



SUNDAY 7 JUNE 2020

DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

**The Parishes of:** Bishop Auckland || Newton Aycliffe & Shildon || Willington  
Crook, Tow Law & Wolsingham || Tudhoe || Coundon, Ferryhill & Windlestone

---

## ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

---

### Trinity Sunday (A): John 3: 16-18

She told me her favourite song was 'Love changes everything'. It described her experience, she said. Her teenage daughter rolled her eyes - she thought it really cheesy, but it led to an awkward attempt to honestly talk about the experience of love. Frankly we didn't get too far, but maybe it set off some useful pondering.

So many of us have been in lockdown for nearly three months. We've missed contact with others - physically and visually, and the enormous emotional support we get from our relationships has been strained by distance and absence. If we've learnt to appreciate our family and friends all over again, this must continue. Let's admit it, say so, and speak our love often.

Enjoying company, spending time eating together, meeting up for coffee or a drink, swapping stories and news, sharing thoughts with trusted friends, especially longstanding mates, means we're talking love - the wonderful voltage generated in our relationships. Humour and laughter, tenderness and tears, real acceptance and understanding, forgiveness and joy, all form the identikit picture of one made in the image and likeness of God.

Being loved means you matter. You are valued. You are somebody and you make a difference. It's very clearly expressed when others put themselves out for you.

Our God does this. God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son. The time - honoured cliché that actions speak louder than words should make us pause to consider the enormity of what we have been given - because we are loved.

We rightly applaud our NHS, all carers and front-line workers. We support Help for Heroes and acknowledge those who keep the world turning. The publicity is important because we forget, we get casual and we take for granted. Lest we do that with God, his living Body, the Church, celebrates today the whirling relationship of love we call Father, Son and Holy Spirit - the origin and source of the love that changes everything.

It's said with some effect that it's harder to receive than to give. We give to many people and great causes. But stop for more than a moment to take on the enormity of what has been given to us - and receive - humbly, gratefully, tearfully, passionately and in any way you can. You are only here because of love. God intended you, believes in you and gave his only Son to show it. Feel important. God is love. You share in his life. I leave the applause to you.



DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

---

## ESCOMB PARTNERSHIP NOTE

---

### Pope and Archbishop seek 'outpouring of Holy Spirit'

Last Sunday, the Feast of Pentecost, Pope Francis took part in his first ever online service with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

Other senior UK church leaders were also involved in the Pentecost service.

Pope Francis urged all Christians to seek a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit in order that they might be bearers of Christ's love, light and hope, in a world "experiencing a tragic famine of hope" but he also urges a turning away from the "selfish pursuit of success without caring for those left behind" and to be united in facing the "pandemics of the virus and of hunger, war, contempt for life and indifference to others".

In the service he said "Today, more than ever, it is necessary to implore the Holy Spirit to pour into our hearts the life of God, who is love. Indeed, if there is to be a better future, our hearts must change for the better".

"Today our world is experiencing a tragic famine of hope. How much pain is all around us, how much emptiness, how much inconsolable grief. Let us, then, become messengers of the comfort bestowed by the Spirit. Let us radiate hope, and the Lord will open new paths as we journey towards the future".

He urges Christians worldwide to be "more deeply united as witnesses of mercy for the human family so severely tested in days" and "to ask the Spirit for the gift of unity, for only if we live as brothers and sisters can we spread the spirit of fraternity".

Archbishop Welby preached at the service and there were also contributions from other senior UK church leaders including the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, who is due to retire in June, and who gave the final blessing.