

May 2025

60 pence

# Faith in the Moor



**News, Views and Articles of Interest**



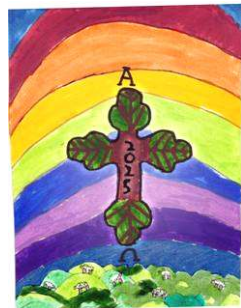
***This month's theme:***  
**'Stone'**

This angel 'Raphael' stands in peaceful tribute, a meditative memorial by Shawn Williamson to his mentor Josefina de Vasconcellos in The Quiet Garden at Rydal Hall, Ambleside. See p29

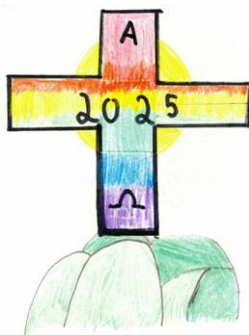


## Shining Lights

Every year on the special Easter Eve 'darkness to light' service at Nenthead St John we bless the 6 Paschal Candles for the whole parish.



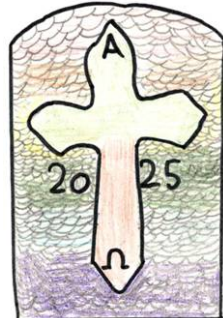
We choose a decoration fitting to our area, and this year we were totally spoilt for choice from these stunning designs by children from Nenthead school. We loved the shimmering stained glass, the joyful colours, the intricate shapes and pencil work, the ideas, the vibrancy, and the sheep!



The artists have all been given a candle with their design on, but we had to choose just one for our tall candles that can be seen right from the back of the biggest church. Our winner\* shows a deeper truth that caught our imagination; the cross being also a tree of life, bursting into new leaf.

Thank you Patrick, Freddie\*, Elsie, Ara, Iris, Daniel, Josie, Rory and Poppy.

*MNW and BNW*



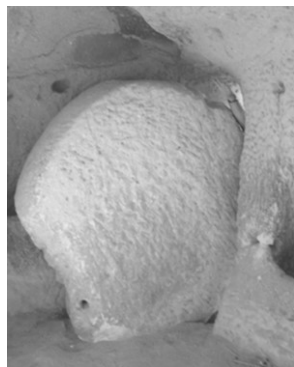
## Roll the Stones Away

Ever since I saw the theme for this month's *Faith in the Moor*, I've had a song rolling around in my head: "The angel rolled the stone away" (see Matthew 28.1-4). Appropriate, I suppose, as I'm writing this on Holy Saturday!

I've been reminded of a comment I once heard, that the angel didn't roll the stone away to let Jesus out – he could have done that for himself. The angel broke the official seal, rolled the stone away and sat on it – waiting to be identified as the perpetrator of this crime – to proclaim the authority of God over the civil powers. The angel demonstrated that the power of darkness cannot contain the force of light and love.

This photo, taken in Cappadocia many years ago, shows the kind of stone that might have closed Jesus' tomb: round, designed to keep people out – or in. A tool of protection – or oppression.

Too often in our world, we find ourselves shut in: entombed by the powers that tell us to be afraid or suspicious, to conform to the dictates of power; or trapped by our own insecurities or sense of inadequacy.



But as the angel rolled the stone away, so we too can be freed from the darkness. As citizens of a different Kingdom we can reject fearfulness and suspicion which keep us trapped in a safe tomb, and choose instead to break out into a world of risky freedom and radical love. The darkness need not prevail, the stone can be rolled away – and the most powerful tools we have for this are joy, hope, love – the determination to hold onto faith's promise of new life, and the refusal to let our song be silenced. Enjoying the simple good things – singing and dancing, storytelling and laughing, being creative and enjoying the natural world, loving and building community – all weaken the fearful power of darkness and let the light in.

So whether you sing "The angel rolled the stone away", "We shall overcome" or your favourite pop song; whether you sing in church, in the Alston Moor Folk Choir or just in the shower when (you think) nobody's listening – keep singing, keep *living*, and watch the stones... roll away.

Your friend and vicar, *Mark Nash-Williams*

# The Stones Will Cry Out

Palm Sunday's Gospel includes this famous phrase, when the authorities told Jesus followers to be quiet he answered, if they are, 'the stones will cry out.' (Luke 19.40)

Stones are used often by God – from the two stone tablets on which he wrote ten commandments for Moses' people, to the one rolled away from Jesus tomb when he rose from the dead for ALL people.

When you look at our fields divided by stone walls my thoughts go to those hard-working people who built them. Others are using local stone for building new bungalows in the field below where I live.

I grew up on the coast opposite the Isle of Wight. Our beach was stony and not exactly comfortable! Ezekiel 11.4-21 includes 'I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.' How we pray for friends and family that hearts are receptive to Jesus' Love.

I have a postcard of druids at Stonehenge, stones erected possibly 5,000 years ago. They will last a long time, but not forever. In Isaiah 26.4 we read 'Trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord God you have an everlasting rock.'

