

NORTON NEWS

May
2018

The Only Way is Up

I start with a confession today. I must admit to rather liking the pop song 'The only way is Up', by Yaz. The song transports us back to a bygone age of wide shoulder pads and permed haircuts and depicts a relationship that has hit rock bottom and, yes, you've guessed it, now the only way it can go is up.

We use the word 'up' in this way all the time. 'Things are looking up', is just one of a number of phrases we use to give the sense that 'up' is the way forward to a brighter future. At work you often hear people say, 'They're on the way up', describing someone who's currently in a lowly position but will be moving on to bigger and better things. Strangely, I've never heard anyone say this of me!



As we look forward to Ascension this month, Jesus is himself on the way up. And in his going from earth, we too can look forward in optimism and hope to bigger and better things to come.

Ascension should not be taken too literally. It is not about Jesus ascending to heaven like some Apollo space rocket as the disciples crane their necks to get one final glimpse of his feet as he disappears into a conveniently placed cloud. A depiction I recently saw in a stained-glass window in Somerset.

Luke is simply trying to put into words something that stretches beyond our imagination. Jesus ministry on earth is now finished. He has accomplished everything. Our future is brighter because of it and we can all look up with optimism. His going is not something of sadness, but of joy. Because in his going Jesus has bridged the gap of sin that separates us from God. We can now all share in his love, as Paul said, 'I am sure that nothing in life or death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 8.38-39).

Jesus is no longer confined to one place in time and space. He now has the helicopter view of our world in all ages. But he doesn't leave us without help.



Before he went he promised 'I will ask the father and he will give you another helper' (John 14.16). If Jesus was our helper on earth and is now our helper in heaven he gives us the spirit as our new helper on earth today. It's no coincidence that Pentecost follows quickly on the heels of Ascension as the spirit descends upon his disciples, breathing the new life of Christ into them.

Suddenly this bemused, down trodden group are transformed in an instant, energised by the Spirit and strengthened to go out and carry on the mission Jesus started. No longer mission to a few bedraggled fishing villages in Galilee but mission to the entire world. The good news of Ascension and Pentecost is that Jesus has just gone global.

Today we are called to continue that global mission. Christian Aid week coincides with the run up to Pentecost, reminding us powerfully that Jesus' mission to the world is spirit filled, bringing new hope to the marginalised and the oppressed.

As a church we must take that helicopter view of Christ's spirit driven mission, not confining ourselves to one locality. This year, we will be supporting Christian aid in their appeal to help the people of Haiti, who are still struggling to rebuild after natural disaster. Once the headlines die down, very quickly the world moves on to other stories, forgetting the work needed to rebuild communities.



So please do remember and give generously to the people of Haiti and just remember, "the only way is up..."



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The Parish of Norton, Letchworth Garden City

Christian Aid Week: Together we're stronger than the storms



In Haiti, Marcelin raised his three daughters alone. They've endured some of the worst natural disasters on earth. They're not just survivors. They're fighters. But they're only so strong. They won't survive the next hurricane without your help.

This Christian Aid Week, you can be in their corner. You can help them build a home that will weather the next storm, so they won't need to fight to survive anymore.

We step out in mission for our neighbours like Marcelin, because we believe in life before death. We believe God's kingdom is stronger than the storms.

Christian Aid Week brings tens of thousands of Christians together to achieve incredible things with some of the poorest people in the world. We need you to join us so we can do more, and make sure that Marcelin and his neighbours do not have to fear the next hurricane.

This Christian Aid Week, 13-19 May, our church is holding a Christian Aid service on Sunday 13th where we will make a special collection and on Sunday 20th we will hold our traditional cake stall.

Will you join us? If our church can raise £210, we could pay for two days' construction training for a local builder in Haiti. The builder could then build secure, comfortable homes for people like Marcelin, giving them a safe place to weather the next disaster, and a fighting chance to build a better life.

Speak to Sara Clark or Trevor today. Together we can be stronger than the storms.



Photo credit: Christian Aid
Marcelin Abellard and his daughters Ketia, Linda and Keshna (left to right in the photo) still haven't recovered from Hurricane Matthew. Marcelin doesn't expect them to survive if another hurricane hits



Photo credit: Christian Aid

It's over a year since Marcelin and his daughters lost their home, but they're still living in a 2 x 2m windowless concrete block.

Community Coffee and Cake



What a wonderful feature Norton Coffee shop remains. The community coffee shop, which is open at 10am every Wednesday, has been running for a number of years. It's not just for church members either but seeks to serve the whole community. Recently we had 25 local walkers turn up, but there was still plenty of tea and coffee not to mention home made cakes to go around, and, after a long walk, no feeling of guilt at having that extra slice!

There's always plenty for everyone, as well as a warm welcome from the many volunteers who help to run it.

