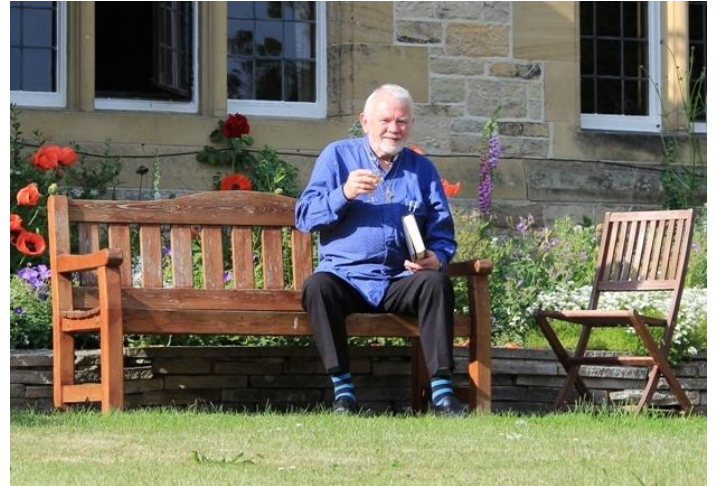


2018 Pilgrimage

'All things counter, original, spare, strange'

Our first Lincoln Readers stay at Shepherds Dene - Riding Mill, Northumberland NE44 6AF. Some had stayed before on group or individual retreats but I suspect that many of us would wish to return. The setting of the house and grounds is stunning, with plenty of space for relaxation or meditation and worship. The river is only a short walk through the gardens. The house was built in 1906 and there are many original features in the Edwardian building. In the 1940's it was gifted by the family owners, to become a Retreat House for the Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle. Groups or individuals are welcome regardless of faith. Daily worship is available in the chapel. The rooms were very comfortable with good food and hospitality!



Our Pilgrimage Leader - Revd Canon Alex Whitehead



Thursday:

After dinner, Canon Alex introduced us to the area of our Pilgrimage. He spoke of Oswald, Aiden, Hilda, Cuthbert, Wilfrid and the Venerable Bede.

Friday:

The next morning Warden Sally Buck spoke about our theme: **'All things counter, original, spare, strange'**. With words and music Sally focused on two poems by Gerard Manley Hopkins. Pied Beauty (1877) containing the line that suggested our theme and Binsey poplars (1879).

She talked about * **Selving and Unselving** - * 'The formation or modification of one's identity'. Before lunch we were asked to individually consider : Q. Am I counter, original, spare, strange? Q. Am I aware of stuck places in my life? Q. Where in my life and ministry, might I might need to take the next step?

Later we visited **Hexham Abbey** where we were treated to a tour by two very enthusiastic guides - retired Bishop Stephen and retired Dean Michael. This was followed by a short act of worship.

We returned to Shepherds Dene, with a free evening after dinner, before Compline.

Saturday:

We travelled by coach to **Jarrow**, where we were warmly welcomed by the Priest in charge - Revd Gillian Maude and her colleagues. After coffee and an introduction, we were free to explore the church and grounds, before our act of worship. After a sandwich lunch, we walked to nearby **Jarrow Hall** and the **Saxon Village**, where apart from the buildings and animals we met a very enthusiastic local, dressed in medieval costume! Returning to Shepherds Dene - it was dinner and a free evening. After visiting the Bar, a dozen folk took part in a 'Call My Bluff' style quiz!



Sunday:

After breakfast - it was worship workshop time, to prepare for our evening Eucharist. Some chose to adapt or dramatize readings, whilst others worked intercessions, other aspects of the Liturgy or music. Our small choir group sang: 'Lord We Love You So' to the tune of Gabriel's Oboe - as an anthem:

***Lord we love you so, Forgive us when we fail you.
You gave your life for us... that we might live in
you. We need you O so much, to feel your loving
touch, now and evermore... Jesus we love you,
Infill us Lord, with your Spirit. We need you O so
much.***

Once again our Pilgrimage proved a time of rich blessing!

Particular thanks to Alex, Sally, our guides and hosts at Shepherds Dene. J.M.

