



Ripon & Lower Dales Methodist Circuit

April 2023



Herald
Newsletter -
Issue No 40

Come, let us rejoice, because
Jesus who was dead is alive
again.

Let us rejoice because he lives
for evermore!

Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!



Introduction



In being asked to introduce myself the first question is often where to start, for me that start must be in the context of commonality so here goes ...

Greetings! I'm Sarah, a fellow disciple of Jesus and I am absolutely delighted that God has placed me in the beautiful circuit of

Ripon and Lower Dales where, amongst other things, I'm grateful to be a lot closer to my family and friends than I was in Guernsey!

As well as being a probationer minister, I am a daughter, sister, Mum of three and soon to be a grandparent. For the last thirty years I lived in Lincolnshire, a fact of which I was reminded as we celebrated my son's 30th birthday on December 30th, and although my family and friends are all over the country I am delighted to be back on the same body of land as they are.

I live with my dog, Charlie, a lively Cocker Spaniel, we love walking, so you may catch me some days pretending that he's well behaved and well trained, or on another day just enjoying the fact that he's with me as I explore the beautiful countryside on our doorsteps. If you visit me at home, be prepared to be met with an extremely enthusiastic four-legged welcome which you're best to simply ignore as he then shows you he really can behave!!

I'm looking forward to meeting you over the coming months and walking alongside you as together we discover the amazing things that God is doing and how we, as church, can work with Him in this place.

Welcome

March was a month of welcome and I pray April will be too. I reserved sharing these words of welcome for Revd. Sarah Caddell at her welcome service on the 18th of March for this month's issue of the Herald. I sometimes like a good anagram, so I invite you to anagrammatise 'welcome' with me.

W – Welcome, obviously, but that's too obvious and we can do better than that. So, what about **W**ork? That works but not alone, so let's add **W**ith. How about we put those together, oh yes, **W**e. We Welcome you to Work With us Together. After all, we are invited to work with God, to join in with God's mission of love and building the Kingdom of God.

E – Enjoy your time whilst living in this beautiful part of the world. Find enjoyment in surprising places whilst ministering and serving God.

L – Love Life, Live Love is a little motto of mine. Ultimately, it's about Loving God and loving our neighbour as yourself. Love is the best choice here, but let's include **L**aughter. Life in all fullness includes Love and Laughter, both godly traits.

C – Care, we can put care here, may you know the care from the churches and community as you offer pastoral care. From such care given and received may we see a culture where **C**ompassion, **C**reativity and **C**ourage flourish.

O – Omnipresent, God is, we are not. Remember we cannot be in two places at once but we can be in the place God guides us to be at the right time. So, our welcome includes recognising God is real and we need to be realistic in expectations of each other.

M – Minister, we welcome you as Minister with the gifts and graces you bring. So, our M is about us welcoming you and getting to know the 'this is **M**e' that God made and called to be a Methodist Minister.

E – Enjoyment, more enjoyment is good but let's try for

another word here. **E**ncouragement, in our welcome, may we give and find encouragement. There's something loving in the nature of being an encourager and love is felt when being encouraged. We can also add **E**veryone for our final word. May this not just be the welcome we show Sarah but what we offer to everyone.

In summary;

Welcome to **W**ork **W**ith God all together.

Enjoy and celebrate discovering God in this part of the world and life of the Church.

Love and **L**aughter as we **L**et God lead us in the Way of holiness.

Care that cultivates **C**ompassion, **C**reativity and **C**ourage.

Omnipresent God, fully known by God who seeks to dwell within us and all about us.

Me, being the 'Me' God made you to be and ministering from that place as a servant of the Lord.

Encouragement that brings joy, strength and extends grace to everyone.

So, our anagram is complete, I pray that all around the Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit family we would see this kind of welcome being given to all.

Revd. Sarah, welcome, (see above).

Yours in Christ, - **Revd. Gareth.**

Note From the Editor

Welcome to April and Easter edition of THE HERALD. It really is a bumper edition, with news, Easter service information and lots of events planned for the month ahead. Thank you again to all who have submitted articles, there's been no shortage this month and there has been lots of juggling done to squeeze it all in, but please don't let that stop you from submitting something for next time it really is great to have this

problem and makes the editing role feel very worthwhile. The deadline for May's Edition is 21 April 2023. Thank You Wishing you all a Happy Easter. – **Amanda Milner (Editor)**

Don't eat daffodils! a seriously silly but earnest reflection by Revd. Gareth Baron

In our family car journeys, Radio 1 tends to be the station of choice. Why am I telling you this? It was whilst playing this radio station that my ears pricked up as they read out messages received from their listeners about vicars eating daffodils. Before you ask, I have never eaten a daffodil. Neither do I recommend anyone else to eat daffodils for they are poisonous. Don't eat daffodils!

