

Beetham Church PoW Nativity Crib

Last year I was delighted to receive, out of the blue, a message from Rolf Baumann. His father, Bruno Baumann, was one of the German PoW's at Bela Camp in 1946 who had constructed the Christmas Crib and presented it with thanks to the people of Beetham Church. Each Christmas since then, the crib has been on display throughout the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany seasons. Remembering the spartan circumstances which the men endured, and the primitive tools and materials at their disposal, it is truly remarkable that the crib was crafted and painted so skilfully, creating such a beautiful finished product. In 2021, thanks to the generosity of a number of local people, we were able to have the crib professionally restored in the confident hope that it will remain in good condition for many more years to come.



In reply to Rolf's communication, I was able to send some information to him and his wife Gabi at their home in Wilhelmshavn. I included a copy of the "Reconciliation" booklet produced from the research by Sandy Lofthouse into the Bela Camp which makes reference to the Crucifix carved by Bruno Baumann and presented to the Reverend Macleod Murray in thanks for his Christian ministry to the German men in those difficult times.

This year we again exchanged messages and cards, as below:

Dear Rolf and Gabi
Advent Greetings from Beetham! It was good to receive your message - thank you! We were of course thinking of your father and his workmates as last week we once again assembled the Christmas Crib. This will be 78 years since it was presented by your father to the people of Beetham, and the crib will remain on display until Candlemas (2nd February). You would of course be made to feel very welcome indeed if you were to visit us here. Or if travelling is easier in the summer months, we would bring your father's crib out of storage for you to admire his wonderful workmanship and skill! Your photos have just now arrived - it is good to see such positive outcomes from such a dark and tragic period of our history.

John
Dear John!
Enjoy a wonderful Advent Season at Beetham together with your wife. I myself am just rather busy with the illness representation of our city organist at the "Banter Kirche" at Wilhelmshaven till the end of January and it's a good feeling of helping our church. Have a good time, and: I'll never forget your goodness of sending me invaluable information about my father's crib and his crucifix!
All the very best for you and your wife
Yours Rolf
It's a long time ago - I wonder whether you know these two pictures. My brother in law reconstructed one and the other was recently found by my sister...



Dear John,
It's very good for me reading your sensitive words on the time shortly after WWII. Of course this is a dream for me: seeing the Christmas crib of my father in reality. Soon there will be the 80th anniversary of it - may be this would be an idea?!
For now the bible words "Peace on earth and good will to men" shall illuminate our world of darkness and wars... You and the Beetham Church crib community show (now for 78 years) that there is a chance of overcoming the darkness and thank you all very very much, that you and your men have done it and will do it in future!
And: I'm a little proud on the fact, that my father's work at that time was on the side of goodness and right... Thank you very much again and best wishes to Beetham Church for everything!!
Best wishes for you and your wife, Rolf

Having kept contact this Christmas season, I am happy to share this correspondence with you all!
John Lomax

Postscript

Just before Christmas, Revd Andrew received an email from Rolf's brother, Eric. Rolf had shown Eric the Christmas card depicting the Nativity Crib that John had kindly sent to him this year. Eric was keen to purchase more copies of the card. It was too late for them to arrive in Germany before Christmas, but we were delighted to receive this response from Eric this week:-
Dear Jenny, thank you so very much for the cards which arrived here on Friday! I am sure you can imagine how touching it is to see that something my father made - or helped making, so many years ago, is still around. When my brother started investigating and writing emails to Reverend Norman, he always told me when he had found out something new, and we both agreed that our father would have been very pleased! As a child, I was often told about the crib and we had a black and white photograph of it and of the accompanying inscription. For my father, this was the beginning of a lifelong artistic occupation with woodcarving as a hobby. From where I am writing, I can see a 50 cm high statue of Christophorus which he made in the 1950s. My father remembered his time as a POW fondly. Even if he was separated from his family, he was safe and from what he told me he was being treated friendly.
Many kind regards, Eric

'Reconciliation', the story of the Beetham Crib, is available to purchase from the Church Bookstall



www.beethamstmichaelandallangels.co.uk

Ring out, wild bells

*Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.*

*Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.*



For centuries, church bells have been rung to mark momentous events and occasions. Here at St Michael & All Angels, our venerable bells, three of which date back to the 17th century, have pealed in recent years to commemorate significant national, local and personal events, as well as to summon the faithful to worship. The Centenary of the 1918 Armistice; anniversaries of key moments in the Second World War (VE Day and VJ Day); HM Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee; the Queen's funeral and the coronation of King Charles, to name but a few. And on a more personal level, to mark the loss of friends and to pay tribute to happy memories of good times spent in their company.

Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem, In Memoriam, from which the verses at the top of the page are taken, was written after the death of his closest friend, Arthur Hallam. Tennyson chose the ringing of bells as a metaphor for the eternal circle of life because of the ancient tradition of church bells ringing at the turn of the year to see out the old and to usher in the new, and to reflect his own feelings of loss and renewal. *'Ring out the grief that saps the mind, For those that here we see no more'*, he wrote.

Tennyson, like his contemporary Charles Dickens, was also only too well aware of the social and political ills of the mid-nineteenth century and despaired at the inequalities and unfairness in society which affected the lives of ordinary people. In his poem, he juxtaposes an outpouring of his personal grief with an expression of his deeply felt conviction that the birth of Jesus had ushered in the hope of redemption and a better future for mankind.

At the start of a new year, we are all led to look both forward and backward, at what is past and to what is to come. January takes its very name from the Roman God of transitions Janus, who, with two heads, could look in both directions at the same time. And so we ring out the old, leaving our regrets, our failures, our disappointments, behind us as we attempt to ring in the new, making our resolutions based in hope for the future. It is not quite so easy to *'Ring out the grief that saps the mind, For those that here we see no more'*, but we, together with Tennyson, can hope that the promise of Christ's birth in Bethlehem will help to *'Ring in redress to all mankind'*.

As we enter 2025, we know we cannot change the past, nor can we predict with any certainty what is to come. What we can do is to reflect from time to time on the true significance of the birth of the baby in a stable in a small town in a foreign land, and look forward with hope for the future.

*"Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be."*

Brian Smalley

Letter from The Revd Andrew Norman

Dear friends,

I am writing this on the fifth day of Christmas and whilst I haven't received the gift of 'five gold rings' from my 'true love', the month of January is now looming. The beginning of a new year steadily approaching meaning, no doubt, that we'll all be considering the possibilities and the perils that may lie ahead of us as we journey through 2025.

Although for many the time for the singing of carols has concluded, the Church - in bidding us celebrate the message and good news of Christmas for forty days - continues to invite us to rejoice. To remember the hope that 'God is with us' as we now look to all that will come, bidden and unbidden, in the days, weeks and months of the year to come. In the (perhaps less well-known carol) 'Of the Father's heart begotten', written in the fourth century yet only translated into English in the nineteenth, we're reminded that all our human beginnings and endings; all that has been, is and yet will be, can only find its proper place in God. The God whose likeness we see in the face of the baby of Bethlehem, who promises light and life for all.

*'...He is Alpha, from that Fountain
all that is and hath been flows;
He is Omega, of all things,
yet to come the mystic Close...'*

Although for some this might seem quite fantastical, this is the claim that the Christian faith continually encourages us to consider. To stretch our imagination, to enlarge our understanding, to believe the truth that we can reckon as credible God's desire to know us and to be known by us. And so - however hesitatingly or uncertainly - to know for ourselves his loving purposes towards us. Not a magical tonic that will take away our griefs or sadnesses, not an optimistic wishfulness that means that we'll be spared challenge or discomfort, but an awareness that means we can embrace life with a hopefulness and a trust born of knowing that we journey in God's company and fellowship.

In concluding these thoughts and in looking ahead to the New Year, I leave you with some words (when looking back on his life) of the thirty-ninth President of the United States of America, Jimmy Carter, whose passing was announced as I sat down to write these words. They remind us, from one who lived a life of fruitful service, that faith in God much always be consequential; changing who we are and how we are with others. As 2025 begins, may we all be given help and grace to give faith a chance and, in doing so, to make a difference in the year that is to come.