*George Mullard*


**Pentecost**  
**Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> June**



**Come and Sing Evensong**

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**Everyone Welcome!**





## The Rocks Beneath

*This area has a fascinating geology, environment and history. FitM spoke with Alice Bondi about her work creating a permanent display in the church in Garrigill*

*How did you get involved in the Garrigill church exhibition project?*

The idea came from Mark asking the Alston Moor Partnership if they could help with something to contribute to the church's future.

When I first moved here, I got a job with the East Fellside and Alston Moor Project, as a footpath officer, which involved not only negotiating footpath improvements but interpreting the area to visitors and local people. This then became the East Cumbria Countryside Project (which unfortunately no longer exists), where I focussed on the interpretation – walk leaflets, guided walks, exhibitions etc. So doing this exhibition is picking up on a field I've missed for 20 years while doing other things.

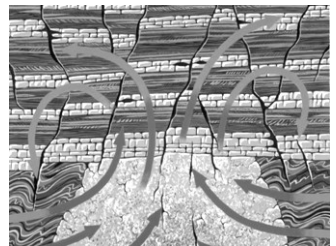
One of the things I felt had not been highlighted enough on Alston Moor is the North Pennines' UNESCO Geopark status. It is the rock beneath that determines everything – mining that brought people, the building material for their housing, and later the tourism we value today.

When mining declined the village became something different. In more recent times those rock foundations – with rock creating soil and hence the interesting plants and micro-environment – result in the North Pennines being designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now renamed National Landscape).

*How do the displays reflect this?*

I am trying to start with geology, layers of rocks and the fissures through which minerals were pushed up to create veins of precious things.

*(FitM: The area's rock is cracked like its people!)*



Problem is I could write a book, and there is only so much space! I touch on Westgarth Forster, famous geologist from Garrigill, understanding the structure, and how that led to the history and development of the area.

*Is the context of the Church setting reflected too?*

It's about how the area is lived in; the huge growth of mining from the 1750s changed it from mediaeval scattered, temporary residences into a proper village, and churches grew for them. Through the late 18<sup>th</sup> century here were so many chapels now closed, the Redwing one being most known today. There was a school, and even a girls' school. The smithy was important, and there were two pubs, with a clear social divide between their clientele!

*It sounds like you start with rock but get engaged with people.*

Yes, there's the story of a young plant specialist and photographer, Kenneth Park who became the first Field Officer of the Moor House field station (later National Nature Reserve). He died in a tragic accident and is buried in Garrigill churchyard.

*So there's still scope for more material?*

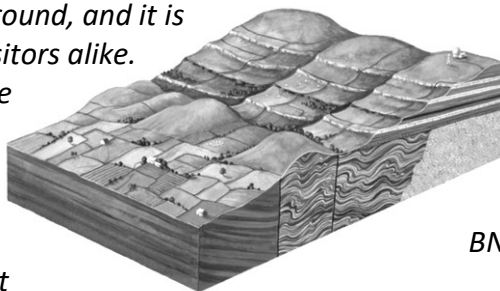
I am hoping to make a leaflet, or leaflets, to reflect the panels in more depth. There is so much that is totally fascinating about it all!

*Has doing this research tuned in to your love of Alston Moor?*

Alston Moor was where I just felt ... at home. I loved it when I first came 50 years ago, and then 42 years ago found a house here when I was first able to buy – even with no mains services of any kind. What I loved, right from the beginning, in talking with people, is such a strong sense of community. It is a community that has to look after itself because we are too small and remote to be important to the authorities.

*But its foundations are on solid ground, and it is deeply loved by its people and visitors alike.*

*We look forward to learning more when the display goes up soon.*



*Geological art by  
Dr Elizabeth Pickett*

*BNW*

Ground advice: Geology rocks, but geography is where it's at.





pink [purple] fluorite

## Jewels in the Darkness

*“Head-gears gaunt of grass-grown pit-banks, seams abandoned years ago; drop a stone and listen to its splash in flooded dark below . . .”*



green fluorite

W H Auden’s nostalgic poetic words are suggestive perhaps of austere conditions and dank atmosphere below, not the exquisite, entombed beauty the miners broke into: *‘The interior of some of the largest loughs – mine cavities – when first broken into, form a spectacle of unrivalled splendour - walls of crystallised quartz - fluorspar - galena and other minerals.’*



*Interior  
lough,  
Smallcleugh  
Galena*



This led to collections and some remarkable and treasured “spar” box displays - *‘In the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century there was a spar box of some two thousand specimens created by Isaac Robinson of Nenthead shown in the ‘Great Exhibition’ of 1851.’*

*[‘Radiant realms’: Peter Davidson.]*

It is thought that such collections led to swapping just as ‘pokemon’ cards do today or marbles of yester-year, as well as the founding of entrepreneurial mineral shops! *‘John Walton a miner from Garrigill with his wife Sarah founded a modest dynasty of mineral dealers.’*

*[‘Radiant Realms’]*

*Outside abandoned Rampgill Mines*

## Students’ Spar Boxes

In response to this history and our [‘Heritage Heroes’](#) Nenthead Primary School created their own spar boxes; their own capsules of sparkling – illuminated – mirrored and in some cases polished splendour. This experience tumbled forth:





