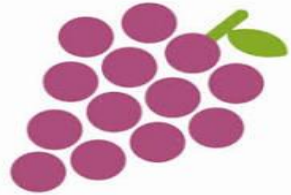


REACHING OUT

from the Cockfield Benefice

Parish Churches serving the villages of:

Bradfield St Clare, Bradfield St George w
Lt Whelnetham, Bradfield Combust,
Cockfield, Felsham, Gedding,
Gt Whelnetham & Stanningfield



October 2025
Issue 130

From the Rector's desk:

We are now in harvest season - when we give thanks in our churches for the harvest and for God's creation. These last couple of weeks I have seen fields around my house being ploughed and then drilled with new seed for next year's harvest; and it is always a comfort to know that food production has started its cycle again.

However, we know that many in our area are struggling to put food on the table, so we would be very grateful for foodbank contributions to our harvest services that we can donate to either the Gatehouse Foodbank or the Vineyard Foodbank. Just bring your donations to the service and we will drop them off to the appropriate foodbank.

Harvest is all about growth! You may have wondered about the logo that is being used on Reaching Out these past few months - it's a bunch of grapes - and it is a logo that until recently has been used by the 'Leading your Church into Growth' organization. It is a scriptural reference to the vineyard, as in John's Gospel the vineyard represents Christ, who is the "true vine" and the source of life and spiritual fruit for believers, who are the "branches". So, you can see that it is a symbol of growth and that we long to grow more branches - and be fruitful! Do read on later in this issue of Reaching Out to find out how we intend to grow as part of the Leading your Church into Growth programme (LYCIG).

If you feel that you would like to know more about the Christian Faith as part of LYCIG there are already opportunities in our benefice to do so. We have a men-only group and a women-only group that gather regularly to study the bible and discuss what it means to live as a Christian today.

There is also a home group for any gender. These groups are also places of support and fellowship - and I commend them to you. If you'd like to know more then please do get in touch with me or Rev Richard at richard.stainer14@gmail.com (for the men's group), William Cardale at william@cardale.co (for the mixed group) or Christine Stainer at christine.stainer57@gmail.com (for the women's group).

Lastly, I was sitting in St Edmundsbury Cathedral this afternoon at the 'Called Together' service, where Lay Ministers were licensed to serve in parishes across the diocese. There are many different forms of ministry including Readers, Lay Evangelists and Youth Ministers, to name but a few. It was great to learn that 18 people had answered the call to serve God in a lay ministry, and to see them being licensed by Bishop Graeme (our acting Diocesan Bishop). I pray that they will have a fruitful ministry in the parishes they will be serving, and that many more are called to train as a lay minister in our diocese in the future.

If you think that God is calling you to do something in his Church, then do have a chat with me, or Rev Richard, or our Assistant Curate, Fiona. We would love to hear from you!

Sharon

Rev Canon Sharon Potter, Rector, Cockfield Benefice
revsharon2@gmail.com, tel: 01284 828599, 07825 086063

Leading Our Churches into Growth

'Churches that intend to grow, tend to grow' - this is a great statement and one that comes out of research in the Church of England. We have been busy working on our own plans for growth, and whilst we have been



doing so we have been praying the prayer for growth (below) in our service, in our meetings and individually at home.

We have seen slightly higher numbers in our services across each Sunday since we started praying - and so please pray the prayer as often as you can!

However, we need more than prayer, so here is a taster of what we intend to do to grow our benefice.

- introduce a new welcome pack for those who move into our villages which gives information not only about the local church but also about the village
- appoint 'worship accompaniers' who will help newcomers to our services to help guide them through worship that is unfamiliar to them
- make improvements to our benefice website and post more on our benefice facebook page about our services and events
- begin a 'start' course for people wanting to explore Christianity who have never been to Church or perhaps have not been for a long time

We have begun more detailed plans on the above and hope to bring those to our PCC meetings in November.

Thank you to those who emailed in their suggestions about how we can make our services more welcoming. Do keep those suggestions coming and we will incorporate any fresh ideas into our plans.

So, please do pray the following Prayer for Growth:

God of mission, who alone brings growth to your Church.

Send your Holy Spirit to give

Vision to our planning. Wisdom to our actions.

Joy to our worship. And power to our witness.

Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you,

And in service to our local community.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Big Green Challenge for October



The current which brings warm water to the west coast of the UK (often called the North

Atlantic Drift) is in danger of being turned off within the next 100 years a study has concluded, making deep cuts to fossil fuel emissions even more urgent to avoid the catastrophic impact. Scientists have warned previously that the collapse of the current must be avoided “at all costs”. It would shift the tropical rainfall belt on which many millions of people rely on to grow their food, plunge western Europe into extreme cold winters and summer droughts, and add 50cm to already rising sea levels.

According to Prof. Stefan Rahmstorf, at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany, “We found that the tipping point where the shutdown becomes inevitable is probably in the next 10 to 20 years or so. That is quite a shocking finding and why we must act fast in cutting down emissions.”

Air temperatures are rising rapidly in the Arctic because of the climate crisis, meaning the ocean cools more slowly there. Warmer water is less dense and therefore sinks into the depths more slowly. This slowing allows more rainfall to accumulate in the salty surface waters, also making it less dense, and further slowing the sinking, forming the feedback loop.

Politicians need to be made aware of the alarming situation that we could face because of this change in sea currents. With political parties talking about increasing fossil fuel production and moving away from net zero targets, all of us need to be campaigning to raise public awareness of the dangers of continuing to burn fossil fuels.

Source: The Guardian
Rev Richard

Ed's note: if you'd like to know more about being more environmentally friendly, do get in touch with Rev Richard at richard.stainer14@gmail.com.

