



WASHBURN & MID-WHARFE CHURCHES MAGAZINE



DECEMBER 2025 ~ ISSUE 494



To the Glory of GOD and in loving memory of the eldest son of SIR JAMES HILL Bart. This window was erected as a tribute to ARTHUR JAMES HILL Esquire, JP of Denton Park Yorks. Born 15 Jan. 1876 Died 1 Aug 1935 by his wife and daughters 1936

Washburn & Mid-Wharfe
United Benefice
Farnley, Fewston with
Blubberhouses, Leathley and Weston
with Denton.

Priest-in-Charge
Revd Teresa McLaughlin
Tel: 01943 818113
Email:
Rev.McLaughlinT@outlook.com

Honorary Assistant Clergy
The Revd Barry Miller
Tel: 01943 467641

Revd Dr Terry Drummond
01943 512208 Email:
terry.drummond@hotmail.com

Licensed Lay Ministers
John Charman, - Tel: 01943 466712

Fran Dale, email:
fed.curlew@googlemail.com

Paul McLaughlin, email
pmc1617@gmail.com

Fiona Schneider
Email fisch108@aol.co.uk

Churchwardens

Blubberhouses & Fewston:
Alison and John Bowers - Tel: 07752
431886

Denton & Weston
Ann Chadwick - Tel: 07986 454 433.

Farnley:
Peter Goodwin - Tel: 01943 969953

Leathley:
Terry Bramall CBE Tel: 07802 877799
& Liz Webster 01943 468376

Methodist Ministers

Rev Cameron Stirk
thestirks@tiscali.co.uk

Rev Tim Perkins
Tel: 01943 864187
or revtmp1971@gmail.com

Norwood Retreat Centre
Norwood, Otley LS21 2RA,
Tel: 0748 415 4032
norwoodretreatcentre@gmail.com
Methodist Chapels are in the circuit of
Wharfedale & Aireborough

Websites:

Saint Oswald's Church, Leathley
www.leathleychurch.org

All Saints Church, Farnley
www.farnleyallsaints.org

Fewston with Blubberhouses
www.fewstonwithblubberhouses.org.uk

All Saints Church Weston
www.westonchurch.wordpress.com

Benefice web site
<https://washburnmidwharfebenefice.org.uk>

Norwood Retreat Centre
www.yorkshirewestmethodist.org.uk/people-places/norwood-retreat-centre

Benefice Administrator

Anna Bowman
admin@washburnmidwharfebenefice.org.uk
Telephone: 07523 798338
please note the role is part time so I will reply to your
email or return telephone calls as soon as I am able too.
Usual work afternoon - Wednesday

Front cover Image

Cover image: The nativity.

One of Saint Helen's Denton.
Stained glass window made by
Whitefriars Glass workshop. The
friar on the windows is the symbol
of the glassworks.

Credit: Anna B





Village Church Services December



Please check on www.achurchnearyou.com
for up to date information.

7th December

Advent 2

9.30 am	Leathley	Holy Communion (TMc)
11.00 am	Fewston	Morning Prayer (PMc)
3pm	Weston	Carol Service (TD)

14th December

Advent 3

11.15am	Denton	Morning Prayer (PMc)
11.00am	Fewston	Holy Communion (TMc)
3pm	Farnley	Christingle Service (FD)

19 December 7pm Fewston **9 Lessons & Carols (TMc)**

21st December

Advent 4

9.30am	Weston	Holy Communion (TMc)
6.30 pm	Leathley	9 Lessons and Carols (TMc)

Weston & Denton with Askwith

22 December 7pm Mary and Joseph Walk - Meet at the Village Hall

24th December 2.30 pm Fewston Journey to Bethlehem

25th December Christmas Day

9.30am	Blubberhouses	Christmas Family Service (FS)
9.30am	Denton	Christmas Family Service (JC)
9.30am	Leathley	Holy Communion (TMc & PMc)

28th December Christmas 1

11.15am Denton United Benefice Communion Service (RE)
for January Services see page 6



Services at Norwood Methodist Chapel December & January

Sunday 14th December 2.30pm Carol Service led by Michael & Elizabeth Faulkner

Sunday 28th December 2.30pm United Service for various Methodist congregations led by Roland Henney

Sunday 11th January 2.30pm Covenant Service led by Rev. Cameron Stirk

Do come along and join us!

The Vicar's Monthly Message



"for it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself."

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

As we approach Christmas, we all have endless lists of things we need to do, like writing cards, buying presents, and making sure that we have special food in for the celebration when families get together. We all get caught up in a whirlwind of activity but spare a thought for those who cannot go and buy lots of presents, or even afford to buy "little luxuries" to eat. Never has the work of food banks in this country been so important. Perhaps we know of someone who may not be able to afford an expensive meal for Christmas day, or a child who may not be receiving lots of presents, perhaps we may be able to help? We see the plight of so many refugees who are searching for a place to call home, and not forgetting the homeless in our own towns with nowhere to call home. Let us be thankful for all the good things we enjoy.

