



April – May 2021

We are delighted to announce that we plan to reopen in Low Row on Sunday 23rd May, at 10.30. We are hoping to have as our Preacher the Rev, Clare Downing, Moderator of General Assembly.

Our PENTECOST service will celebrate the birthday of the worldwide church.

Following the retirement of our Ministers, we hope to have many contributions for our future editions of the link from far and wide. This time John Loyd begins with:

Worship During Lockdown

The URC chapel at Low Row, where we normally worship on Sunday mornings, has been closed during lockdown. Also during this time, we have not been able to meet our families in their homes and gardens, or meet at a cafe, but like others, we have sought different ways to keep in touch; old fashioned letters, phone calls, emails and zoom.

But, how have we sought to continue our communication with God? Jo and I decided a couple of months ago, to walk on Sunday mornings, to the original chapel at Smarber, and hold our own short services there.

Smarber is a very spiritual place and we join with God, to conduct our own short, but meaningful services inside the old stone walls.

So, we have learnt during lockdown, that we can, with a little imagination, and change from the normal routine, keep in touch with our loved ones and also communicate and worship our God. I am sure many others have made similar changes to their lives to achieve this.

Having said this, when services resume again, we are both looking forward to the wonderful fellowship we experience in Low Row. In the meantime, we will continue our Sunday morning walk to Smarber.

News from afar this time comes from Margaret Ogilvie who writes:

Hello to my dear friends in Low Row,

News from Findhorn. I do not know about you but there is much of a sameness about life here and I am afraid that I sometimes ask Bill what day it is when I wake up. There are things happening in Findhorn but not at a gallop. Our garden is pretty big and keeps us reasonably busy but everything seems to have slowed down including us! How about this, just after Christmas there was a great display of northern lights over the shore, which was on TV next day. But Bill and I missed it as we were in bed! We met up with Helen Bond a few months ago as she was up for her daughter's wedding and we were all talking about Swaledale.

Findhorn has two pubs both able to serve drinks outside, but now closed all together, one great little café, now closed as such, but open as an organic food and onside baked bread shop and a post office which also sells a few household essentials. The village community centre which usually has daily activities such as pilates, painting, craft classes, mums and tots groups. The tots come from outside this village and most residents here are well above the age of having young children. The centre obtained funding for a free weekly lunch to be delivered to each household cooked at the pubs which has been appreciated as many elderly folk were hardly seeing anyone.

We do have a great empty beach which runs 7 miles along the coast to the next town where village folk and visitors walk themselves, children, and dogs. Bill and I often talk about the great walks in Swaledale but I doubt we could stride out now as we once did. In fact it was only the other day that we were talking about how much we had appreciated the Dale and all you lovely people.

We kept the church open when this was allowed for a few months, it was open for two hours on Sunday mornings for drop in quiet contemplation (with filmed reading and music). We then had a couple of months of minister led services without singing but we are now completely closed again. We

also have an attached church hall which can not be opened for activities at present.

When we can, it will be great to get down and see the dale and some of you again.

Margaret

Thank you to Sue Miller who shares the work she has been doing in support of the search for our new Minister

Sue Miller has been helping to put together a piece which it is hoped will provide information for potential candidates for the new Minister of our Tees/Swale Pastorate. Using Profiles from the 3 churches in the Pastorate - Zion in Northallerton, Northgate in Darlington and Low Row with Keld URC, together with information from the Keld Resource Centre, the document outlines the main features of each church and its membership, and highlights the key opportunities. It is hoped that this will provide useful information for potential applicants and also generate interest in this unique Ministry, which ranges from the bustling town centre churches of Northallerton and Darlington to the rural communities of upper Swaledale. We look forward to welcoming and working with a new Minister in due course.

And finally, we share a short prayer of thanks as we see the new life in our fields, hedgerows and gardens:

In the lengthening of the days, Snowdrops emerging, from Winters frozen ground as we see the creators hand.

In the sight of a tiny lambs, joyfully bounding, across the hillside as we see the creators hand.

Creator God, forgive our moments of ingratitude, help us appreciate the wonder that is the world, the endless cycle of nature, of life, death and rebirth.

Open our eyes to see, our lips to praise and our hands to share as we see the creator's hand.

Amen

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Tees & Swale Pastorate