportunity to renew and deepen our union with Christ and to seek restoration of its exploration in the unity of all Christians The weekend pilgrimage at Walsingham ends with the Blessed Sacrament Procession and traditional Benediction after which the majority of

pilgrims leave and head for home. However, we had another day soaking in the peacefulness of the grounds and the environs of the Shrine Church. On the Monday evening we offered our prayers in the Holy House for our own personal requests and concerns which was nice. The following morning after a hearty breakfast we said goodbye to Lorraine who had made her own way to Walsingham. We left in good heart heading for Harrogate, where we were to spend our last night. However, the fact that I had three falls whilst in Walsingham itself and an episode in the hotel, all within 10-12 days was a little concerning for my fellow travellers. And I must admit I thought so myself. I am very appreciative of the care and concern given to me after my third fall and some periods confusion that I experienced at the time. They finally persuaded me to go to Accident and Emergency in Harrogate General Hospital, despite it being the day we webeen when we first arrived the previous day. The Shrine can accommodate up to re to travel home on the ferry. So after an initial examination the hospital medics recommended that I have some further tests done before letting me go. At that point it was decided that one of the cars should travel on to Cairnryan and get the ferry home to Belfast as planned. However, I'm pleased to say that after several tests, including a brain scan, I was given the all clear to come home. I cannot thank enough the staff of Harrogate General for their care that day and also my fellow pilgrims for their support and concern for me. Further I would like to thank our drivers who got us to Walsingham and back safely. In January next year I will be issuing a form for names of anyone who would be interested in making a pilgrimage to Walsingham in 2025. I have booked 12 places at this stage but that can be increased if needed. However I will need to know fairly soon, i.e. by the end of February 2025. This will also help me to decide what is the easiest and least expensive method of travel. The dates for our stay in Walsingham are Thursday 25th.September till Tuesday 30th.September (depending on how we travel). If you would like to know more come along to one of our monthly meetings in St. George's. You would be most welcome. We normally meet on the last Thursday of the month but (there is always an exception) the date of the next meeting is Thursday 2nd January at 1.00pm when we have a celebration of the Eucharist followed by a light lunch.

Fr Graeme Pollock

THE COUNTRYMAN

by Paul McLaughlin



Charlie the milkman was a big red-faced man in his late 50's when I first remember him. He may have looked differently at one time, but he is etched indelibly on my memory as stout and middle-aged with a moon face that harboured the biggest smile in the district.

That smile was as familiar as the mahogany-coloured horse that pulled his cart round the streets of my childhood. "Rosie", he called her, and she was the only female who shared his life at the old farm at the top of the Whiterock Road. "I wouldn't part with my Rosie for a king's ransom", he would say to anyone who would listen: "She's the best old girl this side of the mountain".

Charlie was from the townland of Ballymurphy and had the soft, country accent that once whispered across the fields that tumbled from the slopes of Belfast's Black Mountain. He was a countryman who had been left behind like a little island in the middle of a housing estate filled to bursting with kitchen-house, city folk. But he kept to the country ways, despite the changes brought by the newcomers.

Paraffin lamps lit the windows of his whitewashed cottage and no new-fangled electricity, as he called it, was ever piped into his one-bedroom abode. The stable looked as if it could have come from a nativity scene and the yard bustled with chickens, hens and a spectacular goose that trumpeted from morning to night. Charlie called him his walking burglar alarm, but that was in the days when no one cared to break into other people's houses. Front doors were left open until well after dark and neighbours ceilidhed happily on Summer evenings.

Charlie's door remained open even after he had left home at the scrake of dawn to make his deliveries. He kept to the old ways. Going to bed with the darkness and rising with the cockerel. He was proud of the fact that he had never watched a television set and boasted that his only experience of the wireless had been the young King Edward's abdication broadcast.