*'We made a precise plan making sure it looks nice.'*

*'We started twice and decided when it looked its prettiest.'*

*'I like the really crystally ones the sparkly purple ones the best.'*

*'It was our rocks in nature collection.'*

*'We put the big 'rocks' at the back behind the small rocks - it was a vague attempt at precision.'*

*'There is such a variety.'*

*'That one is my emerald.'* (green fluorspar)

*'And, I have some fossils.'* –

*"What kind?" – 'Possibly worm fossils; there are plenty of worms!' I certainly saw some 'filigree' fossils within their spar box.*

*'I got a stone tumbler for Christmas – it makes a loud noise when 12 stones are rattling against each other – it makes them nice and smooth in your hands.'*



Their consensus:

*'We are nosy – we want to know things.'*

*'We are proud of our boxes.'*

*'We now know about the earth's history - how it is built up in layers.'*

Summed up by this **amazing** concept:

***'It's amazing how the world can do by itself.'***

MH





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## Christ is Our Corner-stone

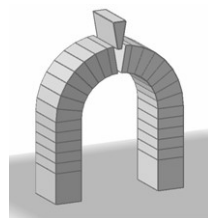
So wrote the hymn-translator and Anglican priest, John Chandler, in his rendering of the Latin hymn *Angularis fundamentum* in 1837. And so Jesus is referred to in a number of passages of Scripture.

In ancient architecture, a corner-stone was the first and most important stone laid. Its placement determined the alignment, stability, and integrity of the whole structure of a building. If the corner-stone was flawed or misaligned, the entire edifice could be compromised.

The Bible uses the imagery of a corner-stone to emphasise Jesus' fundamental underpinning of our faith in several places: St Paul says in Ephesians 2:20–22, 'Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord', while the Psalmist declares: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone', prophetically pointing to Jesus' role in God's plan of salvation.

The image of Jesus as the corner-stone of our faith is very powerful; it makes clear that without Him, the whole edifice of our belief-system as Christians is meaningless and liable to collapse in the face of any testing of our Church's teaching about the nature of God and His purpose for us.

It is possible to render the word 'corner-stone' as 'keystone', depending on the context in which we encounter the expression. This is another architectural term: In an arch, the keystone is the central, topmost stone that locks all other stones in place. Without the keystone, the arch would collapse. The keystone symbolizes Jesus as the unifying force that holds the Church together. Colossians 1:17 says, 'He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together'. While the cornerstone begins the work of building, the keystone completes and secures it. Just as the keystone finishes the arch, Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). Without Him, the Church would crumble.



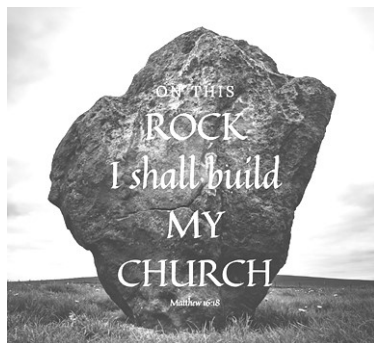
At a time when we live with so much uncertainty - the precarious international situation, 'wars and rumours of wars', natural disasters and climate-change taking their toll on our planet's stability - we can truly thank God for the comfort He gives us in the objective fact that, as the hymn-writer John Mason Neale tells us, 'Christ is made the sure Foundation'!

RP

# **‘On *This* Rock’**

## **What else did Jesus change by renaming Simon?**

We all know Jesus’ disciple Simon, and that Jesus renamed him Peter. Those who enjoy languages and bible study know that comes from Petros, usually translated rock. ‘On this rock I will build my church’ says Jesus to his friend. (Matt 16.18)



But it is a specific kind of rock or stone, and not the sort his hearers might expect. Usual building stone, the nice, cut, square, ‘dressed’ stone used for lasting construction is not petros, but lithos.

When Jesus and his friends visited the temple (Mark 13.1 NIV), his friends say “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!” – just as we stand in awe inside great cathedrals, amazed by the huge stone arches that hang far above. The word they use to describe these stones is Lithos.

So Jesus was making a very specific point by naming Simon Petros. Petra was the Greek for the bedrock of nature; the sort that gave you a sure foundation, but you couldn’t grow crops on! By choosing Petros (the masculine form) for Simon, it could have been an insult: the kind of natural uncut rock or stone dug out of the ground while gardening; lumpy and covered in dirt! The sort you make rockeries with or, if a manageable shape, dry stone walls. The contrast to received architectural wisdom would have stuck in his disciples minds; HIS church was not going to be like the temple. He changed perception of what faithful worship and practice could be.

Jesus declared he would build HIS church from ordinary everyday material, not shaped and changed material, with bits chopped off and sanded down and all exactly the same. There’s a lovely hymn that begins ‘As many stones, their edges rough, unhewn, may by their awkward shape lend others strength’ and goes on to ask God to build us together as a church that will bring glory to his name. We build his church by looking after each other, exactly as we are. By working out how we best fit together even though we are all different. Jesus church doesn’t use rulers and set squares; just acceptance, care and loving creativity.