More stories were read out as the listeners sent in their familiar tales of being in church or a school assembly and witnessing the local vicar eat a daffodil flower. The stories began to build a picture when some recalled bits of the accompanying message that was shared. "No-one will believe I ate a daffodil, just like people struggle to believe Jesus was raised from the dead." Without getting into any deep theological reflection on this and realising some messages can get lost or altered in translation, this seemed to be something which at the very least stuck in peoples' minds. The radio presenter wondered if this was an advertising campaign from the church and questioned its success. That was before recognising that they had been talking about this on primetime mainstream radio for the last half-an-hour. Other clergy from around the country messaged the show to reassure the show that they had never eaten daffodils, along with others who recounted stories of when people accidentally digested daffodil bulbs, mistaking them for onions. All this is

pretty random and granted doesn't show the great depth, like that of listening to poetry recitals on radio four. But millions of people heard the name of Jesus that day who otherwise probably wouldn't have. Millions of listeners also heard that Jesus rose from the dead.

In a past issue of The Herald, I wrote a reflection about advertisements and asked what kind of advert are you for the Christian faith? I'm not suggesting we all should be pretending to eat a daffodil, but aspiring to live in a manner that points to Jesus is in my opinion a good aspiration to have.

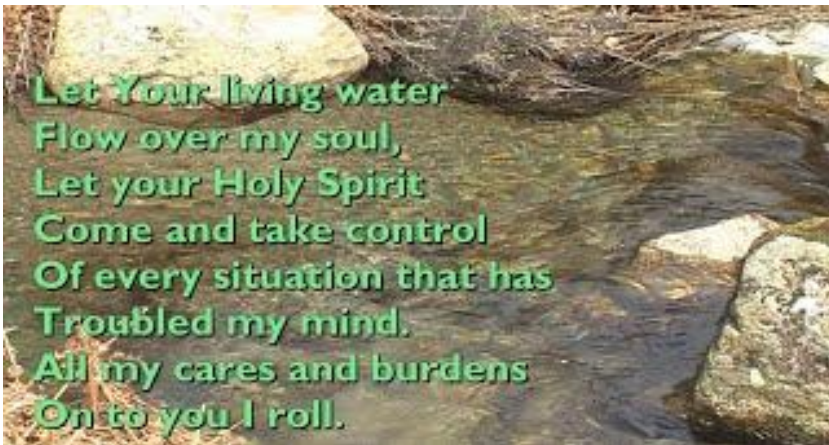
Jesus is alive! Now this is something worth talking about. But a proclamation is mere words unless matched by a life that evidences it. A proclamation by itself without a living example, fails to answer the 'so what?' question in response. Jesus is alive in me and gives me life, and shapes my life, this is proclamation becoming something else, something more and something noteworthy. It's more than just saying it, its showing God. 'Go preach the gospel and when necessary, use words.'

Shamefully at times we see lives that don't match the proclamation, which don't match the faith we say matters. Instead of showing Christ, we show unhelpful, unfair, and untrue criticism of others. Instead of telling the Gospel, we tell our gossip. Instead of extending grace, forgiveness, and compassion, we reinforce the fences to hold grudges, failings of others and conflict firmly in place.

I tend in these reflections seek to offer gentle challenge and hope filled encouragement. I certainly have not sought to use this platform to address disturbing and disappointing behaviours. Yet, experience and evidence of the above behaviours is something which must cease because it doesn't show Christ, nor the transforming grace of God in our lives.

Looking past it might seem like its extending grace, forgiveness, and compassion, yet it amounts to various levels of collusion, and that corrupts the soul. I am not pointing the

finger. I am however, sharing the kind of adverts I've seen in people. Whilst all of us with our imperfections show a pixelated image of Christ, but it is far better than ungodliness displayed in High definition. I pray therefore, that this Eastertide and beyond, we would know, receive, and live by the Living Water as people born again. I pray we would show the miracle of God's transforming and saving grace through our daily living, that we would in each moment show that Jesus is alive and remember don't eat daffodils.



