



The Benefice of Upper Wensleydale 'Church in the Home'

April 2025



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Edition Number 113

From the Vicarage: - A 'Good News' Channel

For many, the Easter school holidays begin on Friday and our grandchildren are already looking forward to visiting the dale to see the signs of Spring leaping around the fields as the harvest of Lambs begin to make their presence felt once again.

'When nature resumes her loveliness, the human soul is apt to revive also' writes Harriet A. Jacobs.

Spring heralds hope; a hope that winter is behind us and that better things lie ahead, for, in the words of George Harrison: *'It's been a long, cold, lonely winter'*. But it's not just the weather that can challenge us, there can be times in our own lives when our circumstances may seem dark and bleak, leaving us feeling bruised and broken and, in recent months the national and international news has seemed to bring us nothing else.

"What we need", said a lady to me recently, "is a good news channel". And I was reminded yet again that through the love of God and the sacrifice and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ, that is precisely what we *do* have!

As disciples of Jesus, we are an **Easter people** who walk daily in the Hope that has been given us. As Easter people we are blessed with a real and substantial hope that turns our 'darkness into light'^{Ps.139:12}. The resurrection of Jesus Christ changed, and *continues* to change, absolutely everything. This is the 'good news' that my friend is seeking but hasn't yet discovered. For so many it's akin to staring at the most advanced HD TV set but unable to see anything clearly at all because it's not tuned in to receive the signal that is being broadcast. The signal is being transmitted perfectly clearly but the image is blurred & all that can be heard is some very loud background static.

Yet the Hope that is generated from this the most momentous event in human history and from the contemporary accounts of the hundreds of people who put their lives at risk by daring to declare that they had met the risen Jesus immediately after his death, has resonated across the millennia and continues to do so today. Millions of people, every day and all over the world, continue to meet the risen Christ as He continues to bring Hope and Life to everyone and anyone who would seek Him. It's a Hope that never ends because it's an **'Endless Hope'** and millions of people every day, including those living in Upper Wensleydale, continue to experience it for the very first time. We hope and pray that you can celebrate in your hearts and homes and with your church family in the many different events across the Benefice, the joy of the risen Christ this Easter.

'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.' ^{Rom.15:13}

"Alleluia! He is Risen!" - Happy Easter to each and every one of you!

Sarah and Dave

The next 'Gathering' will be on **Sunday 6 April**
10:30am at St Oswald's in Askrigg



The Power of HOPE

We look forward to welcoming you there!
Be a Blessing – Be Encouraged – Be Church

Car Parking available on the cobbles, at the Village Hall & at the former Carrs Billington site.

Been away and missed some of
Dave's sermons?

Listen to the podcasts!



Search 'Rev Dave from Wensleydale'
on your usual podcast platform.

Latest Podcasts:

Living Lent Generously
Come Up Here

St Oswald's Coffee Mornings

Askrigg Village Hall
10am to 12 noon



Next Coffee Morning:

Saturday 5 April

Proceeds this month to: Swaledale Mountain Rescue

Wensleydale Filling Station



Thornborough Hall, Leyburn

Friday 11th April

Roger Carswell

Roger is an evangelist based in Threshfield. He has written several books about the gospel and endorsed many others including 'Fine Gold' – a book about many significant Yorkshire Christians. He is closely associated with Yorkshire camps at Netherside Hall which provides Christian camps throughout the year for church groups and schools. It also runs a youth leader training programme for young leaders taking a gap year. Roger has spoken at Filling Station several times. He normally brings a small bookstall of Christian literature – so come prepared!

GOOD FRIDAY 2025 WALK OF WITNESS

with Churches Together in Upper Wensleydale



The annual Walk of Witness will begin at

Gayle Methodist Chapel
10.30 am on Friday 18th April 2025

Members and friends of Churches Together in Upper Wensleydale will reflect on events of that first Easter nearly 2000 years ago, as we walk through the town to take part in a Good Friday service at

11.30 am at St Margaret's Church

Everyone is invited to join these events.

Maundy Thursday



St Oswald's Church: Askrigg

Join us for a Shepherd's Pie Supper

food served at 6:30pm

Please register your attendance with Askrigg or the Office



Followed by:



Remembering the Last Supper

Holy Communion

7:30pm

Good Friday Walk

2pm Semerwater

A walk using the public footpath along the side of the lake. 2.5miles return

A walk to the Old Cross Stalling Busk



**Meet on
the Beach**

Followed by:

Hot Cross Buns



At St Matthew's Church Stalling Busk

Everyone is welcome!

St Oswald's Church
invites you to join us to celebrate
the completion of the Tower Project
Saturday 12th April from 2.30pm

Come and join us

We have planned an afternoon to give thanks for the completion of the church tower, and the support and dedication of everyone who has contributed to this project. The afternoon will start with an act of blessing, and include refreshments, bell ringing, an exhibition, topping out and a craft activity. Come and be part of our church history!