'I have one life and one chance to make it count for something...I'm free to choose what that something is, and the something I've chosen is my faith. Now, my faith goes beyond theology and religion and requires considerable work and effort. My faith demands - this is not optional - my faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference.'

With every good wish and prayer,

As ever,

Andrew



St Michael and All Angels, Beetham
Candlemas Choral Evensong
Sunday 2nd February
at 6.00pm
All are welcome

St Michael & All Angels Beetham Church Services for January 2025

Date	Time	Service
Sun 5th	11am	Parish Eucharist
	6pm	BCP* Evensong
Weds 8th	10.30am	BCP Holy Communion
Sun 12th	11am	Parish Eucharist
	6pm	BCP Evensong
Sun 19th	11am	Parish Eucharist
	6pm	Epiphany Carol Service
Sun 26th	11am	Parish Eucharist
	6pm	BCP Evensong

Please see weekly Pewsheets for details
*Book of Common Prayer

Contact: revhannahwallace@gmail.com 01524 449 035

REST & RESTORE

A time of prayer for healing & wholeness

St James Church Arnside

6:15 - 7:00PM

JAN TUES 7TH MAR TUES 4TH MAY TUES 6TH

2025 DATES

Arnside - Beetham - Heversham - Levens - Milnthorpe - Gosport

KE MC
Kent Estuary Mission Community
Sharing God's Love in Christ

Please join the churches of the Kent Estuary in a Mission Community Gathering

10.30am, Sunday 9th March
in St Peters' Church, Heversham

Please note there will be no service at Beetham that morning but Evensong will be held at 6pm as normal

Arnside Christians Together churches together IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

'Do you believe this?' Sunday 19th January 2025
A Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 3.00pm

Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church
Silverdale Road, Arnside

Burial of Ashes
Friday 13th December
Pauline Harrison
May she rest in peace



St Michael and All Angels, Beetham

Epiphany Carol Service



Sunday 19th January
at 6.00pm

A service to reflect on how God's goodness and glory is revealed and manifested to the world at Epiphany, praying that we might know the light and grace of Christ in our lives always.

Winter Soup Lunch
in Beetham Church
from 11.30am to 1.30pm
Wednesday 8th January

Hot mugs of soup with bread
Tea, coffee and cake also available

Donations welcomed in aid of the Church Heating Appeal



"WE ALL GET THE EXACT 365 DAYS. THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS WHAT WE DO WITH THEM"
Hillary De Piano

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL !

Well dear reader, another year begins. Although it feels they are coming around faster as each year passes, I am happy to welcome it in. Full of promise and potential adventures, we are poised as if about to read a new book in a familiar genre. In keeping with that theme, a little review of last years music book according to Beetham Community Band.

"NEW YEAR IS A DAY, TO TUNE TO THE RHYTHM CALLED SOUL, WITH THE BEST CHORDS CALLED EXPERIENCES AND PLAY THE GUITAR CALLED LIFE" *Vikrmn*

It was great! Enough...? I thought not. We did have a lovely year of music. Old tunes and some cracking new ones, with more new pieces at the ready. We have really come on too. 'No pressure' stands firm as our mantra and despite some struggles we have managed. We are low on numbers due to incidents and accidents, which is impactful on a small band. But what matters most is they get better. We will be keeping your seats toasty. We do miss you very much though.



We welcomed two new members which is just wonderful, both of whom were playing at the switch on for Brightening Beetham. I am sure everyone enjoyed the event as much as we did.

We are having a little break during the season of bugs but will be back before the end of January. So if Father Christmas put something musical in your stocking or you finally say to yourself, 'this is the year I will take up my instrument and join the friendliest band around ...' give me a call on 07725580095.

I say it every month, but music really does give you so much. My updates have been saying it for years, the correlations between music and well being and healing have been thoroughly proven to be correct. In 2024 music literally gave me my voice back as some of you know. Ask yourself what can music do for you? I look forward to hearing from you.