Fairtrade Fortnight

Don't forget that fairtrade fortnight continues until 3rd October - but that doesn't mean that you need to stop buying fairtrade after then - and continue to do so as part of your regular shopping trip!

Tools Wanted (Tools with a Mission aka TWAM)

TWAM refurbishes and sends tools to Africa, and recently we have collected tools that have been taken to Kagera, our link Diocese. Mike Morley from Bradfield St Clare has been instrumental in setting up the Kagera link for TWAM, and is willing to collect any tools that people may want to donate. He can be contacted on 07768 668886.

There is a list of the tools that TWAM would like as donations, and a list of those that they don't take. If you'd like a leaflet to help you with your donations, you can find one at the back of Church, or just give Mike a call to discuss what you'd like to donate.

Village Friends October 2025

The theme for the meeting of our over 65's group this month is 'who do you think you are?'. We welcome members to bring along their family tree - and photos of themselves as children! It's fascinating to hear the history of some families, so please do come along and join in. 2-4pm at Felsham Village Hall. All welcome. Free entry - including refreshments. If you need a lift then please let Canon Sharon know, 01284 828599 or 07825 086063.



Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal

We are hoping to send some shoeboxes that contain new and unused gifts to this appeal. The boxes go to Ukraine, Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria and are welcomed as Christmas presents by those in need. If you'd like to make up a shoebox, then please do take a leaflet from the back of church which tells you how - and then drop your box off to Cockfield Rectory, Howe Lane, Cockfield, IP30 0HA before 26th October, when the boxes will be blessed at the harvest service at Lt Wheltnetham on Sunday 26th October at 3pm. Thank you.

FUNDRAISING FOR BRADFIELD ST GEORGE CHURCH

You are invited to a

POP UP AFTERNOON TEA

WITH
ANGELS
DELIGHT
FLUTE & HARP
DUO



EAT WHAT
YOU LIKE,
PAY WHAT
YOU CAN

5 OCTOBER 2025 AT 3-5 PM
THE MARQUEE AT
WEST LODGE, BRADFIELD ST
GEORGE, IP30 0DL

NO ENTRY CHARGE BUT PLEASE BOOK FOR CATERING
PURPOSES. ON 01284 388311 OR 07954323461

MEALS CAN BE CATERED FOR -
PLEASE PHONE 01284 388175
OR 07443626499

Cockfield Benefice Services and **Events** - October 2025

Saturday 4 October	2pm-4pm Knit'n'natter at Bradfield St Clare Village Hall. All crafters/knitters/crocheters welcome!
Sunday 5 October Trinity 16	9.30am Holy Communion at Stanningfield 11am Holy Communion at Bradfield St George 6pm Celtic Communion for creationtide at Felsham Village Hall
Sunday 5 October	3-5pm, 'Pop up Afternoon Tea' at the Marquee, West Lodge, Bradfield St George, IP30 0DL. With 'Angels Delight Flute & Harp Duo'. No entry charge but please contact 01284 388311 or 079543 23461 to book for catering purposes.
Sunday 12 October Trinity 17/Harvest	10am Harvest Thanksgiving at Cockfield 11am Holy Communion at Bradfield St Clare 6pm Praise and Worship for Harvest at Gt Whelnetham
Tuesday 14 October	11am Holy Communion at Felsham Village Hall
Thursday 16 October	2-4pm Village Friends at Felsham Village Hall - this month's theme, 'who do you think you are?'
Sunday 19 October Trinity 18/Harvest	9.30am Harvest Service with Holy Baptism at Stanningfield 10am Praise God Together at Felsham Village Hall 10.30am Holy Communion with Holy Baptism at Cockfield 6pm Evening Prayer at Bradfield St Clare
Sunday 26 October Last Sunday after Trinity	9.30am Holy Communion at Gt Whelnetham 10am Worshipping Together at Bradfield St George 1pm Holy Baptism at Gt Whelnetham 3pm Harvest Thanksgiving at Lt Whelnetham

A service of Celtic-style Morning Prayer is usually held every Tuesday at Cockfield at 9am and at Stanningfield every Thursday at 9am. *Please note these services may be subject to change – for up-to-date service times see the benefice website at www.cockfieldbenefice.com or contact Rev Canon Sharon Potter, 01284 828599 or 07825 086063 or revsharon2@gmail.com.*

Reading from the Bible: Leviticus 23 verse 22

HARVEST

My name is: _____

FRUIT & VEG

Things that grow in my garden



Choose
☺ ☹ ☹
& draw it in the circle in each box



TOP FOODS

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

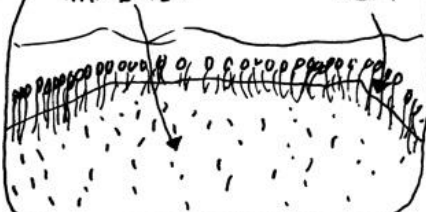
Things that are "harvested" or made in the area where I live:

Things to be thankful for:

Number of tins of baked beans at this year's Harvest Service:

HARVESTED

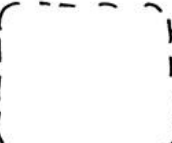
LEFT



"When you reap the harvest do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor & the alien..."



People would look at me strangely if I brought one of these to the Harvest Service



But what sort of alien does the Bible verse mean?

Alien

Thought 1: Do you know where your food comes from? Look at the labels.

Thought 2: Is it a good idea to transport food around the world?

Thought 3: How can we make sure people who grow our food get paid fairly?

This verse is Leviticus 23 verse 22

God is giving instructions to Moses & the Israelites

What are 'gleanings'?

Why were they to leave them?

Can you think of ways we could do the same kind of thing today?

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