Ready for the years ahead – *Stephanie Durrant*

Everyone at St Oswald's is very excited about the completion of the work to the tower. The project has been running for more years than most can remember! When I joined the PCC back in 2019, all the talk was of the tower and the application for a Faculty - I had to hit the ground running to find out the exact nature of the problems with the tower and what a Faculty even was!

For those of you who don't know, the church tower had been damp for many years. The PCC Minutes from 1925 make reference to the continuing damp in the tower, suggesting that the problem had been going on for quite a few years before that. It would seem that we have those pesky Victorians to blame for the damp. In the mid 1850s, extensive remodelling of the church was carried out, and as part of that the lime render was stripped from the building. Revealing the stone gave us the image of the church we have grown accustomed to today but this stone was never meant to be exposed to the Dales weather. The tower, at the west end of the church takes the full force of the rain that sweeps in from Cumbria.

During Rev Ann Chapman's time in Askrigg, the problem of the tower was raised, mainly due to the 2014 Quinquennial Inspection report, which highlighted the worsening issue. Inside, the tower was green and black with mould. Bell ropes and wooden flooring were rotting. Our church architect, Andrew Boyce, consulted widely on the problem and Historic England and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings were very helpful with their advice and contacts. MaryRose Kearney, Chair of our Fabric Committee, has worked tirelessly to push this project forward and together with Andrew a plan was put forward to the Diocese of Leeds and the National Park for permission to re-render the tower.

This course of action was not universally accepted, even within our own PCC and congregation it took time to understand that this was the only long lasting resolution to the challenges faced. Over the following 6 years, with, of course, Covid in the mix too, the necessary permissions were sought and gained, money raised and tender documents issued. Three public meetings were held, so that the wider population had a better understanding of what was planned, and had a chance to ask questions.

Raising a not inconsiderable £250,000 was a daunting task. Grants were applied for – the National Lottery turned us down twice - but the Benefact Trust, the National Churches Trust, The National Park, the Wolfson and Headley Foundations came to our aid, as did the wonderful Jane Ritchie and the Elm House Trust. Many, many individuals and groups donated through a variety of fundraisers including Open Gardens, a silent auction of art arranged by the late Piers Browne and the infamous 5p collection jars!

Work finally started in June last year, when the scaffolding was erected and the clock removed for safekeeping. Since then, masons from Matthias Garn & Partners have worked tirelessly through sunshine, wind and rain. We have to say a special **BIG** thank you to all those living close to the tower, who have had to endure almost a year of flapping plastic, not to mention the noise of the drilling when they removed all the old cement and mortar!

And so, as I write, the clock has been reinstalled, the bells have been serviced, the finishing touches to the tower are being made and the rainwater goods are being replaced. The scaffolding is now down and we can see the tower in its new form. Yes it is different and may take some getting used to but it is already so much drier – so much so, that there is now dust rather than puddles in the ringing room. The main building is also drier and no longer smells musty. We hope you will come along and celebrate this new chapter with us, and help us to bless the tower for its next 500 years!



Lent Lunches at Gayle Chapel

It's been a lovely special time of fellowship and reflection over the last four weeks in Gayle Chapel as we have shared lunch together and joined in prayer together. Thank you to Julia and Graham DiDuca for organising the meetings and providing some wonderful soup!

BCP Lenten Prayer Meetings

Our last Lenten service of **BCP Evening Prayer** was held in St Margaret's in Hawes on Wednesday April 2nd at 6:30pm.



Over the last four weeks we have moved around the Benefice celebrating with the Prayer Book in Hardraw, Askrigg and Stalling Busk, praying for our world, our nation, our communities and the Lord's Church here, in the Upper Dale and wider afield.

Holy Week

There are many different opportunities to engage in worship, prayer, fellowship, reflection and witness as we approach the celebrations of Easter.

I encourage you to make the most of these special times together - without the prayerful and considered approach to the Cross, the joy of the Easter celebration is not set into context, and we can miss out on so much of what is at the very heart of the Passion of Christ.



Posters are available in our church buildings for you to take and display in a prominent place.

It's a simple and gentle way to remind those who walk by to consider and remember what these days are really all about.

Easter Morning Semerwater Daybreak Service With Baptisms!

6:00-7:00am



BBQ Fish on the Beach

Start your Easter Celebrations in a special way!

Come and join us once again for a wonderful start to your Easter Celebrations with our 'Daybreak Service' on the shore of beautiful Semerwater.

This year we have the additional joy of being able to celebrate two adult baptisms.

Make it an Easter Morning to remember as we gather together and share in BBQ fish and fresh bread.