The King's Coronation

Are you getting excited about the coronation? I wasn't here in 1953, but I hear stories of excitement as the late Queen was crowned, and people gathered round newly bought very tiny television sets to watch it in grainy black and white. King Charles III has waited a long time to succeed to the crown and I'm a bit sad I have had to push people into thinking what we might do to celebrate his crowning. So far, I think, with a very hard act to follow he has done well, and like his late mother, his Christian faith shone through his Christmas message to us.

Look out for what is happening in your town or village and join in with it. We have some things planned in the Circuit and ecumenically and this list may be added to as we get nearer May.

On Sunday 7 May, the day after the Coronation, Bishop Monkton has an ecumenical Songs of Praise in our chapel at 10.30am. In the afternoon at 2pm, Sawley have an ecumenical service in our chapel at 2pm followed by tea and in Ripon, there's a huge civic service in the Cathedral at 3.30pm, then Allhallowgate have an afternoon tea at 4.30pm followed by a Songs of Praise at 6.30pm. You will be welcome at any of these events.

At Christmas, the King, speaking about Jesus, the light of the world, said this: "whatever faith you have, or whether you have none, it is in this life-giving light, and with the true humility that lies in our service to others, that I believe we can find hope for the future. Let us therefore celebrate it together, and cherish it always."

Let us pray for King Charles III, the Queen Consort and the rest of the Royal Family and this nation at this time of transition and celebration.

Almighty God, we give you thanks for Charles your servant and our King, for his devotion to his family, nation and Commonwealth and to the Earth, our fragile home. We thank you for his faith in you and his love for all peoples and for his call to be our sovereign in such a time as this.

Bless and protect Charles in all the years to come, grant him long to reign over us and give him gifts of wisdom and discernment as together we face the opportunities and challenges of our age. Bless Camilla the Queen Consort, William, Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family today. May we all abide in your love, draw strength from the deep wells of Christian hope and dedicate ourselves afresh to God's kingdom of justice and peace.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. – **Revd. Ian**



May the joy of new life rise in you this Easter.

Are you/have you been waiting for Easter Sunday so your Lenten Fast can end? Is it the chocolate, the biscuits or cake you're looking forward to? Or getting to the end of the Lent book you've been reading? The end of Lent was traditionally associated with certain foods – Hot Cross buns for Good Friday (even though you can now buy them most of the year); eggs and roast lamb for Easter Sunday. Perhaps your family has other foods you associate with Easter, but let's look at those I've mentioned. Hot cross buns first – what do they symbolise? The cross on the bun reminds us of Good Friday, that Jesus died on the cross. Originally there would only have been 5 sultanas representing the 5 wounds of Christ, and the spices included remind us of the spices used to anoint Jesus' body.

Lamb for Easter was a tradition I came across as an adult. Friends had lamb for Easter Sunday dinner for a number of reasons – it was seasonal, being springtime. It can also remind us of Jesus, the Lamb of God and the Passover being celebrated when Jesus had the Last Supper with his disciples. And finally, the symbol we most often associate with Easter – the one that's been filling the shelves of the shop since Christmas stuff was cleared out – eggs. What do you think about as you choose an Easter egg to give, or take the one you've been given out of its box and foil? Do you ever stop to think about its association with Easter? The Easter egg is often spoken of as a symbol of new life – the potential for life that is within the egg. But there is more to be seen in it than that. Think about an egg – rather dead looking– even stone like (the ordinary ones that is) – then think of the stone in front of the tomb on Good Friday. Open up your egg (I'm on

chocolate ones now) – separate the two halves – what do you see? If its empty, remember the tomb on Easter morning – Jesus' body no longer there because he had risen – new life from death. If there are sweets, more chocolates, a toy, or a filling – think of the surprise the friends of Jesus had when they went to the tomb and found the angel telling them that he was risen – a good surprise and a special gift – their friend with them for ever – and with us too. Whichever kind of egg you have at Easter this year, there is something in it to remind us of the events of that first Easter.

May the joy of new life rise in you this Easter. – **Amanda Milner**



Kathy's Corner

Freedom is the “in-word” at the moment in our family. My 9 year old granddaughter is feeling the shackles of being an only child! I noticed some months ago that she wanted a bit of freedom. So I came up with one way to help Bethany. As she lives just along the road from us, her mum can see her across the road, then she just has to stay on the pavement until she gets to my home – where I’m already watching out for her. Bethany thought that was really good.

