

## St John's Church, Garrigill – update 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2025

Dear friends and supporters of St John's Church

I'd intended to update you at the end of the year, but the combination of Christmas services and ill health put me behind schedule – my apologies.

One year on from our 'relaunch' meeting, the future of St John's looks much rosier – thank you!

### Services

With nearly a dozen services, and an average attendance of 11, we have a healthy and well-attended pattern of worship established. There is still room to develop it – in particular, we haven't had the resources to put on another 'Messy Easter'-style event – but we can work on that for the future.

Services in 2025 resume next Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> February – there's a full list of services overleaf, and printed cards will be available in church shortly.

### Events

Angela's monthly Coffee Shop has become a much-anticipated treat – thank you to her and her amazing team! It's usually on the same Sunday as our service, so you can combine the two! Apart from providing delicious food and much-needed income, the coffee shop is a great boost to the social life of Garrigill – and beyond, drawing people from far and wide. It would be good to have a few more events during the year – if you have the time and energy to organise something, do let me know!

### Church and Churchyard

Thank you to our now regular team of cleaners, polishers, flower arrangers, gardeners ... and to those who have started work on a wildlife survey of the churchyard. Perhaps this might be the year when we develop an environmentally conscious maintenance plan for the churchyard...

### Money

This time last year, our annual income was around £1400, but our essential running costs were £1900 – including nothing for costs of services, maintenance or contribution to the cost of a vicar – we were likely to run out of funds within 3-4 years.

This year, thanks to your generosity, our income has *exceeded* our expenditure by around £1500 – even allowing for extra costs for services (heating, lighting, requisites), a few big items (the compulsory 5-yearly architect's inspection, a deposit on restoration of the gates and a huge electricity bill when the heating was left on) and making a small contribution to the diocese for the cost of providing a vicar.

So we currently have around £8000, of which £3600 is restricted to the porch restoration, and £1700 to building work and maintenance more generally.

## Development Project

Though you haven't heard a great deal from us, work has been going on behind the scenes:

- 1) Our 5-yearly architect's inspection revealed some additional works which will be required, including significant repointing, work to windows and rainwater goods, and improved drainage. This is all in addition to the replacement of the porch roof, finishing the interior of the vestry and relaying the main path.
- 2) In addition, Alastair our architect has been assessing the feasibility of introducing accessible toilets and a simple kitchen in the vestry, and is currently drawing up possible plans.
- 3) Richard Hymers has been working closely with us, and suggests that we may be looking at a total cost in the order of £90,000 (though this is a ballpark guesstimate at this stage!)
- 4) Alice and her colleague Marilyn have started work on designing a possible permanent exhibition about the geology of the area, to link in with a churchyard trail to the graves of Westgarth Forster and John Park.
- 5) At the end of January, representatives of the Diocesan Advisory Committee (who will recommend whether or not we will get a faculty – ecclesiastical planning permission – for the works) visited the church. They were enthusiastic about our plans, and made some helpful suggestions (e.g. creating some bookcases with timber from the few pews we hope to remove)

## Project costs

The cost of all this work, at possibly around £90,000, is significantly higher than we had hoped – but we are making progress:

- As I said above, our income is now more than our expenditure;
- A generous benefactor has offered us £25,000 subject to our getting sufficient match funding from other sources;
- David Hymers has been hard at work investigating sources of grants, so that we can apply as soon as we have some definite costings.

So there is still a lot of work to be done in raising funds, but with around ⅓ of the cost already in the bank or promised, we are in a good position to seek match funding.

## How can you help?

If you are already contributing – whether financially, or through your time and hard work – thank you! We have a way to go, but are making steady progress.

If you feel able to start giving regularly – or to increase your giving, say by the rate of inflation, we would be immensely grateful. Payments can be made by bank transfer to sort code 400820, account number 80649015 (account name: "Alston Moor PCC (Garrigill)") – or by scanning this QR code.



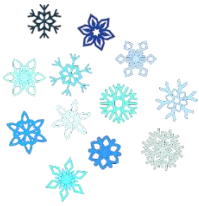
And within a couple of weeks we will be able to receive payments by direct debit (which means a Church of England-owned company will do all the Gift Aid admin for us, helping our treasurer considerably!) If you'd like to know more, please give me a ring (01434 382558) or email [vicar@alstonmoorcofe.org.uk](mailto:vicar@alstonmoorcofe.org.uk)

Thank you all again for your support – your generosity really is ensuring that St John's Church will be here for the benefit of the community, a living concern, for generations to come.

With every blessing for (the rest of) 2025

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "M. M. A.", is written at the bottom of the page.

# Services in Garrigill in 2025



## JANUARY - *No service*

### FEBRUARY

Sun 16<sup>th</sup>, 9.30am: **Holy Communion**



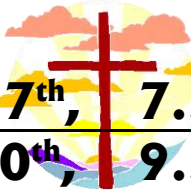
### MARCH

Sun 16<sup>th</sup>, 3.00pm: Prayers for World Peace

### APRIL

Thu 17<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm: **Maundy Thurs Communion & Vigil**

Sun 20<sup>th</sup>, 9.30am: **Easter Communion (t.b.c.)**



### MAY

Sun 19<sup>th</sup>, 3.00pm: **Holy Communion**

### JUNE

Sun 15<sup>th</sup>, 9.30am: Morning Prayer



### JULY

Sun 20<sup>th</sup>, 3.00pm: “Furry Friends” Pet Service

### AUGUST

Sun 17<sup>th</sup>, 9.30am: **Holy Communion**

### SEPTEMBER

Sun 21<sup>st</sup>, 3.00pm: Harvest Celebration



### OCTOBER

Sun 19<sup>th</sup>, 9.30am: **Holy Communion**

### NOVEMBER

Sun 9<sup>th</sup>, 3.00pm: Remembrance Service



### DECEMBER

Thu 18<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm: Carols on the Green (*date t.b.c.*)

Wed 24<sup>th</sup>, 11.30pm: Midnight Mass