From the
Benefice
Calendar

Funerals since the last Newsletter:

4 March	Elizabeth Webster
25 March	Donald Myhill

Baptism

22 March	Reuben Zach Lilley (Hardraw)
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Invite someone you know to join us for
Evening Prayer on a Sunday!

For some time now we have been offering the opportunity of sharing in a service of Afternoon/ Evening Prayer by telephone in your own home. It is very simple to join in. I am confident that there are many more people in the upper dale who would benefit from joining with us. You may be one of them, or you may know someone who would appreciate the chance to do so. If this is the case, then follow the instructions below and we look forward to welcoming you at 4pm on a Sunday afternoon.

As 4pm approaches, call this number **03330 164757**.

You will then be asked to enter the room number **893 277 00#** and the **PIN 2772#**. Then you are in! Say hello, sit quietly, and join in with the short service of prayer and reflection



You are invited

Sanctuary Day

We would like to invite you to a **Benefice Sanctuary Day** on Saturday 17th May from 10am to 4pm. The day will be led by Rev Felicity Lawson of 'ReSource' and Rev Annie Naish, Chaplain of the Scargill Community in Upper Wharfedale and will be an opportunity for us all to listen to and receive from the Holy Spirit and to take time to rest in God's peace.

There will be times of teaching, reflection and receiving throughout the day, which will end with communion in St Matthew's. The time is designed to refresh us and equip us for going forward with confidence in God's love and provision for us as individuals and as a church in Upper Wensleydale.

Refreshments and lunch will be provided. We would love you to join us in what we know will be a special day. If you would like to be a part of this special time together then please let Stephanie know by 5th May in order that we can make the necessary catering requirements.

Tel: 01969 667553

The Triumphal Entry: "The Lord needs it" (Mark 11:1-7 NIV)

I am struck by Jesus' demand: 'The Lord needs it.' May I draw your attention to five things?

First, *a demand from Jesus comes with authority.* We have nothing that is truly our own. All we have – even our lives – is a gift from God to us and can be demanded for his use.

Second, *a demand from Jesus can be costly.* Animals were valuable, especially a colt with a whole working life ahead of it. Nevertheless, at the words 'the Lord needs it', possession is handed over. We may think we have good uses for our resources. But if the Lord says, 'I need it', then the only wise thing is to give him what he demands.

Third, *a demand from Jesus needs no explanation.* Jesus doesn't say why he wants the colt; he just says, 'The Lord needs it.' He has the right to make demands without any justification. It's not our business to ask God to explain why he does actions or makes demands. To insist on an explanation is no longer to kneel before God on his throne but to seek to sit with him at a negotiating table. Explanations can wait; obedience can't.

Fourth, *a demand from Jesus can come through his disciples.* Jesus does not personally stride out and say, 'I demand this animal.' Instead, he sends his followers with his demand. Christ's authority for commands and demands – 'in my name' – can be delegated to his followers. Of course, this must not be abused but prayerfully evaluated.

Finally, *a demand from Jesus comes with a promise.* The text reads, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.' Jesus declares that he is not stealing this valuable animal, merely borrowing it. It will be returned. There will be a day when all we have given to God will be repaid in full – perhaps in this life but certainly in the next.

J. John Reverend Canon www.canonjjohn.com



Upper Wensleydale Benefice Services

April 2025

	St Mary & St John's, Hardraw 9.00am	St Margaret's, Hawes 10.30am	St Oswald's, Askrigg 10.30am	St Matthew's, Stalling Busk 2.30pm	
4 April	Sycamore Hall – Communion Service in the lounge – 10am				
6 April	The Gathering - Benefice Family Communion St Oswald's Church, Askrigg at 10.30am				Evening prayer by telephone
13 April	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	Café Style	12.30 Soup followed by Communion	Evening prayer by telephone
17 April Maundy Thursday	Benefice Supper at St Oswald's at 6.15 Come and join us for a Shepherd's Pie Supper – please let the office know you would like to attend. Followed by: Communion Service remembering & celebrating the Last Supper 7.30pm				
18 April Good Friday	Walk of Witness from Gayle Chapel at 10.30am Service at St Margaret's at 11.30pm Walk from Semerwater (2pm) to the Old Cross at Busk 3pm Hot Cross Buns at St Matthew's				
20 April	Daybreak service at Semerwater at 6am – includes baptisms Come and celebrate the start of Easter Day in the traditional way. BBQ fish and bread beside the lake –just like Jesus did!				
	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Holy Communion		Evening prayer by telephone
27 March	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Afternoon Prayer Explorers & Pathfinders	Evening prayer by telephone

Rev Dave Clark

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Administrator: Stephanie Durrant (work hours 1-5pm Tuesdays and Thursdays)