A couple of weeks ago I had the pleasure of looking after the two younger grandchildren, whilst their dad was busy doing some maintenance on his car in our garage – sometimes it seems we only see Andrew when he wants the use of the garage, as he doesn’t have one! I sent my daughter a text to say they were coming, if Bethany wanted to play with her cousins (great way to get some help baby-sitting). When her mum told Bethany, they’d walk along to see us, she looked a bit dis-gruntled, thinking she couldn’t walk herself. Grandma needs to watch Leo and Esme, she was told. That was ok, but then she wanted to know what her mummy would do, whilst she was staying with me. She wasn’t at all impressed with the idea her mum would like to stay and see her nephew and niece!

I was just glad to have both of them! I thought I’d child-proofed the house before they came – guard round the storage heater, ornaments moved up high, etc. But it was the first time Esme has been since getting her freedom – she can walk and climb now! Putting the TV onto the children’s channel wasn’t a good idea – ours is on a small unit, not high up on the wall, so Esme dancing along to the music had me fearing for the TV.

Leo remembered grandma keeps toys upstairs, and naturally I hadn’t brought down the ones he wanted, had I! So, another sign of freedom - Grandma doesn’t have a stair gate, as they

do at home. Esme was free to explore – that was great fun, especially when she found my wall mirror was at her height – who is this little girl who dances and jigs when I do? Her laughter was quite infectious!

As we enter the Easter season, freedom is offered to us too. Jesus died to set us free from the shackles of sin; his gift of the Spirit means we have someone to help us take the right path to keep us safe. On Easter morning, I hope you can look upon the new “you” and dance and jig with laughter too.

Happy Easter. Blessings from - **Kathy Lowrie**



Vic's Monthly Musings

In these days of advanced technology, we often struggle to find the human contact that we knew years ago. Don't get me wrong, as a retired science teacher, I have an innate interest in all new gadgets and technology, but there are times (and I must say quite often) that I yearn to be able to speak to a person directly.

I am sure that you will all have shared my experience of trying

to contact someone in a bank, financial institution, or government department, where you are first advised that you could have sent an email or checked a website. Then you are subjected to minutes (it seems like hours) of tedious music before you can actually speak to a person ---- if you happen to be lucky.

Well, this month I would just like to share with you two little snippets of writing that have been passed on to me during moments of “wonderful shared personal, face to face conversation”. The first was passed on to me by Harriet on one of our little Friday morning chats. I understand, from Harriet, that this item on Psalm 23 originally came from Elsie Bowe, some years ago, when she was leading a service at Leeming Chapel. The second item was passed on to me by a close friend who just wanted to remind me of some encouraging words of wisdom, written by John Wesley on the responsibilities of being a Christian.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd	That’s relationship.
I shall not want	That’s supply.
He makes me lie down in green pastures	That’s rest.
He leads me beside still waters	That’s refreshment.
He restores my soul	That’s healing.
He leads me in the right paths	That’s guidance.
For His name’s sake	That’s purpose.
Even though I walk through the dark valley	That’s challenge.
I fear no evil	That’s assurance.
For you are with me	That’s faithfulness.
Your rod and staff comfort me	That’s shelter.
You prepare a table before me,	That’s kindness

in the presence of my enemies	That's hope.
You anoint my head with oil	That's consecration.
My cup overflows	That's abundance.
Surely goodness and mercy	They're virtues.
shall follow me all the days of my life	That's a promise.
And I shall dwell in the house of the	That's security.
Lord	
For ever	That's eternity.

Words of John Wesley

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can,
In all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.

Rev. Gareth Baron an April Fool

If you investigate the origins of 'April fool's day' you are taken to France. Historians point back to 1563 and suggest that it is to do with the change from the Julian calendar to Gregorian calendar which altered the start of the new year from the Julian at the spring equinox, around the 1st of April. Those who forgot about this change and celebrated the new year in its previous starting place of April were thought to be 'poisson d'avril'. April Fool was born and now people look to prank others as its evolved into one of those weird days which makes little sense or point with bizarre made-up rules that all pranks must happen before mid-day or the prankster becomes the fool.