Many of the good things we really enjoy are the simple things in life, as to be as a child, enjoying the wonder of the season. Jesus came into our world, not in a royal palace, but a humble stable, and throughout his life had many of the same experiences as you and I. The big difference of course was that he knew he was special; unique in fact. He is Emmanuel, God with us; the Christ child can make the most difficult of situations be turned around, as nothing is impossible with God. He can change our world if we decide to make room for him in our hearts.

When we move from the Advent season (Please see page 6, highlighting the Advent Course this year which is to be run at The Vicarage) to the Christmas season, take delight in all that is around us; the people we will share Christmas with; those whom we may take for granted; for all the good things we have and for the Christ child born all those years ago, but who can still make a big difference in our lives today.

Christmas Blessings
Teresa

News from Norwood Chapel

On Friday morning I drove off to a local school to take an advent assembly. Armed with music, words and a solitary Christmas Cracker I felt well prepared for this seasonal shindig. As I walked in the building I quickly headed for the main hall where the familiar Friday morning feeling filled the air. Some of the staff smiled and said "good morning" whilst others were busily occupied with 'interpersonal pupil-teacher disciplinary activity!'

As I waited for proceedings to begin one teacher came up to me and asked me if I was doing an Advent Assembly. "Yes, "I am." I said, at which she promptly left the hall! I felt slightly unnerved as I wondered what I had said to offend her! As I pondered this another teacher mouthed something to me, which I didn't quite get. Following an action reply I twigged it. This lady (the one who had walked out) belonged to a well known religious sect who don't believe in the divinity of Christ and so don't celebrate Christmas. I was relieved that it wasn't anything that I had done to upset her but was sad that she didn't feel able to stay and listen. Missing the assembly may not have been a tragedy but missing out on the most important birth of all time is.

George Stringer Rowe wrote a carol in which he said;

*"And to those who never listened, to the message of his birth
Who have winter but no Christmas, bringing them Thy peace on earth
Send to these the joyful tidings, by all people in each home
Be there heard the Christmas anthem: Praise to God the Christ has come."*

Winter without Christmas (a Christ-centred Christmas) is a tragedy. This is the darkest time of the year and whether or not you suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder Winter offers little or no hope. Statistics show that at Christmas suicide rates go up, more people die from natural causes, marriages fall apart, psychiatrists' patients suffer regressions and family feuds begin. All this plus more than 40 nations tearing each other apart in war situations and we soon realise that something has gone wrong. So much for peace on earth! And yet it is for this very reason that the son of God came to earth.

In his letter to the Ephesians Paul describes his readers before they knew Jesus as being

'without hope and without God in the world'. Then, he goes on to say *"But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace..."*

(Eph 2:12-14)

This is a message worth listening to and this is why at our darkest time of year (25 December) we celebrate the birth of Christ. You see the nativity is not a sentimental story about cardboard characters crowding round a cosy crib, but rather it is the historical account of the creator God stepping into the world that he made in order to save it.

PTO

News from Norwood Chapel continued

The life of Jesus had a tough beginning in a cold cowshed and a tragic end on a cruel cross. But this was God's way of salvation. In life, Jesus experienced the pain of the human condition and by his death he paid the price for human rebellion. His resurrection proves this amazing victory over sin and death. Jesus, the babe in Bethlehem, the Saviour of the world offers real hope today to all who are imprisoned by sin and despair, to all who have 'winter but no CHRISTmas'

Rev. Cameron Stirk (Norwood Methodist Church)



Advent Course - Travelling Light

"The Bible is full of comings and goings. People travel, sometimes long distances, sometimes just locally. Some travel willingly, others reluctantly; some carry a lot of stuff with them, others take little or nothing. All these movements become times of learning for those involved, part of how they grow in relationships with each other and with God.

In this Advent course, we come alongside a few of those travellers. We journey with them, reflecting with them, almost getting into conversation with them about their experiences. As we walk together with them, we notice things about where we ourselves have come from and where we are heading. We hope to find inspiration, to put a spring in our step; also guidance about the route ahead; and perhaps some warnings which may prompt us to change our own direction of travel.

In all this, we move on – towards the celebration of Christmas and towards the new year that lies beyond it. As followers of Jesus Christ, we walk with him, discovering more of the light which Christ brings and finding ways to share that light with others. "Introduction to this course

The course is to be run on a Monday afternoon at 2pm at the Vicarage, please do see if you can come and join in with us as we journey towards the celebration of the Birth of Christ.

Blessings Teresa

Village Church Services

January

4th January

9.30 am

9.30 am

11.00 am

Leathley

Weston

Fewston

The second Sunday of Christmas

Morning Prayer (Common Worship) (PMc)

Holy Communion (Book of common Prayer) (TMc)

Morning Prayer (TMc)

Community Notice Board



Denton Flower and Cleaning Rota December & January

30th & 7th December Ann Chadwick
 30th & 7th December Ann Chadwick
 14th & 21st December Helen Coble
 28th December & 4th January 2026
 Karen Boothman
 11th and 18th January Sue Wood
 25th and 1 February Julie Crowther

Weston Flower and Cleaning December & January

7th December Mr & Mrs Senior
14th & 21st & 28th December
Sally Stanley, Hazel Pullan
and any willing volunteers

4th 11th & January Mr & Mrs Senior
 18th & 25th January Mrs J Cowgill



Nine Lessons and Carols

Saint Michaels and Saint Lawrence church Fewston
 , Friday, 19 December, 7.00 pm

Assistance needed

The PCC of All Saints Church, Farnley
 would like to appoint an

Honorary Treasurer.