Not only does the shop provide a place for the community to socialise and make contact it also divides any profits equally between the church and various charities, including local ones. In the last 2 years we have made contributions amongst others to charities as varied as Local Age UK, Garden House Hospice, Hitchin Sanctuary for the Homeless and the local stroke association.

We are always on the look out for new helpers to join our friendly bunch. People are teamed with a partner and only have to help out once every six weeks. So why not give it a try, they'll be plenty of support for you.

If you are interested, please contact Margaret Andre 01462 686658.

ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH & SCHOOL



WEDDINGS

Aaron Alban and Gabrielle Banner will be married on 26th May at St Nicholas' Church Norton
Please pray for them as they start their married life together.



St Nicholas' School

We now have a vacancy for a Midday Supervisory Assistant at lunchtimes. Are you available during school lunchtimes? Keen to supervise our wonderful children as they eat and play? Want to be part of our school staff team? If you are interested in finding out more about this position, or know anyone who may be interested, please contact Miss Brigham through the school office.

Our Dance Show last week was a wonderful event and we managed to raise £350! This will be split between the Stand By Me Charity and the school.

Can you take on the challenge and raise money for SNAPS by joining in with Letchworth Rotary Club's charity walk around the outskirts of Letchworth? Enjoy some fresh air & exercise with your friends & families. The Letchworth Greenway is around 14 miles in total. But don't panic! You CAN walk it ALL if you wish. But anyone opting for a shorter distance can finish at any of 5 checkpoints along the route. And you'll get a lift back to The Highfield School where you started.

Sponsor forms available from the school office. 75% of your sponsorship will go to SNAPS, with the remaining 25% being gifted by the Rotary Club to charities and community projects.

NB: Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult! Please let us know if you plan to participate. **Christiane Colbon and Natalie Willbe, Joint Chair, Helen Ogilvie, Secretary Rosie Rafferty, Treasurer SNAPS** Find us on Facebook: [SNAPSNews](https://www.facebook.com/SNAPSNews)

ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

Thank you's

- Thank you to Graham Clark, Rose Gregory, Sarah Cook, John Smith for their work on the P.C.C. over the past three years and longer for some.
- Thank you to Michael Forrester for his work as deputy Church Warden.
- Thank you to all the Social Committee for providing a wonderful Fundraising Dinner, the food was great, the drink was flowing, the desserts were delicious and the company excellent, thank you to all who worked and supported this event.
- Thank you to all those hardened gardeners who helped clear up St Nicholas Church in the rain.

If you feel there is anyone in the church who deserves a 'thank you' please get in touch with the editor (i.e. the vicar, but editor sounds much more cool).

Social Committee Future Events:

12th May Beetle Drive

19th May Pyjama Party

Please support these events

From the Registers

Baptism

15th April - Wynter Allum

22nd April - Albie Arnold

29th April - William Woloschin

Funerals

11th April - Dorothy Coulden

20th April - Christine Keeble

26th April - Les Brown

27th April - Joan Karnehm-Smith

REGULAR SERVICE DETAILS

Every Sunday	8 a.m. 9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion at St Nicholas' Church Parish Communion at St George's Church Sunday School meet in St George's Hall Crèche is held in the Lady Chapel
3rd Sunday of the month	11.15 a.m.	Informal Praise & Worship in St George's Church
Wednesdays	10 a.m.	Holy Communion in St George's Church
Thursdays	7.30 p.m.	Eucharist at St George's Church
Morning Prayer	9 a.m.	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays St George's Church
Evening Prayer	5 p.m.	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays & Fridays, St George's Church

REGULAR EVENTS

Mondays	7.30 p.m. 7.45 p.m. 8 p.m.	House Group at 29A Eastern Way Bellringing Practice in St Nicholas' Church Badminton in St George's Hall
Tuesdays	10 a.m. 1.30 p.m. 1.30 p.m. 8 p.m.	Bible Study Tuesday Club in the Clulow Room Tuesday Cherubs meet in the Lady Chapel (term time) Music Group in St George's Church
Wednesdays	10 a.m. 8 p.m. 8 p.m.	Norton Coffee Shop Ladies Choir in St George's Church House Group at 17 Heathermere
Thursdays	1.15 p.m.	Norton Nippers Parent and Toddler Group (term time)
Fridays	12 noon 1.30 p.m. 6.15 p.m. 7 p.m. 8 p.m.	Friday Lunch in the Clulow Room House Group meet in the Clulow Room Choristers Street Dragons (fortnightly) Choir Practice in St George's Church
Sundays	6.30 p.m.	In-Betweeners Norton Parish Centre

YOUTH EVENTS

<i>Street Dragons</i>	<i>Fridays 7 p.m.</i>	<i>Norton Parish Centre</i>
<i>Norton In-Betweeners</i>	<i>Sundays 6.30 p.m.</i>	<i>Norton Parish Centre</i>
<i>Choristers</i>	<i>Fridays 6.15 p.m.</i>	<i>St George's Church</i>