'For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.' 1 Corinthians 1:18

What do people make of Good Friday, when Christians gather on walks of witness carrying a Cross? And what of the many

flowered crosses that appear outside chapels and church buildings on Easter Sunday? Does the onlooker see foolishness in these public displays which focus on the cross? Do they know the message of the cross and if not, does a walk of witness or a flowered cross tell them the message of the cross? I think popular knowledge would at the very least know the cross to be a Christian symbol. Yet, the message of the cross is probably less known. The knowledge and the love of God and of His Son Jesus Christ our Saviour is not even understood by some who wear jewellery crosses.

I believe there are aspects of Christian living which are more relatable to those outside the faith than other parts. Christian acts of charity, feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, or welcoming the stranger are acts which most in wider society recognise as good. Social action or social holiness as John Wesley put it, is without doubt a helpful meeting point of people of differing faiths and non.

Other aspects of Christian living can be more challenging because glossing over the 'faith bit' is not possible and the message of the cross cannot be ignored. The perceived foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, which becomes a challenge to trust and believe in Christ Jesus crucified in our place. Peter denied Christ, Thomas questioned his friend's testimony and people today still struggle to look long enough at the redeeming act of love of Christ Jesus upon the Cross.

'For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.' 1 Corinthians 1:25

The Easter story isn't a blockbuster Hollywood movie, it's a true story that as no need of special effects or over the top make-up. It doesn't seek to present a hero figure that has been specially trained in martial-arts or any other combatant skills for that matter. Jesus didn't resist arrest, he did not seek

to escape, nor did he evade the questioning or trial officiated by Pontius Pilate. What Jesus did was die upon the cross and rise again. What Jesus did was defeat the power of sin and death, bringing in the Kingdom of God and offering forgiveness of sins to all people. Jesus victorious, gives us faith, hope and love. Jesus is alive and the cross speaks of the power of God. The true light could not be overcome by the darkness. Easter is a time for celebration because Jesus is alive and gives new life, a life which begins with Jesus on the Cross and continues for ever with Jesus in Heaven. I'm happy to be an April Fool, but not for forgetting the change of calendar and celebrating the new year. No, I'm happy to be an April Fool because I am happy to follow the Way of Christ Jesus, to take up my cross daily and if that's seems foolishness to you, then call me a fool because I intend to be it for life.



SERVICES IN HOLY WEEK

Everyone is welcome to any or all of the following services during Holy Week (which will all be different)

Monday 3rd April

Mission Church, Burrill - 7pm
Churches Together in Bedale



Tuesday 4th April

St John The Baptist Church, Leeming – 7pm
Churches Together in Bedale



Wednesday 5th April

Bedale & District Methodist Church – 7pm
Churches Together in Bedale

Thursday 6th April - Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday Communion at Bedale & District Methodist Church -
7pm
led by Revd Gareth Baron

Friday 7th April - Good Friday

Churches Together in Bedale - Walk of Witness - 10.00am
(Meet at the Bandstand)
Bedale & District Methodist Church – 10am to 4pm – Open for Private
Prayer
(See separate Notice for more details)
Section Good Friday Service – 6pm – West Tanfield Methodist Chapel
Led by Revd. Gareth Baron

Sunday 9th April - Easter Sunday

Early morning Communion Service – Bedale & District Methodist Church
– 9am
Led by Revd. David Emison

Easter Sunday Circuit Praise Service – Snape Methodist Chapel –
6.30pm
Songs, Readings, and Drama



News from our “Roving Reporters” from around the Circuit

Boroughbridge - Greetings from Boroughbridge. This month we celebrate the first anniversary of our community larder. It's been an enormous success and a fabulous example of how working in partnership with others can have amazing results. If you haven't been to visit us yet, bring your shopping bag and come and see us. We are open every Wednesday from 12pm. Coffee and tea are served from 11.45.

We have an exciting event coming up. On Friday 5 May at 7.30pm, we have the Heinz Gospel Choir from the University of Pittsburgh in the USA coming to give a concert in our church. They are a 41 member strong choir of young people on a tour of northern England, Northern Ireland and Wales and after us they head for Durham Cathedral. I've played their clips of music on their website and we are in for a great evening. We are charging £5 on the door to come. Please do. It would be great to see the church full.