*BNW*

Ground advice: Don’t take life for granite. Marble at your own greatness.  
Keep your coal under pressure. Happiness is a slate of mind.

# A Calling to Walling

## Dry stone walling – a personal view

Stretching for miles, over the moors and valleys, dry stone walls are part of the local landscape, literally so. In an area with few trees, stone is an obvious cheap building material. The spread of stone walls also echoes the history of enclosures over the last 500 years. Small farm enclosures from the late 16th century, and then larger enclosures in the 18th and 19th centuries, were built with stone in upland areas. Perhaps you have walked the Fairfield Horseshoe and been amazed by the wall that you follow on the descent over Hart Crag, Dove Crag and High Pike.



Nowadays, stone walls are recognised for their environmental benefits, as they create a wide range of habitats. There is a warmer dry side, where we find foxgloves grow well, and an exposed wet side, great for moss. Inside is home for wrens, hedgehogs and shrews. While a post and wire fence may keep animals in (or out), a stone wall provides so much more, with shelter from wind being obvious as I write this now ...



But how do they work? Foundations are key, which is an image used often in Christian hymns – “Christ is made the sure foundation” being one that comes to mind. Foundations that are level, strong, solid. Then wall stones, held together by overlapping the joints in the course below. Occasional through stones join the two sides together, providing strength for the whole wall. More wall stones and then the top stones (copes, in the trade), which give the top of the wall a solidity if they are laid tightly. Stepping back from time to time to view what you have just built is vital. One badly positioned stone can take a lot of work to get the wall back to looking good – perhaps something to learn about life in general there? All that holds the wall together is gravity and friction; the “dry” doesn’t refer to the lack of rain but the absence of mortar.



But where do I fit into all this, as someone who has spent the last 35 years at a desk proofreading chemistry books? A brief introduction to walling many years ago with the National Trust showed me how not to build a dry stone wall – it is more complicated than it might seem. It was moving to a wreck in the area a few years ago that meant I had to learn. Courses with the Dry Stone Walling Association (highly recommended, see <https://www.dswa.org.uk/>) and many walls of our own, both to mend and to build from scratch, has given me the chance to learn and practise. Our new home now has complete boundary walls, the garden has structure and the sloping site is held together with retaining walls. And I am probably stronger than I have been for years!



*Tim Jackson*

*Tim will be remembered by Nenthead congregation, but now lives over the Moor in the next parish.*



“It’s good therapy. It’s the type of job that is good for your soul”, said the professional waller Eric Landman who built this in memory of his wife.

**Be patient with geologists — they all have their faults.**



And they’re actually quite gneiss!



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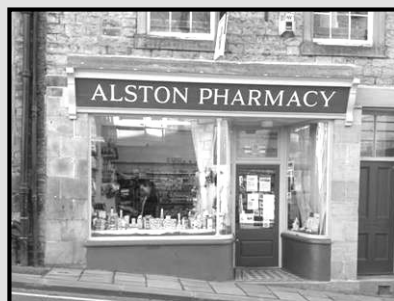
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☎ 07597 639314 ✉ [dave@revmilner.plus.com](mailto:dave@revmilner.plus.com)



**Lay Pastoral Worker:** Dean Lawson Phone: 07897 736024

Email: [laypastor@penrithmethodist.co.uk](mailto:laypastor@penrithmethodist.co.uk)

**Church Steward:** Mr John de la Mare ☎ 07802 709320

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### ROMAN CATHOLIC

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

**Deacons;** Rev. Charlie Conner, Rev. David Greaves

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**Local Contact:** Anne & Paul Parkin ☎ 01434 381704

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### QUAKERS

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Kate Webb ☎ 01434 381562 ✉ [kate.webb@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kate.webb@yahoo.co.uk)



### CHURCH OF ENGLAND

**Vicar:** the Revd Mark Nash-Williams *(usual day off: Monday)*

The Parsonage, Brampton Road, Alston, Cumbria CA9 3AA

☎ 01434 382558 ✉ [vicar@alstonmoorcofe.org.uk](mailto:vicar@alstonmoorcofe.org.uk)



**Churchwardens:**



**Alston** Andy Morsman 07375 905246

**Garrigill** Vacant – contact one of the other Wardens

**Kirkhaugh** Richard Graham 381367

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## Methodist Services



All services at 11.00 am in St Wulstan's, unless otherwise stated.