Charlie was a royalist of the old school and his Presbyterian blood boiled at "that hussy Missus Simpson and all of them Republican eejits who were trying to ruin our wee country" in the 1950's. But mainly Charlie kept his politics to himself. He had the humour of the native and it was infectious.

Every morning he tied his great coat around his considerable girth with a piece of string and set off for one of the local dairy farms. I would see him before nine o' clock as I waited, at the junction of the two main roads, for the trolley bus to school.

He would wrap his arm around Rosie's neck and they would trudge up the steep incline like two old mates out for a dander. He would take out the battered nosebag and give Rosie her breakfast of best porridge as I stood desperately trying to remember my spellings or the new poem that a student teacher had 'forced' us to learn.

Ten years didn't change Charlie a bit. The old hat and coat remained his uniform and Rosie stayed by his side through all weathers, but times were changing, even if Charlie wasn't. Two teenagers smashed their way into his home on one of the rare days when he had pulled shut the red front door behind him. They wrecked the interior and stole his father's watch. He still smiled, but there was a sadness in his eyes that told of a rare feeling of betrayal.

I watched the big man go like snow off a ditch. The shoulders sank and the moon face waned as an illness, un-talked of in those days, went through him for shortcuts. Within weeks, Charlie was dead.

The minister said fine words over his coffin on that chilly January morning in Glenalina cemetery, although he admitted he "didn't actually know the man". He must have had a fine words' template and just filled in the latest departed's Christian name where appropriate. Hundreds attended the funeral and listened as the big man was eulogised by a stranger. "An upstanding Christian man who lived by the good book and looked out for his fellow man", said the vicar who, surprisingly I thought, wore a grey jacket over his dog collar shirt. Black would have been more seemly, I'm sure.

Charlie was interred within sight of the old cottage beneath the sods of Ballymurphy. He joined his mother and father and a wee brother who had been taken by the diphtheria. The gravestone read "Charles McCurry from this parish" and I realised that I had never heard his surname before. He was always just Charlie the milkman; countryman and friend to all.

MUSIC LIST January 2025

Sunday 5th January

11:00am Eucharist

Processional Hymn	47
Setting	Byrd Mass for 3 voices
Psalm	72: 1-7, 10-15
Gradual	48
Offertory	52
Communion Hymn	307
Anthem	Riu Riu - <i>arr McGlynn</i>
Hymn	49

The Epiphany Men's Voices

5:00pm Epiphany Carol Service

Chamber Choir

Sunday 12th January

11:00am Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn	47
Setting	Sumsion in F
Psalm	29
Offertory Hymn	48
Communion Hymn	294
Anthem	The three Kings - <i>Stopford</i>
Recessional Hymn	52

Epiphany 1 Parish Choir

5:00pm Choral Evensong

Responses	Rose
Psalm	46 & 47
Canticles	Dyson in C minor
Anthem	Jesus Christ the apple tree - <i>Poston</i>
Hymns	46,49

Choral Scholars

Sunday 19th January

11:00am Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn	388
Setting	Stanford in Bb
Psalm	36: 5-10
Offertory hymn	410
Communion Hymn	308
Anthem	I wonder as I wander - <i>Rutti</i>
Recessional hymn	486

Epiphany 2 Parish choir

MUSIC LIST January 2025

Sunday 19th January

5:00pm Choral Evensong

Responses	Rose
Psalm	96
Canticles	Stanford in A
Motet	O sacrum convivium - <i>Messiaen</i>
Hymns	50, 54

Epiphany 2

Chamber Choir

Sunday 26th January

11:00am Choral Eucharist

Processional hymn	439
Psalm	19
Setting	Ireland in C
Offertory hymn	476
Communion hymn	305
Anthem	O sing joyfully - <i>Batten</i>
Recessional hymn	366

Epiphany 3.

