

PARISH CALENDAR 2023

AUGUST			EVENT	SIDESMEN/ WOMEN	ALTAR FLOWERS	CHURCH CLEANERS
6th	Trinity IX	11.15 am	Revd. Anne Hardarce	Mrs P. McFall	Anya Wallace	Mr I. & Mrs L. Walton
13th	Trinity X	11.15 am	Chris Hegg	Mr I. Walton	C.Lee	Mr P. & Mrs M. Mercer
20th	Trinity XI	11.15 am	Revd. Anne Hardarce	Mr B & Mrs B. Lewis	Anne Chadwick	Mrs P. McFall & Mrs M.Roskell
23rd	Wednesday	10.30 am	Coffee Club	Village Hall		
27th	Trinity XII	11.15am	Chris Hegg	Mr A. & Mrs K. Herron	TBA	Mr N. & Mrs A. Wallace

SEPTEMBER

3rd	Trinity XIII	11.15 am	Revd. Anne Hardarce	Mrs P. McFall	Olivia Assheton	Mr B & Mrs B. Lewis
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THE PARISH CHURCH OF St LEONARD IS MOST GRATEFUL TO THE
INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS
THAT SPONSOR THE PARISH NEWSLETTER

OUR PRIEST IN CHARGE

Vacancy

OUR CHURCH WARDENS

The Hon RC Assheton 07817 634392 = Mrs P McFall 441484 = Mr Walton 07979 598 057

DOWNHAM VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chairman Mr Neil Wallace —441196
Hon Secretary Mrs Clare Ashworth —445112
Village Hall Bookings —info@downhamvillagehall.org.uk .

Downham Social Media Resources

The public Facebook page -
"Downham Village"
The private Facebook page
"Downham & Twiston Residents"

CHURCH RESOURCES

Morning Prayer for Clitheroe, Chatburn and Downham is streamed on Youtube Monday -Saturday. Access it via St. Mary Magdalene' Facebook page or via the link on the website site

PARISH OF ST. LEONARD

DOWNHAM & TWISTON

newsletter

2023 Issue 6 August



www.downhamvillage.org.uk

A Challenge for August - From Chris Hegg

*"But those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint."
(Isaiah 40, verse 31)*

My wife and I gain much pleasure from our small collection of tropical hibiscus in our greenhouse and this year I thought I would add to our collection by buying two hundred seeds. However, only six germinated and one of those soon gave up the fight for life. Nevertheless, the five remaining plants are thriving and we can't wait to see what colour flowers they will produce.

In many ways my experience with those seeds mirrors the experience of Christians trying to spread the Gospel in this country: they find that many people just aren't interested, while others express a passing interest only to quickly fall away. As Christians it is our joy and duty to spread the hope that lives within us and to witness the transforming effect of our faith in Jesus, but it can be quite a challenge to get others to take any notice. Contrary to what is often assumed, it isn't that most people have rejected the Gospel message but rather that they have never really heard it. The Gospel message is, at its heart, a simple one about joy and hope and it can transform the lives of all who hear and believe it.

So, here's a challenge to everyone in Downham ... if you have doubts, if you think Christianity is irrelevant or just plain dangerous, or if you think that God really doesn't exist, then why not come to St. Leonard's one Sunday morning (11-15am). You'll be most welcome and we'd love to hear your thoughts on faith, the church and us Christians! What do you have to lose?

Chris in an Ordinand in the Church of England and can be contacted at chris.hegg@outlook.com. He is currently helping us until a new Vicar is appointed and leads our services on every other Sunday.

IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

Friends neighbours who have been unwell or who are in hospital at this time



TOM McLEAN - AN APPRECIATION

Tom was a dear friend and neighbour to everyone in the parishes of Rimington, Twiston and Downham. His funeral, beautifully conducted by Andy Froud on 23rd May, was jam packed with the many people who wanted to acknowledge his friendship, wonderful and quirky humour and exceptional contribution to parish and charity life over so many years. His devoted family – Zoe, Dan, Melanie and Ethan would like to, once again, thank everyone who supported him and were part of the service and all the arrangements.

We celebrated and mourned Tom, for many years proud and meticulous Editor of this newsletter, and more importantly for his devotion to his family, and groundbreaking work at Calderstones, Crossroads, and Integrate. They were highlighted at the service at St Leonard's Church and afterwards at Downham Village Hall.