"TO KINDNESS AND LOVE, THE THINGS WE NEED MOST"
The Grinch

See you soon, love and kindness as always. Tess x

Beetham Church Handbell Ringers

Christmas was once again a busy time for the handbell ringers. We were delighted to return to both Croftside and Elmsfield residential homes, where everyone joyfully joined in with the carol singing, led by members of the church choir

Levens Tuesday Club was a full house, and they not only sang carols but had a try at ringing too. This was also the case at the Royal Windermere Yacht Club, where eight willing volunteers had great fun ringing 'Frosty the Snowman', to much applause from the audience! They were also fascinated to hear the history of our historic bells

At the Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols, four of the handbell ringers provided a lovely accompaniment to one of the choir carols, *Rejoice and be merry*. Then the full team played carols as the refreshments were served after the service to end our musical handbell Christmas







Church Grand Hamper Raffle

This year's School Winter Fair was held on Saturday 30th November, and once again the Church ran their Grand Hamper Raffle. Five years ago we were really pleased to have enough donations of food and drink to make up 9 hampers, so it was a wonderful surprise this year that with thanks to everyone's kind generosity we were able to offer a record breaking 26 hamper prizes!

A very grateful thank you goes to the enthusiastic team of packers, cellophane wrappers, ribbon tiers, stall minders, and raffle ticket sellers, and to everyone who bought raffle tickets. Congratulations to all 26 winners and we hope that you have enjoyed the contents over the Christmas season

The Fair was very busy and appreciated by all who went along. It was lovely to see so many familiar faces supporting the school and church





Beetham Church Advent and Christmastide

Advent preparations began at the end of November, with the setting up of the **PoW Nativity Crib** and the creation of the **Advent Wreath**, ahead of the **Advent Carol Service** on Sunday 1st December

This was followed by a busy week getting ready for **'Brightening Beetham'**, with thanks to Ned and Tess Rowlands for organising the Christmas Trees and porch arch, to Ian and Viv Stirrup for installing the **Outdoor Crib**, and to all who helped with the trees and lights. Particular thanks go to Beetham Nurseries for their generous support for the project, and to all the local businesses and individuals who sponsored a tree. The well-attended **Big Switch-On** was held on Saturday 7th December, with the Beetham Band and mince pies and mulled wine, with thanks to the bakers and servers

The church indoor **Christmas Tree** was again generously donated by the Beetham Band and was carefully positioned and decorated in time for the School Nativity, along with the windowsill rows of candles. With thanks to Dianne Lomax and the **Flower Arranging** team, this was followed by the creation of glorious flower displays throughout the church in Christmas colours of white, red and gold. The traditional evenings of **Village Carol Singing** around Slackhead and Beetham raised £442 for the Salvation Army and the church heating appeal

The candlelit **Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols** was opened with the beautiful solo singing of the first verse of *Once in Royal David's City* by Lottie Harmer. Under the enthusiastic musical direction of Geoff Field and accompanied by Ken Forster, the choir told the Christmas story through inspirational music to complement the Bible readings telling of Christ's birth

On Christmas Eve the **Christingle** service attracted a record attendance, with Revd Andrew joyously leading the service as children brought the Nativity figures up to the Crib. Thanks go to the team of Christingle makers and to Booths Milnthorpe for providing the oranges. A total of £486 was raised for The Children's Society

Revd Andrew led **Midnight Mass** heralding the celebration of the birth of Christ, and continuing on Christmas Day with the **Christmas Eucharist** service












School Corner

December is always a magical month in schools. We began the month singing at the opening of Beetham Nurseries Christmas Markets. The whole school made the trip to the Nurseries to sing a variety of carols which was very well received by the customers of the Nurseries. Thank you to the Nurseries for inviting us to the opening.

We have been raising money for St John's Hospice for a few years now through a sponsored Reindeer Run. This year we set ourselves the target of running 500 laps of the school field as a school. On a dry Monday morning all the Beetham Reindeers, aged 2 and above, trotted to the school field with their antlers shining in the winter sunshine. Working collectively the troop of reindeer completed 573 laps of their field surpassing their target and raising £200 in sponsorship. Thank you to everyone who sponsored a reindeer for the event!