Parish choir

5:00pm Choral Eucharist

Setting	Merbecke
Gradual Hymn	234
Offertory Hymn	358
Hymn	374

Parish Men

CALENDAR January 2025

Jan 1	THE NAMING AND CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS
10:30am	Eucharist: The Rector
Jan 2	
1:00pm	Eucharist: The Rector & Fr Graeme Pollock The Walsingham Group meets at this Eucharist – all welcome
Jan 5	THE EPIPHANY
9:30 am	Eucharist: The Rector
11.00 am	Choral Eucharist: The Rector Preacher: The Rector Readings: Isaiah 60: 1-6; Ephesians 3: 1-12; Matthew 2: 1-12 Reader: <i>Wardens</i> Intercessor: <i>Pam Tilson</i> Servers: <i>Mark Claney, Agape Laoye, Tony Merrick</i> Tea and Coffee: <i>Mina Kelly, Richard Oldfield</i>
5.00 pm	Epiphany Carol Service
Jan 8	FERIA
10:30am	Eucharist: The Rector
Jan 12	THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
9:30 am	Eucharist: The Rector
11.00 am	Choral Eucharist: The Rector Preacher: The Rector Readings: Isaiah 43: 1-7; Acts 8: 14-17; Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22 Reader: <i>Pam Tilson</i> Intercessor: <i>Fr Tom Layden</i> Servers: <i>Omolewa Akinyele, Mark Claney, Janet Sandikli</i> Tea and Coffee: <i>Eleanor Maynard, Catherine Hunter</i>
5.00 pm	Choral Evensong: The Rector Lessons: Isaiah 55: 1-11; Romans 6: 1-11 (<i>Fr Tom Layden</i>)
Jan 15	FERIA
10:30am	Eucharist: The Rector
Jan 19	THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
9:30 am	Eucharist: The Rector
11.00 am	Choral Eucharist: The Rector Preacher: The Bishop Readings: Isaiah 62: 1-5; 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11; John 2: 1-11 Reader: <i>Janice Carruthers</i> Intercessor: <i>Janet Sandikli</i> Servers: <i>Banji Akinyele, Tony Merrick, Steven McQuitty</i> Tea and Coffee: <i>Brenda Claney, Judith Fawcett</i>

CALENDAR January 2025

<p>Jan 19 5.00 pm</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY</p> <p>Choral Evensong: The Rector Lessons: 1 Samuel 3: 1-20; Ephesians 4: 1-16 (<i>Janet Sandikli</i>)</p>
<p>Jan 22 10:30am</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">VINCENT OF SARAGOSSA</p> <p>Eucharist: The Rector</p>
<p>Jan 26 9:30 am 11.00 am</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY</p> <p>Eucharist: The Rector</p> <p>Choral Eucharist: The Rector Preacher: The Rector Readings: Nehemiah 8: 1-3, 5-6, 8-10; 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a; Luke 4: 14-21 Reader: <i>George Woodman</i> Intercessor: <i>Janice Carruthers</i> Servers: <i>Banji Akinyele, Mark Claney, Steven McQuitty</i> Tea and Coffee: <i>Yvonne Doherty, Linda McConnell</i></p>
<p>5.00 pm</p>	<p>Choral Eucharist: The Rector Lessons: Numbers 9: 15-23; 1 Corinthians 7: 17-24 (<i>Geoffrey May</i>)</p>
<p>Jan 29 10:30am</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">FERIA</p> <p>Eucharist: The Rector</p>

POETS CORNER

The Corners of My Year

I wish you were here in September rain
When the sweet azalea has flowered again
When the bed's too big without your smile
I dream your scent like camomile

I wish you were here in December frost
When the love is found and the heart is lost
When the house is silent like a child
Scolded, then thankfully reconciled

I wish you were here when March has sprung
When birds are singing and bells are rung
To harbour me in velvet down
And kiss my words in sacred sounds

I wish you were here when June bursts through
And warms each morning bathed in dew
I wish you were here to dry each tear
And fill the corners of my year.

Paul McLaughlin

