

CTST NEWSLETTER



June 2025

Message from the Chair

Welcome to our third newsletter funded by Dogger Bank. This newsletter is taking an Easter theme to celebrate our family of churches and our faith in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. CTST celebrate with all churches in South Tyneside in their worship and witness.

Review of Events

Exploring Lent through Art

This Lent, Churches Together in Harton (South Shields) hosted a four-week course led by Rev Jane Rowell, exploring the themes of Lent through art. Each week, around fifteen people gathered to reflect on five or six paintings ranging from the 14th century to modern times. The sessions sparked thoughtful discussion as we explored how different artists have depicted key moments of the Lenten journey. It was a fresh, creative way to engage with Lent, deepening our understanding through visual storytelling. Many thanks to Rev Jane and all who took part in this inspiring and reflective course.



Easter Sunday Sunrise Service

Many thanks to the 120 and more people who came to celebrate the Resurrection at 6am on Easter Sunday morning at South Shields seafront. We were delighted to see everyone from many church groups gathered together. Later 54 crowded into St. Bede's Church Hall for refreshments and a warm drink.

Our grateful thanks go to Margaret Stephenson Gray for leading the service, David Sim for the technical support and all those taking part in the service and helping behind the scenes, especially in the kitchen. Also, thanks to our hosts at St. Bede's.



Scripture Union Procession of Witness

Taking part in the South Shields Good Friday parade is always a moving experience. I worship with Grace Church, Talbot Road, South Shields, and we supported Bethesda Church by helping carry their banner—my first time doing so, and it was harder than I expected. I'm determined to be stronger next year!

We embraced the new route, walking together through the town, being joined by various bands and churches along the way, finally gathering at the Market Place for a truly ecumenical service. I don't think I'll ever tire of seeing our Market Place turned into a place of worship as so many different people, from different backgrounds - and all with their own unique stories-gathering to hear the Gospel preached and to worship God together.

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EASTER SERVICE

Nurturing Dementia held their first Dementia Friendly Easter Service in April at St. Gregory's Church, South Shields. The Rev. Emma Satchell led the service and was accompanied by St. Gregory's School Choir who enthusiastically sang Easter hymns and songs. We were joined by residents and staff of two Jarrow care homes and members of the Dementia Empowerment and Engagement Project (DEEP). Parishioners from five local churches came along and joined in reflecting a Churches Together atmosphere.

We all enjoyed a short uplifting service recounting the story of Easter, followed by Easter refreshments of Hot Cross Buns. One of our DEEP members recited a reflection regarding being involved in the DEEP group promoting a positive experience of living with dementia. The Mayor and Mayoress attended the service and the Mayor shared her passion to make South Tyneside dementia friendly during the time of refreshments.



WORSHIP ON THE STREETS

The first Saturday of every month (weather permitting) at 11.00 am we busk for God in Hebburn town centre. Although organised by Hebburn Independent Methodist Church, we often have three or four churches represented. WOTS is a national movement and we hold monthly zoom meetings to share and pray. We sing the gospel rather than preach and it is a way of engaging with people who do not attend church or have a Christian faith.



HELPING LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

We have been able to help 30 households since February with Household Support Grants from South Tyneside Council. Local clergy and church members were asked to refer households struggling with the cost of living. People who were referred received a grant to help with the costs of food, fuel and essential household items. With the grants, we were able to help single mums, people recently bereaved and people with learning difficulties.