Tom didn't want an official Eulogy in church, so the family got round that one by offering Tributes; very moving ones from Zoe and Dan. Never mawkish and often funny, just as he would have wanted, with bunting left up from the Coronation in the Village Hall as the family wished. And then we had Bernard Gething's neighbourly recollections – which made us all laugh mostly and cry sometimes. And so, Tom, my most respected Editor and friend, am going to be very naughty and circumvent your wishes yet again, with an 'Appreciation'. Hah! Got you on semantics. You'd like that.

With love OA.

Tom Mclean Beloved Dad, Uncle, Brother, Grandad, and much-missed friend

Tom dedicated his life and career to the support of others. To quote nephew Dan: "He has no doubt built a place in a lot of people's lives, memories and affections. We have heard him described most frequently as a lovely man, also "generous, unselfish, supportive, dedicated, interested, cultured, intrigued."

After National Service, Tom trained in Horticulture which led to a lifelong appreciation of gardens and gardening but he followed his father into nursing and worked tirelessly with, and for, people with learning disabilities - championing them to be independent and live their own lives. Tom dedicated his life and career to the support of others and within the community, he was deeply involved in the Village Hall, Garden Club, History Group and the Downham Banner project as well as being a long serving Secretary to the PCC and volunteer with Crossroads and Integrate.

Tom's daughter, Zoe, says "He helped create a switch in thinking that people with a learning disability should live full lives. Many people who had spent most of their lives in institutions were now able to be in a proper house with the support that suited them. I have been overwhelmed by the tributes from Dad's work life. He has been described as a breath of fresh air, ahead of his time, and fully committed to the rights of disabled people. His compassion is what most people know him for, not only as a Christian but as a fully decent human being."

"He asked for no Eulogy. This is Dad at his most humble and modest best. All of us here today have our own memories of Tom and what he meant to us. I will miss the loving, generous, reliable and often hilarious Dad he was to me."

We will all miss Tom, his wonderful sense of humour. That lifted eyebrow as he said something that you suddenly realised a few moments later was outrageously funny. And his kindness, his neighbourliness and compassion. As Dan said at the funeral: "When I face challenges, I often think what would Tom do? And how can I be more Tom?"

Let's all remember him with his most popular family phrase. 'White Wine Doesn't Count!'
Cheers Tom!

DOWNHAM RUSH - BEARING FETE DOWNHAM NEWSLETTER

+ + +

DOWNHAM RUSH-BEARING.—The simple relics of Downham Rush-Bearing fête were gathered up as "fragments that remain" yesterday evening (July 15th). The village children made a house to house call to solicit gifts of pence, which, when paid into the treasury towards the end of the day, was spent in whatever good things the amount might suggest it wise to purchase. And these were divided into prizes for foot-races and other games until the stock was exhausted.

It is rather odd, I think, that Downham Rush-Bearing should fall on St. Swithin's Day. However good St. Swithin might have been when he was Bishop of Winchester, the day of "his translation," they say, has been ever since, a rather ominous one as regards the weather. And yesterday proved to be no exception to that saying, as there was sufficient rain to make an alloy to such enjoyments.

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School Report.

We have received the "Report" on the Examination of the school last month, from the "Education Department" from which we take the following extract:—

"On the whole the School is successfully taught, and has passed a good Examination. In the Elementary Subjects the scholars do accurate work. Order is good"

The School re-opened on Monday, the 21st inst.

Parish Perambulations

Vestiges of an ancient tradition are still observed in many parishes within the kingdom. Often referred to as 'Beating of the Bounds', walking a parish boundary forms an annual ritual that goes back over 2000 years with rituals linked to the Romano-British- Celtic god "Terminus". Could this be why certain places at a Parish Boundary, e.g. Ings End, are so named?

Terminus stones were placed to mark boundaries along with other man-made creations such as hedges, roads and dykes. In other places natural features such as trees and rivers marked a boundary.

After the fall of Rome in the West, the communal custom of invoking divine providence to ensure a healthy crop and ensuring land boundaries were protected and developed into the early Medieval ritual of "Rogation-tide". Its Latin root 'rogare' meaning to beseech (to earnestly request protection). 'Rogation Week' happened around Whitsuntide and may also be connected with the ancient tradition of 'well dressing' as both healthy soil and water are vital for communal well-being.

