

Talk by Prof. John Barton, Berwick Parish Church, 7.30 p.m. on Friday 7 June 2024

Authorised and Unauthorised Versions – Bridges or Barriers?

The King James Bible and its modern successors

King James VI and I not only united the Kingdoms of England and Scotland and ordered the building of Berwick's Old Bridge, he also commissioned the most famous translation of the Bible into English. John Barton – leading biblical scholar and author of *A History of The Bible* and *The Word: On the Translation of the Bible* (both Penguin Books) – will talk about the literary and political as well as the religious significance of this and of more modern translations of the world's most widely read book.

Notes about the Author and the Event

John Barton was the Oriel and Laing Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture at the University of Oxford from 1991 to 2014 and since 1973 has been a serving priest in the Church of England. His book *A History of The Bible: The Book and its Faiths*, was published in 2019 to immediate critical acclaim. It became a Sunday Times Top Ten Bestseller, a BBC Radio 4 Book of the Week, and won the 2019 Duff Cooper prize. It is available from Penguin in paperback, £10.99.

His more recent book *The Word: On the Translation of the Bible*, published in November 2023 by Penguin (also priced £10.99), examines how saints, scholars and interpreters from antiquity to the present have negotiated the difficult task of producing usable versions of the Bible in their own language while remaining faithful to the original.

John Barton's Talk has been arranged by Berwick Parish Church Trust, in association with the Berwick Literary Festival, as a contribution to the programme of events during 2024 celebrating the 400th anniversary of the opening of Berwick's Old Bridge, the construction of which was ordered by King James VI and I. The talk will take place in Berwick Parish Church and will be followed by an opportunity to question Professor Barton and then by refreshments and a chance for those who wish to do so to buy Prof. Barton's books.

All are welcome. There will be no charge for admission but a retiring collection will be taken to help cover the cost of the event.