Kirkby Malzeard - The congregation in Kirkby after letting go of their building at the end of October have now had three monthly services in their new home at St Andrews C of E. We are grateful to Rev Ian Kitchen and the PCC for their kindness and warm welcome to us. We worship in the village at 10.30am on the last Sunday of the month. You are welcome to join us. We have also formed a bimonthly Wednesday morning fellowship which meets in the Mechanics Institute in the village. This is a chance to catch up with each other and be together. Our next meeting is on Wednesday 3 May at 11am. As our society no longer formally exists, the members have transferred elsewhere. Most have gone to Grewelthorpe, where we had a special service of welcome on Mothering Sunday. Our chairs and a communion set and a Bible for the lectern have also gone to Grewelthorpe. Other members are now at Harrogate Road and Dallowgill.

Following the Circuit Meeting we hope to begin the formal process of letting go of the chapel. It is sad we couldn't carry on, but we are really positive we can keep a Methodist presence in Kirkby and we have strengthened other churches through joining them. I had a church in a previous Circuit which let its building go and found, freed from responsibility of keeping it going, new energy. You never know! I've just heard of a Methodist family who have moved into the village... Lastly, we remember with gratitude our friend Ruth Thomas, who was our senior steward until she was poorly. We pray for David and the family at this time.

Carthorpe - Not a lot to report, but how good to see the spring flowers all around us and the Chapel lawn cut for the first time this year, Thank you Derek.

We had a very good Tuesday Get Together, Liz took the chair and Rev James shared some of his life story with us.

We appreciate our friends from Tanfield, Pickhill and Bedale joining us we look forward to the next one on 4th April. 2pm

Jean and Joan are hosting,our speaker is Chris Carruthers with his usual beautiful music and slides.

Palm Sunday morning we have our Donkey walk with Church,as yet we don't know if we are going from Carthorpe or Burneston, this will start at 10am.

Grewelthorpe- Our monthly G Club continues, with a consistently good turnout. This remains a popular monthly event, with children of primary age exploring biblical themes through fun.

activities. Next G-Club Wednesday 12th April 6-7pm.

Our Lent Lunches served in Church through the period of Lent have been as popular as ever, a real social hub of our community. The last one will be April 3rd. 12noon-1.30pm

Please join us for a simple lunch including a choice of delicious soup, bread roll, cheese and biscuits, tea, or coffee. Donations gratefully received. This year they are to be divided equally between the DEC Turkey- Syria Earthquake Appeal and Church funds.

We are now moving forward to our Easter services. Our Palm Sunday service will be held on 2nd April, 10.30pm. We are hoping to be joined by the pupils of our village school. Other services are advertised in The Fountains magazine and can be found on the website.

<https://fountainsofchurches.co.uk/services/>

We have been delighted with our new chairs and tables that were kindly donated by the Kirkby Malzeard Methodist Chapel. They have certainly been well used especially during our Lent Lunches and have brought a breath of fresh air into our church. It has been a pleasure to welcome some of the congregation from Kirkby to our services.

Those that attended Revd Ian Pruden's recent Sacred Space Talk were thrilled with the knowledge and reflections that he shared about his travels during his sabbatical last year. We were pleased that Revd Sarah joined us for the evening.

Lastly, fundraising is still continuing for renovations in our church, including vital work on the roof. We were thrilled with The Auction of Promises fundraiser, which was well attended, and thoroughly enjoyed by all. We are now looking forward to the Spring Fair in the Village Hall, 1st April 10-2. There will be lots of interesting stalls. Also, there will be a Jumble Sale 29th April 9-2. Please come along if you can. There will be refreshments served at both events by the Hackfall café in the Village Hall.

Snape - There will be Easter Displays in chapel, from Sunday April 2nd - Sunday 9th April These will depict the Easter story. Why not pop into the chapel during any of the days (during daylight hours). Take some time to reflect over the Easter story, through the Displays.

Easter Sunday - You are warmly invited at 6.30pm to a Celebration Service of Easter Day, through songs, readings, and drama. This will be led by our singers and Rev D. Emison. Followed by light refreshments. We look forward to sharing with you, over this special time.

Bedale & District - The World Day of Prayer service took place on 3rd March at Bedale & District Methodist Church and was led by people from four different churches. Over 40 people from many of the Churches in the Bedale area attended. The service was based on Ephesians 1: 15-19: "I have heard about your faith". the letter sent to a faith community to express gratitude. Paul gave thanks to God for the Ephesians living out their love and faith and prayed that they could see these three truths: the hope to which God has called the disciples, the riches of God's glorious inheritance among the saints, and the immeasurable greatness of God's power.