The process of confirming parish boundaries had important community and legal aspects; the annual inspection was recorded and used in legal documents regarding land transactions. The communal aspect of this was important; young and old walked together so that important folk memories could be maintained. In early days, the memory of an important geographical fact was accompanied by banging the head of a younger participant on a boundary stone. Green birch and willow branches were also used to beat both the boundary and participants as a painful mnemonic. Thankfully, more enlightened methods of imprinting memories were later used including the recital of Psalms 103 and 104 along the boundary walk.

As with other folk practices, Oliver Cromwell banned the ritual but many parishes re-introduced the custom with the Restoration of the Crown. The identification of a Parish remained important as local welfare payments, medical treatment, education and Church burials were all linked to the maintained boundaries.

Whilst the Enclosure Acts, industrialisation and urban growth disconnected many from the land, vestiges of this ancient tradition can still be observed in more traditional parishes, especially where land-holding remained more homogeneous.

JA



ANNOUNCEMENT

We are pleased to announce that the Revd. Dr. Judith Clark has been appointed as the next Vicar of Clitheroe, Chatburn and Downham, subject to the usual safer recruitment checks. Judith is currently serving as an Associate Priest in St Peter's Church Harrogate in the Diocese of Leeds.

Please do pray for Judith as she prepares to take up her post. The Bishop of Blackburn will institute, and the Archdeacon of Blackburn will induct Judith on Sunday 19th November 2023 at 7pm at St Marys Church, Clitheroe. The Revd. Judith has provided a short bio to introduce herself

"I am delighted that I shall be joining you in the Autumn as Vicar of the benefice of Clitheroe, Downham and Chatburn. I grew up in Lancashire, firstly in Burnley and then in the Ribble Valley and attended Moorland School in Clitheroe for my secondary education, so I really do feel as if I am coming home and I can't wait to serve the people, communities and area. I very much look forward with much joy to meeting you all.

I trained for ministry at Ripon College Cuddesdon before serving the majority of my curacy at The Minster and Parish Church of St Peter-at-Leeds. In September 2022 I started working at St Peter's Church in Harrogate. When my curacy ended, I stayed on as Associate Priest (SSM). Throughout my training I studied for a Dphil (PhD) through Oriol College at The University of Oxford. My thesis focuses on the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, a liturgical document that was discovered amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls and dates from the Second Temple Period. As part of my degree I spent four months living and working in Jerusalem which was an excellent opportunity and a wonderful experience.

The two years before I started ordination training were spent working as a Pastoral Assistant for the Joint Benefice of St Michael and All Angels, Beckwithshaw and St. Robert of Knaresborough Pannal. Prior to this, I was reading for my Undergraduate Degree in Religions & Theology, followed by my M.A Degree in Biblical Studies, both from The University of Manchester."

375 Years Ago This Month...

On August 16th 1648, Downham's Sir John Assheton, leader of the Lancashire Militia, attended a Council of War at Gisburn with Lieutenant General Oliver Cromwell of the New Model Army and Major General Lambert of the Northern Parliamentary army. This was in preparation against the 'Engager' Royalist forces, who had moved down from Scotland, to draw their swords and unleash their muskets and canons at the Battle of Preston.

Folklore created after the Civil War and eventual Restoration suggests that the Parliamentary forces were responsible for the destruction of the stained-glass windows in many of the local churches of Ribblesdale and Craven. However, research by Robert Whiting, discussed by John and Philip Dixon, dispute this claim and lay the blame of ecclesiastical vandalism on Protestant iconoclasts some 60 years prior to the fateful Council of War. Even four centuries ago, political propaganda and a culture of victimhood and blame, in order to claim compensation, appeared to be rife.

As for the Parliamentary military trek, the logistics of transporting 9000 battle-weary troops and heavy artillery from Yorkshire to Lancashire was impressive – a pace of 15 miles a day from Otley to Preston, via Skipton and Clitheroe.

On the evening of 16th August, Cromwell slept at Stonyhurst, a hall then owned by the Catholic Shireburn family. As a back-handed compliment, the future Lord Protector recalled it as the finest 'half-built house' in the land. As a cautious soldier, perhaps wary of assassination by his Papist recusant host, the Puritan refused the comfort of a bed and slept, in his armour, on an oak refectory table. This famous piece of furniture can still be seen today in the 'Top Ref' of Stonyhurst College with a brass plaque to attest to Cromwell's resting place for the night.