4<sup>th</sup> Rev Mary Elliot

5 pm Pennine Praise at the Hive, Nenthead

11<sup>th</sup> No service at St Wulstan's. 11 am Ecumenical Christian Aid Service  
at St Augustine's with Holy Communion

18<sup>th</sup> Rev Alex Dunstan

25<sup>th</sup> Janet Robinson

## Quaker Meeting for Worship



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

**And SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH: 6.30 – 7.30pm**  
**14<sup>th</sup> MAY, 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE, 9<sup>th</sup> JULY, 13<sup>th</sup> AUGUST, 10<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER**

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

## Roman Catholic Mass



St Wulstan's, Kings Arms Lane, Alston, CA9 3JF  
Mass every Saturday as usual at 6.00pm  
with confessions available from 5.30pm

## Ecumenical Service at Grisedale Croft

A relaxed, informal service, on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 1.30 pm



# Church of England services & events



## Worship and Prayer in May

### **Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> May** (*1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in the month*):

9.30 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Holy Paraclete, Kirkhaugh
11.00am	Sung Communion	St Augustine, Alston (& livestream)

### **Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> May** (*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in the month*):

9.30am	Morning Prayer	St John, Nenthead
11.00am	<b>Christian Aid Service (HC)</b>	St Augustine, Alston (& livestream)
3.00pm	<b>Blessing of the Lambs</b>	St Jude, Knaresdale

### **Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> May** (*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in the month*):

9.30am	Morning Prayer	St John, Nenthead
11.00am	Sung Communion	St Augustine, Alston (& livestream)
3.00pm	<b>Blessing of Lambs or Communion (t.b.c.)</b>	St John, Garrigill
6.00pm	Evensong (BCP)	Holy Paraclete, Kirkhaugh

### **Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> May** (*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month*):

9.30am	Holy Communion	St John, Nenthead
11.00am	Prayer & Praise	St Augustine, Alston (& livestream)
3.00pm	<b>'Taizé comes to Lambley'</b>	Ss Mary & Patrick, Lambley

### **Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> May** (*Ascension Day*):

6.00pm	<b>Holy Communion</b>	St Augustine, Alston (& livestream)
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## Regular Weekday services

### **Morning, Evening & Night Prayer (not 28<sup>th</sup> April – 9<sup>th</sup> May)**

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

### **Informal Holy Communion**

- Every Thursday, 12 noon Chat Room, Alston

## 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](https://youtube.com/@AlstonMoorParishChurches)
- Download the orders of service from [alstonmoorcofe.org.uk/worship](https://alstonmoorcofe.org.uk/worship) and the notice sheet from [alstonmoorcofe.org.uk/whatson](https://alstonmoorcofe.org.uk/whatson)

## 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](mailto:pray@alstonmoorcofe.org.uk)

Light a candle at [churchofengland.org/our-faith/light-candle](https://churchofengland.org/our-faith/light-candle) or in any of our parish churches

## Ways to support your parish churches financially

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



## May Dates for your Diary (subject to change)

Wed 14<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm    **Annual Meeting (APCM)**    *Chat Room, Alston*  
Sun 18<sup>th</sup>, 10am-3pm    **Coffee Shop**    *Garrigill VH*  
Sat 31<sup>st</sup>, 10am    **St Jude's Coffee Stop**    *Knaresdale w Kirkhaugh VH*

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## Beauty Underground

In 2016 I was fortunate enough to visit Antelope Canyon in Arizona. The canyon is part of the Lake Powell Navajo Tribal Park and reaches approximately 120 feet below ground. The Navajo people call the lower canyon that I visited 'Hazdistazí, or 'spiral rock arches'. From above it looks unremarkable, just a deep crack in the ground (see right),

but as you descend the ladders into the canyon you find yourself somewhere that can only be described as other-worldly.



It's not an easy hike, boulders must be climbed over and narrow pathways and ladders wind you through the canyon, the blue sky visible above you. The rocks that tower above you display staggeringly beautiful colours due to weathering and the presence of minerals such as quartz sands and iron oxides.

I'm not ashamed to say that I cried at the sight, the majesty and beauty completely overwhelmed me. The extravagance of God's creation astounds me; there is even beauty to be found underground!

It's at the top of my list to visit this special place again one day.





It may surprise you to know that these photographs are vastly out of date as Antelope Canyon is in a constant state of change due to being constantly altered by the forces of nature.

*Kim Deacon*

Kim has just joined our editorial team: We hope this picture of her in a deep hole in the ground isn't a reflection on that!



## **Hard as Rock?** **Some unexpected** **qualities of Stone**



We tend to think of stone as hard, perhaps dull and grey, but the Travertine marble used in the Abbey of S. Antimo in Tuscany, Italy, has a translucence which almost makes it appear that the stone is lit from within. The interior of the Abbey is bathed in light. Visitors are welcome to attend the daily offices as they are chanted by the monks there. If you are ever fortunate enough to experience that, it really does feel like a foretaste of Heaven.



Imagine the skill required to represent the softness of flesh using the hardness of marble. It seems impossible, but the Italian baroque sculptor, Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) possessed that skill in abundance, as his work "*The Abduction of Proserpine*" shows.

Sculptures or effigies of sleeping (or dead) children, such as this example from the Bowes Museum, can also manage to portray softness, despite the hardness of the medium used.



But perhaps the most striking and moving marble image I know combines both that impression of softness and the translucent qualities of the marble. The *Cristo Velato* or *Veiled Christ*, in the Sansevero Chapel in Naples, Italy, represents the body of the dead Christ, covered with a veil so convincingly portrayed that you feel it would slide off like a tablecloth if you pulled it. Unbelievably, the entire work was sculpted from a single block of marble.