God's calling has a meaning and a purpose. Oftentimes we are frustrated by difficulties and obstacles and may even lose,

our hope and faith or rely on our weak human nature. However, we are called to keep our “hope and faith” in God’s kingdom and promises. Through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, we come to see the faithful, loving, and gracious God. We regain our hope and faith to face the challenges and move forward. As it was written in Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

Throughout the letter, the author shared his prayers for the saints in the trust that they could grasp how wide and long and high and deep the love of Christ is (Ephesians 3:18). Should we be willing to respond to that love by living not for ourselves but for God? The love of Christ may be revealed through our actions, which will point to God’s glorious and abundant inheritance! What are the stories of faith that you have heard?



Finghall - Well, I have to apologise for our error last month as I forgot to send our report in on time.! However, February being February is sometimes best left to itself till the climate gets better. This is so true in Finghall as the wind is at times very strong coming down the dale, and as our location is open to the elements from both East and West, we get the so-called beast from the East and equally the Pest from the West. We may not know from where it comes or where it goes but we certainly know when it passes.

Oh, and if anyone should find the lid from our recycling box, please let me know!

Since our last epistle we haven't done much roving, but we did manage to get across to Cumbria for an overnight stay in the Moho visiting some of the family. And all our great grandkids. A lovely time but also quite a tiring one.

And talking about families, the Friends of Finghall Christian Home Group meet again on Sunday 26th March at Rose cottage in the village.

Families are wonderful things. Some large, some small, some close knit and some spread out. Our children, if we can now call them that as they have all grown and flown the nest, as they do, are quite spread out. Some with family of their own and we do not see them very often.

So, who then is our family?

When we came to Finghall some time ago and became members of the Chapel it was like being part of a family and that closeness developed over the years with all the joys and sorrows associated with family life, until of course we closed for services.

Now that we from Finghall have been welcomed into Bedale, we have become family members there. There is a togetherness that is developing as we meet and worship together, each playing our own part as family members do. Some of us see more of each other than we see of our own.

families.

Indeed, some of us who may not have family of their own, have family in the Church, which is sometimes referred to as the Church family. There is a sense of “belonging” in families, well, more than a sense really it’s a deep feeling of knowing we are loved.

But then, where did our Church family come from? It comes from God, through Jesus. And so do all our families.

The fathers being the head of our families, but there is one above us all. He is the great creator. He is our Father. The Father of all families however they may have divided and been spread out. And that “belonging” feeling tells us that we “belong” to Him.

We pray for those who feel that they don’t belong. The homeless living on the street, the outcast and the stranger. We cannot know the despair and loneliness that they must feel. But they are still part of Gods family, and we are thankful to him for all our families.



West Tanfield - J.A.M. (Jesus and me) continues to go from strength to strength and the original team of Gareth, Catherine, Barbara and Liz were joined some months ago by Kath from Bedale, a very welcome addition.

Anyone who is reading this and feels like spending some fun time with the children from North Stainley and West Tanfield Primary Schools would be very welcome to join our merry band. We still have less people than our friends from the C of E. and it is on a "come when you can" basis with all volunteers choosing what they would like to do so there is no pressure, just lots of fun with a serious message running alongside. Parents have also joined along the way, just helping out when they can spare the time.

Thanks to the generosity of the Circuit in paying the fees for the Contractor who worked on Chapel House, Tanfield found they were able to make a reasonable contribution to the purchase of a new portable stage for the school. This has meant the stage has now been ordered and will be stored on our premises.

The downside to this is that in addition to School productions, Gareth has the idea that J.A.M. might also be able to "put on a show". Trust me, left to the rest of us, "J.A.M. the Musical" will not be appearing any time soon at a Church near you. However, maybe sometime in the future we could be persuaded to put on a feature for the wider Circuit outlining what we do and how much fun it is.

Ending on a more serious note - we have an average of 18/22 children from Tanfield attending each session and anything between 8 and 15 from North Stainley, who tend to be more inclined to just turn up on the day. I think you will agree a very worthwhile venture and an opportunity for Tanfield to do their bit so far as Mission & Ministry is concerned, not forgetting Kath and Bedale's contribution.