The whole school also made the journey to Lancaster Grand Theatre for the Pantomime 'Mother Goose'. The children cheered and booed enthusiastically and joined in jubilantly with the singing. Thank you to the FOBS for providing the transport to the event.

It is also the season of Christmas Parties. All of the children enjoyed a buffet lunch followed by party games and prizes. Santa also came along to the parties and delivered an early Christmas present to the children.

December would not be complete without the Nativity. Children in Preschool and Class 1 beautifully performed 'Whoops-a-Daisy Angel' to both the whole school and a packed audience of parents and relatives. The whole event was a joyous occasion and showed the confidence and courage of the children. It was really a magical performance enjoyed by everyone - well done to all the children involved! Thanks also goes to all the staff who helped to put together the performance.

Our term finished with a Carol Service in St Michael and All Angels. The whole school share in the retelling of the Nativity and singing of carols. Another joyous event to remind us of the meaning of Christmas.

As we break up for our Christmas holidays it is a time to show our gratitude to all those involved in school. Thank you to the community for supporting our events and promoting our school. Thank you to the church, again for supporting the school as well as providing space for our services and Nativity plays. Thank you to our parents for supporting the school and helping in whatever ways you are able to. Thanks to all the staff who work hard for the children and provide the wonderful learning as well as other opportunities for each and every child who is in our school. And finally thank you to all the children, for making each day special. For always been eager to learn and making the school such a wonderful place to be.

The next year promises to continue to bring wonderful opportunities and memories for everyone including the extension of our preschool hours to full time from January.

The whole school would like to wish everyone in the community a Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year.

Best wishes, Abi Johnson



Beetham WI ~ A Festive December



We got into the Festive spirit early when a group of us visited Sizergh Castle in late November where, after a coffee in the café, we were transported back in time to past Christmases. As we walked through various rooms in the Castle we could experience what life would have been like on Christmas Eve during different periods of it's history. A stroll around the Knoll followed which was quite magical with its nature-themed lights and sounds.



We had a festive social get-together at The Athenaeum, Leasgill in December where there was lots of laughter and chat as we enjoyed a delicious Christmas Lunch produced by Alison Thompson Catering.



theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Though we do not have a 'meeting' in January, we are getting together at Holgates in Silverdale for a Ten-pin Bowling session followed, of course, by a visit to the café afterwards.

For more information about our WI, contact our Secretary, Jeanette, on beethamwi@gmail.com



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BEETHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER ISSUE No 52, DECEMBER 2024

Traffic speeds in our parish continue to be a problem and a major safety concern, particularly where the A6 passes through Beetham. Despite this, getting something done about the issue is not straightforward due to the many agencies involved. Nevertheless, your councillors are persisting in pressing for action based on the findings of a comprehensive study. Based on this study, a detailed report has been prepared and circulated amongst those agencies and positive action is hoped for in 2025, in particular aimed at reducing permitted speed limits on the relevant section of the A6

During recent months there has been progress with various projects. Soundings amongst residents in Beetham village showed a clear majority in favour of retaining its iconic stocks and undertaking the work necessary to make them safe. This work has now been completed using the Parish Council's own resources; whether the stocks are put back into their original intended use remains to be seen! Finding a firm competent (and willing) to undertake extensive renovation of the Beetham war memorial has been surprisingly difficult. However, Parkin & Jackson of Kendal have now agreed to take this on, starting in the new year. This is an important matter and it is reassuring that we can now expect a satisfactory outcome.

Another project, to relocate the original Storth water pump to a new and more prominent site in the village, is ongoing. The art content of the BPC information board on Storth Green has deteriorated badly and needs to be replaced - an existing detailed sketch plan of the village has been suggested as a suitable alternative. Also under consideration is the idea from a resident to install a pictorial information panel showing in outline the view north from Sandside, for which a suitable site along the A5282 would need to be found. Sponsorship funding for this project is being actively sought.

