

Seaburn Dene New Church

News sheet

November/December 2023



To contact the church please ring

0754 6116071

Our email address is

seaburndenewchurch@gmail.com

We also have a Facebook page



Seaburn Dene New Church

Website www.generalconference.org.uk/locations/seaburn-dene

Welcome to the Seaburn Dene News sheet.

If you would like to join us in worship, then please make a note of the following dates...

Sunday 12th Nov	10.30am	Remembrance Sunday Service & Sacrament of Holy Supper	Lynne Griffiths
Sunday 26th Nov	10.30am	Creative Christmas	
Sunday 3rd Dec	10.30am	Worship	Nicky Ramsay
Saturday 16th Dec	7.00pm	Candle for Christmas Service	
Monday 25th Dec	10.30am	Christmas Day Service	Revd Becky Jarratt
Sunday 7th January	10.30am	Worship	Lynne Griffiths

*"We believe that all religion has relation to life
and the life of religion is to do good."*

GOOD WISHES

...to **Hazel Nicholls**, our Newsletter editor, who was laid low with severe abdominal pain in mid-October. Before she knew much about it, she was admitted to Cramlington Hospital, and needed urgent surgery. She is now minus her appendix but is recovering at home. We wish you a good convalescence, Hazel, and hope you will soon be out and about.

...to **Joan Nicholls**, who sends greetings to her Church friends. Health issues continue to make life something of a struggle for her, but her trust in the Lord's providence keeps her going!

...to **Bill and Ina Carr**, who also send best wishes. Bill, alas, is recovering from a recent fall, which left him rather battered and bruised.

...to **Bruce Jarvis** who is due to have a knee replacement operation on November 9th, we wish you a steady recovery and look forward to having you back among us very soon.

Looking Back

Harvest

On October 8th we held our annual Harvest celebration. This day was particularly special as it was our first uniformed movements Parade Service for many years. It was lovely to see so many Brownies, Guides and Rainbows attend and take part by reading the Parable of the Sower. The church felt so alive with youngsters and creativity as they made Harvest themed stained-glass windows to take home. A fantastic array of non-perishable foodstuffs was donated to be taken to Sunderland Food Bank later in the week. After the service it was a delight to join with everyone downstairs for refreshments and a slice of birthday cake for Lynne's birthday. A wonderful morning all round.

Coffee Evening

On Tuesday 10th October the Guides, Brownies and Rainbows held a coffee evening at the church and Lynne, Bill, Alexandra and I went along to support them. What a lovely surprise it was to see the two rooms downstairs heaving with what seemed like hundreds

of people. There were various stalls scattered around the brown room, including a chocolate fountain, sweets and lots of raffle prizes as well as cakes galore. Tea and coffee were being served in the green room as well. It was a pleasure to see so many people supporting this event, Lynne and I were lucky enough to come away with some raffle prizes!!!

A New Look

Recently we have had some essential maintenance and a bit of a new look to the church both inside and out. We had continuing issues with our outdoor security lights which we felt – with the darker nights on their way - needed resolving to ensure the safety of people using our building. So we now have LED security lights fitted. The state of the stair and entrance carpet in the church has been an ongoing cause for concern despite efforts to re glue it, so the church council decided that a brand new hard wearing carpet on all the stairs and the entrance way was called for and very smart it looks too!

TRANSITION

Few readers of our newsletter will know the name **Sheila Heslop**. It was 26 years ago in October 1997 that Bruce and Madeleine Taylor and I first met her. We had discovered that she was a member of the Swedenborg Society in London, and a long-time reader of Emanuel Swedenborg's theological writings. We contacted her and drove over to her home in West Auckland. That was the beginning of a long association, which included attending our regular Bible Discussion Group, which she occasionally hosted, and from time to time driving over to join in our services at Seaburn Dene New Church. She also contributed generously to our finances.

An only child born in 1930, Sheila's father was very musical, a gift passed on to his daughter, and after leaving school she went off to music college in London, where she gained an LRAM for her singing, and an ARCM for her piano playing. She stayed on in London to undertake voice training with an Italian teacher, but it was concluded that childhood scarlet fever had left its mark, and a career in singing was not for her. She returned to the family home

in West Auckland, and in 1961 joined the staff at Durham Girls Grammar School, which later combined with the Boys Grammar School. Sheila became Head of the Music Department, retiring in 1985 to look after her elderly parents. She was a keen reader, and had a great interest in politics, education and young people.

She had long had a feeling for spiritual ideas and practice, having come across references to Emanuel Swedenborg's theology. At some point she obtained a second-hand copy of *Heaven and Hell*, and that, so to speak was that! She had a lifetime association with the local Methodist Church, yet in the background always retained her commitment to Swedenborgian theology. How thrilled and delighted she was when a link was made with our New Church community here at Seaburn Dene. Quietly spoken, Sheila was a modest person, with a playful sense of humour. She grew fond of us, and that was entirely reciprocated. In January 2018 Sheila moved into a care home on the outskirts of Bishop Auckland. I visited her from time to time, and we would speak on the phone. One could sense this natural life gently coming to a close, and she left us on June 24th this year. Some of her religious books were left to our Church.

Now she is experiencing for herself the reality of an active life in the spiritual world, where she will be meeting up with loved ones who have gone ahead. We praise the Lord for Sheila's life and give thanks to Him for bringing her to our community. **BRUCE JARVIS**



Prayer Requests

If you would like a prayer said for a loved one or someone known to you, we can include it in our worship or during our prayer fellowship group. Please contact us via email or phone or leave a note in our letter box.

Looking Forward

Future Service Dates

Remembrance Sunday

On 12th November we will be holding our Remembrance Sunday service to honour all those who served their country in conflict. This service will also include Sacrament of Holy Supper. During this service we will observe the two minute silence at 11am.

A Candle For Christmas Service

Join us on **Saturday December 16th at 7pm** for our community service. This is a chance to reflect and remember loved ones no longer with us by placing a message tag on one of our Christmas trees and lighting a candle in their memory. There will be music and readings in preparation for the run up to Christmas Day also and seasonal refreshments will be served afterwards. We look forward to welcoming you and hope that this will be a poignant and memorable event for all. On the run up to and at this service we will also be accepting gifts of **new** nightwear, slippers, toiletries and gift cards for women and children of **all ages** who are supported by **Wearside Women in Need**. These will be taken to them in the week before Christmas.

50 Years on Shields Road

On March 16th our church building will have been open for 50 years! To celebrate this milestone, we are holding a celebratory service on **Sunday March 17th at 11.30am** followed by an Afternoon Tea style lunch. It would be wonderful to see as many people there as possible who have had any involvement in our church over the years.

We would also like to know about people's memories of the building. If you have photographs or a memory to share, we would love to know about it so we can include them on a display on the day. Maybe you were married, had your children baptised or attended Sunday School, Brownies, Guides, church socials or Club 87 at our church? If so, we would love to include it. If you feel you would like to send a message that we can put in a memory book, then that would be brilliant too.

Any messages and photos can be sent via our church email address. **seaburdenenewchurch@gmail.com**