JA



Newsletter

Tom McLean’s death was a shock and sadness to all who knew him. You can read a tribute to him on Page 2. Tom ‘retired’ as Editor several years ago and we all thought that he had handed over all his responsibilities, but Tom (being Tom) had quietly continued to do all sorts of things; getting contributions, editing, arranging the printing, distribution, and basically everything else. As always - behind the scenes.

The PCC, because it pays for printing and sorts out sponsorship etc, now needs to look at all aspects of the newsletter and would welcome feedback from readers and all residents for its future direction. Would you like a digital version of newsletter by email as pdf maybe?

This edition mainly follows our time-honoured format, but please forgive any gaps or glitches, as we adjust to a new regime! Let’s welcome our new editor Jacqui Shepherd:
jax.shepherd@gmail.com

Initial thoughts for the future are to retain a mix of Parish and local news/events and information, with a limited religious content and general contributions, to hopefully reflect the views and issues of people who live in Downham and Twiston.

Sheep

The sheep have been quietly grazing the Churchyard once more. One (possibly with an eye to the current actors strike in Hollywood) has taken to copying Steve McQueen in attempting to leap the electric fencing! I’m not sure if one is allowed to put sheep in solitary confinement as a punishment for escape attempts....



West Lane Farmhouse

Frustratingly the unsettled weather has slowed reroofing works at Laneside, but a start has been made. Interestingly it looks as if the present has lasted since the house was built in the 19th century. The “grey” slates had been fixed to the latts with iron nails (unlike Top Row where lead nails were used). This is almost certainly because the grey slates are much bigger and heavier than “Burlingtons” used at Top Row, and lead nails would not have been strong enough. The larger old timbers show signs of being worked with an adze whilst the smaller sections of wood are from bent (presumably local) hardwood. Much of the timber (certainly all the larger beams) are being reused, so the carbon in them should remain “locked in” for another century.

Rainfall

Despite the gloomy weather of late we have had almost exactly the average amount of rainfall for the first half of the year 19.80 inches as against 19.10 inches (as at 15th July).

RA

**Stage Two Downham
Educating Rita July**

It was something of a first for Stage Two Downham, as they hosted a summer production of Educating Rita by Willy Russell. Perhaps made famous by the film, the play is somewhat different, as it focusses solely on the 2 key roles in the single setting of a tutor’s office; something of a challenge for any acting duo in a 2 hr plus dialogue. In keeping with the summer setting, another first was the sales of Prosecco and ice cream, that proved very popular. Whilst the wet and windy weather could not confirm that summer was upon us, the atmosphere in the Hall was bubbly as the audience settled down to enjoy the tour de force that was our first summer play. The following is a review of our production of Educating Rita:

In trepidation, Stage Two approached their first summer production. Richard Hubbard as Dr Frank Bryant and Jen Whiteside as Rita White rose to the challenge and a wonderful production of Educating Rita by Willy Russell was achieved. Many people will remember the 80s film with Michael Caine and Julie Walters. Frank, an alcoholic lecturer at a university becomes fascinated by Rita's determination to discover her true self and achieve academic success despite being an unhappily married hairdresser.

Richard brought to the character a mixture of aggression, dislike, sympathy and humour whilst Jen, as Rita, with her Liverpoolian accent, showed a compassion for her tutor, a determination to succeed and a belief in herself, which was second to none.

Richard and Jen directed the play, but no production would happen without the backstage crew and it is thanks to them all that this production changed from 'in trepidation' to a huge success, which could compete with any professional production.
 Well Done!

Hedgerow ‘Arry



The hedgerows and lanes around the parish are brimming with greenery, helped by the English summer monsoon and gentle temperatures. The cherries have started to drop their bounty and the nascent elderberries, damsons and greengages look promising.

The brook side in the village is resplendent with meadowsweet that is a boon for local wildlife. Another welcome addition are self-seeded teasels, much beloved of our local bees. The spiky cones are a reminder of our historic textile production, once an important local cottage industry before the advent of machinery in the dark satanic mills of our local towns.

Before the factories came with their metal processing spikes, dried teasels were set onto makeshift frames and pulled across the cloth, thus raising the nap on the hand-woven textiles. In Roman times, the dried skin of a hedgehog was used for this purpose. Teasels are biennial, so it can be a mystery and delight where they might next appear. Although they can make lovely (if somewhat spiky) dried flower arrangement, please spare a thought for the local goldfinches who feast on the seeds in autumn.