Good Friday

Church is Open for Private Prayer -
Prayer Stations, Prayer Labyrinth -
Light Refreshments being served -
All are Welcome

Friday, 07 April 2023 |
10.00 - 16.00

*Bedale & District Methodist
Church*



Prayer Page

Living Lord,
as we listen to today's message of hope,
help us to put aside our doubts and fears.
Fill us with hope and joy
and give us a glimpse of the risen Jesus in our midst.
Amen.

We come together on this not so ordinary Sunday.
It's Easter Sunday, the day you rose from the dead!
We have gone through the fear and darkness
of Good Friday with you – now it is time to rejoice.
But emotions are funny things, Lord.
Sometimes we just can't put into words how we feel.
Different feelings seem to contradict each other.
The women at the tomb were afraid, yet filled with joy.
How could that be? Life's like that sometimes.
Thank you that today you have taken away all our fear.
And today we celebrate.
The Lord is risen.
He is risen indeed, hallelujah!

Risen Lord, on this Easter Day,
we bask in the knowledge
of the amazing love you have for us.
Today is special.
We know it in the core of our beings,
in the depths of our souls.
The spirit witnesses within us;
our salvation is assured;
your love conquers all fear.
Mighty risen Lord,
we fall at your feet in wonder.
We worship and adore you for all time.
Amen.

Among all the emotion and celebration,
we come before you now,
quietly trusting our lives to you.
When we don't fully understand what is happening,
when we hesitate to act:
lighten our darkness, Lord, we pray.
Bless us with your forgiveness.

When we don't trust you, O God,
when fear overtakes us.
When we take refuge in the tomb,
and don't want to come out.
Lighten our darkness, Lord, we pray.
Bless us with your forgiveness.

When we don't take in
the true importance of your resurrection.
When we don't live as an Easter people,
remembering that we have a faith to proclaim.
Lighten our darkness, Lord, we pray.
Bless us with your forgiveness.
Amen.

He has risen from the dead,
and is going ahead into Galilee.
There we will see him; no cause to be afraid.
Today marks the day when death was vanquished.
If God could do that,
how much more is he able to free us from our sins.
We bless you, Lord God. **Amen.**

Lord God, we thank you for today's experience
of your amazing resurrection.
We want to take our response into our everyday.
We have to get out there, and live.

In the fear, in the joy,
in the rollercoaster moments,
as well as when the path runs smoothly –
wherever you call us, whatever you ask us to do,
we trust you, Lord.

You are always with us – thanks be to God.

Amen.

God of grace,
we bring before you those who have no joy and no hope,
those who see no future, no light at the end of the tunnel,
those scarred by pain and sadness, those who grieve.

**God of grace and resurrection power,
bring your joy and healing today.**

We pray for those yet to hear your good news,
whether that is because they live in far-flung places,
or because they are closed to the message and the possibility
of ‘What if?’

May we be Easter people, willing always to share the good
news

of hope, restoration and freedom to all those we meet –
neighbours, friends and strangers alike.

God of grace...

We pray for those recovering from natural disasters
such as earthquakes and hurricanes, famine, flood and
poverty,

for all whose darkness is very real.

God of grace...

May all share in the joy of your resurrection.

Amen.

**Heavenly Father,
thank you for the fun and happiness
of Easter.
Thank you for food and treats.
Thank you for laughter and
friendship.
Thank you for eggs and excitement.
Thank, above all, that Jesus is alive,
and that we can celebrate that today!
Amen.**



Father God,
we have come with the women to your
tomb
and we have felt their reactions.
We have shared their dawning realisation that Jesus is alive.
We have experienced their joy at your living presence.
Send us out,
with your love in our hearts, and your praise on our lips
that those we meet might share our joy too.
In the name of Jesus, who lives for evermore.
Amen.

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Prayer Commitment by the Circuit Meeting:

- Pray for Aid Agencies in Afghanistan.
- Pray for our current Circuit Stewards and that the Lord will call more to join the team that are visionary, practical, caring, supportive and mindful of our circuits' needs.
- Pray for the year ahead and the Circuits Christian faith life. Especially the aspects of discipleship we can aspire to be engaged in.

Newsletter

If you know someone who would like to receive a postal copy of this newsletter, please let Amanda Milner know on 01677 427909 or 07805 623464, email milnera68@gmail.com. OR the Circuit Office.

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