Image Wikimedia –  
David Sivyier

The commission, carried out in 1753 by the Neapolitan sculptor



Giuseppe Sanmartino, was to produce "a marble statue sculpted with the greatest realism, representing Our Lord Jesus Christ in death, covered by a transparent shroud carved from the same block of stone as the statue." The shroud covers, but does not conceal, the form of the body beneath it, and the sculptor has used the translucent qualities of the marble such that the face and limbs of the figure are visible as if seen through a cloth veil and the pain and suffering which Christ had endured are clearly visible. I find it impossible not to be moved by the image.

ES

# Pepin's Puzzles

Our beautiful cathedral churches are sometimes regarded as **Poems in Stone**

See if you can name those shown here. Some letters are given to help! Which is featured twice?



1 \*or\*sm\*\*\*h  
2 St G\*\*\*\* Edinburgh  
3 K\*\*K\*\*\*\* Orkney  
4 \*or \* M\*\*\*\*\*r  
5 Y\*\*\* \*\*st\*\*



6 \*\*lsb\*\*y  
7 \*x\*t\*\*  
8 \*och\*\*\*er  
9 \*inc\*\*\*n  
10 \*\*y

Photos all my own

Several villages in the UK are named simply as STONE and there are also several places called B\*SH\*PSTONE or K\*NGSTONE. Here are a few

M\*\*DST\*N\* (County Town of Kent) F\*LK\*ST\*N\* (Ferry Port in Kent)  
(Lighthouse) ST\*N\*H\*V\*N (Scotland) G\*\*DN\*ST\*N\* also in Kent

Find the four sayings in the grid, each starting with the words in the first column

People who live	don't	a stone's throw	the first stone
In searching	is without	should not	of her parents
She lives	in glass houses	sin may cast	stone unturned
The one who	within	leave a	throw stones

**Answers:** 1 Portsmouth 2 St Giles Edinburgh 3 Kirkwall Orkney 4 and 5 York Minster  
6 Salisbury 7 Exeter 8 Rochester 9 Lincoln 10 Ely

**Sayings:** People who live in glass houses should not throw stones, In searching don't leave one stone unturned, She lives within a stone's throw of her parents, The one who is without sin may cast the first stone.

**Places:** Maidstone, Folkestone, Eddystone, Goodnestone, Stonehaven, Silverstone, Stonebridge

David Pepin

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## The Eloquence of Sculpture

Sculpture speaks from the heart and mind - to the heart and mind, declaring and receiving; beauty, sensitivities, philosophies and love: sculpture becomes tangible poetry. As a child Josefina de Vasconcellos who modelled with clay from the age of three, was encouraged artistically by her father Hippolyto Hermes de Vasconcellos, Roman Catholic and Brazilian diplomat and her mother Freda Coleman, Quaker and actress. Hippolyto introduced her to a Mancunian stonemason who gave her well-worn carving tools. From these specific beginnings and studying at esteemed academies Josefina became a prolific sculptor of world-renown, in stone, bronze, clay, !lead! and Perspex, and the first women to be elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Sculptors,

Ps 139, 9-10

FRBS:1944.



Josefina and her husband Delmar Banner - artist and lay Anglican preacher - from their stone farmhouse in Langdale, became adoptive parents to two sons Billy and Brian whom she sculpted as 'Boys Wrestling' – as they do! Josefina had an acknowledged affection for children and a deep

concern for those disadvantaged - her most successful innovation 'a textured carpet for blind child dancers'. Her sculpture 'Mary and Child' came from a project with schoolchildren at St Paul's Cathedral.

The concern she had for disadvantaged culminated in her work 'Weight of our Sins': 1999. "It centres on a cross which eight children are holding up. They are bearing its weight, and each is symbolic of a crime against children."



This work went on pilgrimage from Kendal in Cumbria to St Martin-in-the-Fields in London to mark the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Child. Its permanent home is in the Bishop's Palace Garden, Wells, Somerset. Josefina was awarded the MBE for these, her services to young people in 1985.



Her lifetime 1904 – 2005 spanned two world wars. The story of a woman who had walked across Europe to find her husband after the Second World War prompted her sculpture ‘Reunion’ – now placed at the Department of Peace Studies at Bradford University. However, ‘- on completing the work, Josefina realised that the newspaper account could include ‘the reunion of nations after they had been fighting’. *Paul Maddocks*. Her empathetic ‘Reunion’ was renamed ‘Reconciliation’ to be replicated in bronze and realise a global presence – on the site of the destroyed Coventry Cathedral: 1995, – In ‘The Peace Garden’ of Horishima also 1995, – At the site of the Berlin Wall: 1999 - here the figures arch over a bible encircled with barbed wire, – and most recently Stormont: 2000, unveiled by Josefina herself at the age of 96. A sculpture to remind us that the human heart needs a worldwide embrace – Josephina’s eloquent bequest.