As you will be aware, the Parish Council owns and is responsible for a number outdoor seats at many locations in the parish, many of which were donated by relatives in memory of departed loved ones. There is also a lengthy list of other 'outdoor furniture' items which need to be regularly assessed and maintained, involving significant annual expense. Bus shelters are some of the most costly items and there are three of these, of which one (at Green Lane end) is in a bad state of repair. Discussions are ongoing about what action to take here.

Reseeding has been successfully completed at one of the two Parish Council-owned plots of land following damage by unauthorised parking of motor vehicles. River pollution is currently a matter of serious concern and Beetham Parish Council has agreed to join the parish councils of Arnside and Milnthorpe in expressing this concern when and wherever appropriate.

At its meeting on 2 December 2024, your parish council approved its financial budget for 2025/26 which requires a precept from Westmorland and Furness Council of £25,723, which is in line with the previous year.

**Next meeting will be in
Beetham CE School
Monday 6th January at 7pm**

Members of the public are welcome to attend

Previous minutes and details of the Councillors can be found on the website at www.beethampc.co.uk



MILL TOUR & DEMONSTRATION

Friday 4th April, 11.30 - 1pm

BAKING WITH KATE

Wednesday 29th Jan, 11am - 2pm

CRAFTING WITH ERIKA

Monday 6th Jan, 1 - 4pm

CRAFTERNOON

Tuesday 25th Feb, 1 - 4pm

POWSOWDIE

Wednesday 22nd Jan, 11am - 2pm

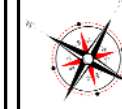
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Sunday 19th Jan, 10am - 2.30pm

Heron Corn Mill, Mill Lane, Beetham, LA7 7PQ
015395 64271 - info@heronmill.org - www.heronmill.org

Lancaster Towerbell Ringing Meeting

The Lancaster Branch of the Lancashire Association of Change Ringers will be ringing at Beetham Church on
Saturday 18th January
from 1.30-3pm



Quest Lecture Group

A friendly group, meeting at the
Athenaeum village hall, Leasgill, LA7 7ET

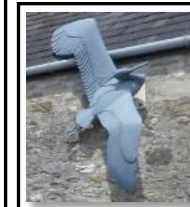
9 Jan ~ Judith Shingler & Allison Peak

'School Life in the 1950s'

23 Jan ~ Capt. Julian Blatchley

'View from the Bridge: supertankers meeting smaller ships'

All meetings are on Thursdays, starting at 10:00am. Guest tickets for individual meetings £2.50, tea/coffee included. Enquiries to Adrian Tayler: aptayler@gmail.com 01539 564030



the HERON theatre

February What's On

art
dance
music
film

Sunday 2nd Feb ~ Viva Wind Quintet (Sunday Music)

Friday 7th Feb ~ Funny Stuff (Drama)

Tuesday 11th Feb ~ The Danish Collector
(Exhibition on Screen)

Saturday 15th Feb ~ Harp and a Monkey
(Saturday Folk Music)

**Wednesday 26th Feb - Saturday 1st March ~
Uncle Vanya** (Warton Drama Group)

Book tickets online www.theherontheatre.com
email: boxoffice@theherontheatre.com ~ tel: 015395 64283
Evening performances start at 7.30pm. Sunday Music 2.30pm.
Exhibition on Screen 2pm. Refreshments available
The Heron Theatre, Stanley Street, Beetham, LA7 7AS

The Gateway deadline
Items for the February edition should be submitted by Monday 27th January
 Please email articles to jenny.marks@btinternet.com
 View deadlines online at beethamstmichaelandallangels.co.uk
 Would you like to advertise with us?
 Annual costs can be as low as just £33! To book space call John Lomax on 015395 62648 or email j.d.lomax@btinternet.com



Edith Anice
 Leslie welcomes you to her interiors shop and café in the Old Beetham Post Office
The Café is closed this month, but the Shop is still open for gifts and perfumes

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Please do be in touch with Andrew you would like to receive the parish email, if there is any support or encouragement he can offer, if you would have any questions about services church life or the Christian faith, or if you would like anyone or anything remembered in prayer.

The Gateway team would like to wish all our readers a Happy New Year
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