*MH*

## Stories in Stone

Our history is known and told through stories both written down and oral, allowing us to learn of life even in the long-past times of the ancient civilizations. But what of the times when there were no humans to witness and record events? These events are told through the fossil record - traces or remains of long-dead plants and animals which are preserved in stone. Their presence in a particular geological layer gives us a time reference and the fossils themselves allow us to infer the size and appearance of the original living organism. Here the stones are the stories, revealing the fantastic dinosaurs of the Mesozoic Era (252 to 66 million years ago) but also smaller creatures such as

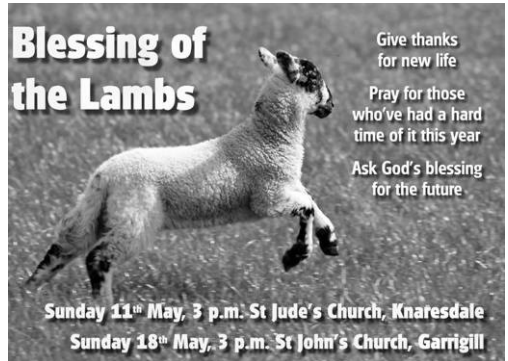


the Gryphae (pictured left), a type of oyster which has existed in one form or another for over 250 million years and is still found today. Can you find the location of the fossilized tracks on Front Street shown in the picture on the right?

*Dave Smith*

## News from St Jude's

I hope you have all enjoyed the Easter Break. The weather started off great and on a gorgeous Easter Morning we had a good congregation in good voice, a joyful start to the day. The next church service on the 11th May at 3pm when Rev Mark will be blessing the lambs.



The date of May Coffee Stop is May 31<sup>st</sup>. I always mention the Coffee Stop because it has become such an important event. So I'm going to take this opportunity to give a big **thank you**. To all the ladies in the kitchen, it can be a bit hectic at times but I know they just love it. Everyone who helps on the craft and book table which includes sales of produce and then towards the end of the morning selling off the surplus cakes, which sell (like hot cakes). Everyone who puts out the tables and chairs and making everything ready, mostly our men here, they are such a fantastic help. The ladies who make you welcome and take your money for raffle tickets and entrance at the door. The people who bring fab raffle prizes. And the person who calls the raffle numbers and makes a joke about it. Most importantly everyone who bakes such fabulous cakes, and of course everyone who supports this event. I haven't mentioned any names but I think you know who I mean, the lady who bakes, brings the boxes with tea, coffee, milk, sugar, of various kinds to suit all tastes, banks the money pays for the hall etc etc. organises everything. She needs a special thank you. Hope I haven't missed anyone out, but you are all amazing.

Saint Jude's Church is in a poor state of repair, so a huge effort is being made to address this, applying for grants and encouraging giving even a pound or two, sponsoring a tile or pane of glass, when you can. It all mounts up. Slaggyford WI Invited five other local WIs and five ladies from the Executive to an afternoon tea with entertainment, a great foot tapping time was had by all. If you would like to see what they do, their AGM is on 6th May at 7pm; you would be made most welcome.

That's all for this month folks. Stay safe and look after each other in this crazy world!

God Bless

*Irene Boyles*

# More Time and Space for Silence

## News from the Quaker Meeting House



In 1656, whilst he was imprisoned in Cornwall for his beliefs, George Fox, one of the founders of the Quakers, wrote the following to the early Quakers; *'Walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone'*

Now we are heading into spring, it seems a good time to update everyone on what is going on at Alston's Quaker Meeting House, more correctly known as *'The Society of Friends'*. No doubt many of you are familiar with the small stone building at the top of the hill; but I suspect there are some in Alston who have never come through the front door, though maybe wanting to do so even out of pure curiosity. What does go on inside that venerable building - now coming up to its 300th birthday - could best be described as an oasis of calm within our often frantic and troubled world, something that is much needed now.

Firstly, I want to state things that you will *not find* in a Quaker meeting. There are no religious artefacts, although we do have a poster which says simply, *'Thou Shalt... Believe what you want.'* There are no ministers or priests; all are encouraged to speak, or minister, to the others attending, should they feel the impulse to do so. There are no hymn books or prayer books, nor is there a 'creed' laying down what we should believe; we do have one book, *'Quaker Faith and Practice'*, which is a discourse on Quakerism since its inception in 1652 and the testimonies of many Quakers from that point to the present day. It is laid on the table in the centre of the meeting, should anyone wish to read it during meeting.

This is what you *will find* in Quaker Meeting; a genuine welcome for all, regardless of age, race, sexual orientation or religious beliefs, or indeed if they have none. Everyone will sit in silence when the Meeting begins and this intense and thoughtful silence will only be interrupted if someone wishes to speak, or to read some item or poetry that seems relevant to the beliefs which uphold Quakerism; these are ***Sustainability, Truth, Equality, Peace and Simplicity*** ( which I use the word 'STEPS' to remember). Being silent and still for any length of time may sound daunting but I can honestly say that I have found, as William Penn did in 1699, that *'True silence is the rest of the mind; and it is to the spirit what sleep is to the body; nourishment and refreshment.'*

In the silence we seek what the Quakers call the *'Light'* within each one of us and to discern how it is guiding our life. For us, God is not something remote or distant or outside of ourselves; the Light, or God, or Gods, or the Divine, or the Spirit is present inside each of us and the whole of creation. What term a person

uses to describe their connection to that which is bigger than themselves is a matter for their own discernment, and all beliefs or faiths are respected. After the allotted Meeting time has elapsed – usually an hour – then everyone shakes hands and then we have a good chitchat over refreshments.

So, to speak the ‘*Truth*’ about our Quaker Meeting at Alston, I need to speak of its ‘*Sustainability*’. It is a fact that many people only find the Quaker Way as mature or even elderly adults – perhaps having discarded other spiritual paths along their life’s journey; that was certainly true in my case. We at Alston are the smallest ‘*Local Meeting*’ by far in the ‘*Cumberland Area Meeting*’ of six Local Meetings; we are heartened that we have an increasing number of others who come to join us each month; although a well-attended Meeting may still be a dozen or less. Many of our Alston Members are undeniably getting on in years and it is our dearest hope that we can see the Meeting attract some newcomers, who will find that our gentle, peaceful and reflective way of worshipping is the right path for their own spiritual journey - or maybe just part of it; many people who attend Quaker Meetings also regularly attend other churches, chapels or places of worship. Basically, unless the meeting does grow then after almost 300 years of presence in Alston, the ‘*Quaker Light*’ will inevitably be extinguished; that is a most painful truth.

In an effort to attract more to come and experience Quakerism for themselves, we are adding a further Meeting for Worship over the summer months. This will be on the **SECOND WEDNESDAY EVENING** of the month, from 6.30 – 7.30, for the months of APRIL - SEPTEMBER inclusive. This, we hope, will give an opportunity for those who have work commitments through the week, or family or religious commitments on a Sunday, to come and join us and find out for themselves the reality of Quakerism; we will be making it as ‘newcomer’ friendly as possible! We will have only half an hour of silent worship and the rest will be spent discussing or explaining any queries newcomers may have and, of course, refreshments for all.

So, in summary –

- Our regular, all year Meetings for Worship will continue on the **FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH: 10.30 – 11.30am** throughout the year.
- Our additional meetings on the **SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH: 6.30 – 7.30pm** will take place on –
  - **9<sup>th</sup> APRIL 14<sup>th</sup> MAY 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 9<sup>th</sup> JULY 13<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 10<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER**

You will be warmly welcomed if you could join us on any of these dates.

*Antony Christie and Carol Graham; Co-Convenors, Alston Meeting.*

## 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*



June Theme: 'Air'

Deadline: **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May**

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## A Myth with a Grain of Truth?

### Geoffrey of Monmouth and the 'Bluestones' of Stonehenge



Speculation about the origins of Stonehenge stretches back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century writer Geoffrey of Monmouth. According to Geoffrey, Stonehenge originated in the 460s AD as a monument to commemorate British aristocrats murdered whilst parlaying with King Hengist. At Merlin's suggestion, the monument was built out of a pre-existing stone circle in the mountains of Killaraus in Ireland which had been erected by giants for its healing powers. Taking an army of 15,000 men Merlin and Uther Pendragon defeated an Irish army to capture the circle, dismantle it and ship it back to England to set up on Salisbury Plain.

Much of this can be rapidly dismantled as blatantly wrong; crucially the first stage of construction at Stonehenge took place nearly 3,500 years earlier (c.2950BC), and none of the stones involved come from Ireland, not to mention the non-existence of giants. However, recent geological work has pinpointed individual quarry sites associated with the 'Bluestones' of Stonehenge on the Preseli ridge in Pembrokeshire. The name 'Bluestones' covers almost all the non-local stones at Stonehenge, not to be confused with the far larger and distinctive 'trilithons' which are made of (more) local stones. It is possible that Geoffrey conflated South Wales and Ireland due to their strong political and religious ties in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, suggesting the possibility that the 'Bluestones' could actually be from a dismantled previous stone circle in the vicinity of the quarries in South Wales (although not built by giants!).



I was involved last summer in the long-running project excavating Neolithic quarry sites which are geologically 'matched' to specific 'bluestones' whilst also excavating early Neolithic monuments in the area – ultimately hoping to identify a dismantled stone circle. Results currently look fairly promising,

but I can't say too much ahead of future excavations and the full publication...

*Wilf Bazley (with thanks to Prof. Mike Parker Pearson)*



Thank you to Michael Hanley for this drone image of Alston: headstones, capstones, cobblestones and setts.



Alston was sometimes spelled as “Aldstone”, probably because it was misinterpreted as “Ald+Stone” (old stone), rather than the “Alds-ton” we get from the real etymology. The town is first recorded in 1164-1171 as “Aldeneby”, a clearly Norse (Viking) name that probably comes from something like “Halfdansby”, meaning “Halfdan’s settlement”. “Halfdan” was primarily an Eastern Norse (Danish and Swedish) name, literally “Half Dane”.

Information by Ryan Starkey, an Alstonian etymologist now working in Hanoi.  
<https://starkeycomics.com>