If you think you have the required accounting skills
 (and are able to attend a PCC meeting, 3 times a year)
 please contact the Church Warden,
 Peter Goodwin on 01943 969953.

Community Notice Board



Fewston Foxy Ladies

Happy Christmas!

The members are off to the Sun Inn
 for Christmas lunch on Tuesday
 9th December 12 for 12.30.

If you would like more information
 please contact

Gillian a ring on 01943 880362; Sue
 07812 071636; Sheila 01943 468741;
 or Margaret 01423 806151



T&T

No meeting in December

Happy Christmas and we look forward
 to see everyone for prize winning
 dominoes on 6th January 2pm

All welcome!

It is only £2 per person.
 If you want to hear more about T&T,
 give Gillian a ring on 880362
 I have always got time for T&T!



Askwith Ladies Social

The social evening is on the 2nd Thursday of the month,
 the next meeting is the

11th December at 7pm at
 The Penny Bun

Contact Anne for more information - Tel: 07713884328
 Email: laeatham@gmail.com

Ready to bowl?

Short Mat carpet bowls - We have the bowls and mat!
 Come and join us on Wednesday afternoons at 2pm.
 We meet at Fewston Parochial Hall and beginners as well as more experienced
 bowlers are very welcome.
 It's fun and very friendly!

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Get ready for the wonderful
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**Christmas
Fair**

Saturday 6th December
10.00am to 3:00pm

Treat yourself to a glass of mulled wine
and purchase local crafts
for all your Christmas gifts.
Free Entry

**Stalls and refreshments in both the Village Hall
Saint Oswald's Church.
Look forward to seeing you !**



CAROL SINGERS

The Fewston and Blubberhouses carol singers will be out and about
in December- Monday 1st we'll be singing around Timble,
Wednesday 3rd - Fewston, Monday 8th -
Norwood & Wednesday 10th - Blubberhouses.

Carol singers of all abilities are welcome and don't forget there is a
post singing supper too. If you want to join us we'll be meeting at
Fewston Parochial Hall at 6:30pm each
evening to car share, please bring a
torch and hi viz if possible.
Thank you.

Further details call Alison on
07752431886.



Norwood Social Hall Christmas Dominoes Friday December 12th 2025

Raffle & Pie and Pea supper
7pm for a 7.15pm start.

Domino dates 2026 for your diaries

Friday January 16th
Friday March 20th
Friday May 15th
Friday September 18th
Friday October 16th
Friday November 20th

Friday December 11th Christmas Dominoes

Hope you can join us.

**Askwith's
Annual Walk with Mary and Joseph
(with baby and real Donkeys)**



**Monday 22nd December 2025
Meet at Askwith Village Hall
at 7pm**

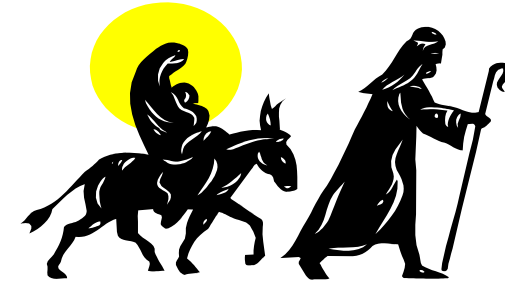
Please dress as a Shepherd or an Angel.
Adults, please wear Hi-Viz & bring a torch.

For more info please call
Ann Chadwick 07986 454 433



FEWSTON CHURCH

Wednesday, 24th December at 2.30 pm
'JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM'



Come and join in our Nativity Story
with carols, readings and Molly the donkey.

Children, please come as an angel, shepherd, king, Mary
or Joseph or one of the animals in the stable that first
Christmas. Or join in without dressing up. Parents &
Friends, please bring children to the Washburn Heritage
Centre at 1.30 pm if you wish to use our costumes.

Light refreshments will be served afterwards in the
Washburn Heritage Centre.

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fewstondrystone@gmail.com

Instagram: fewston_drystone



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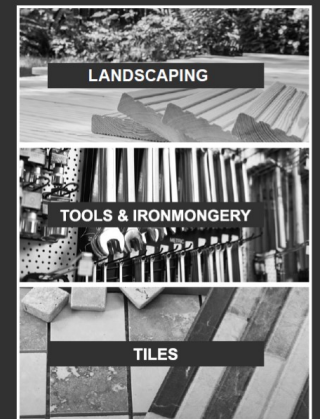
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julieahouseman@gmail.com

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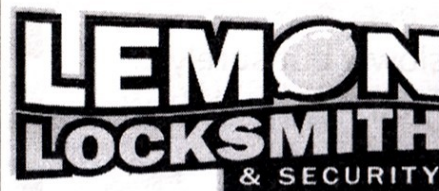
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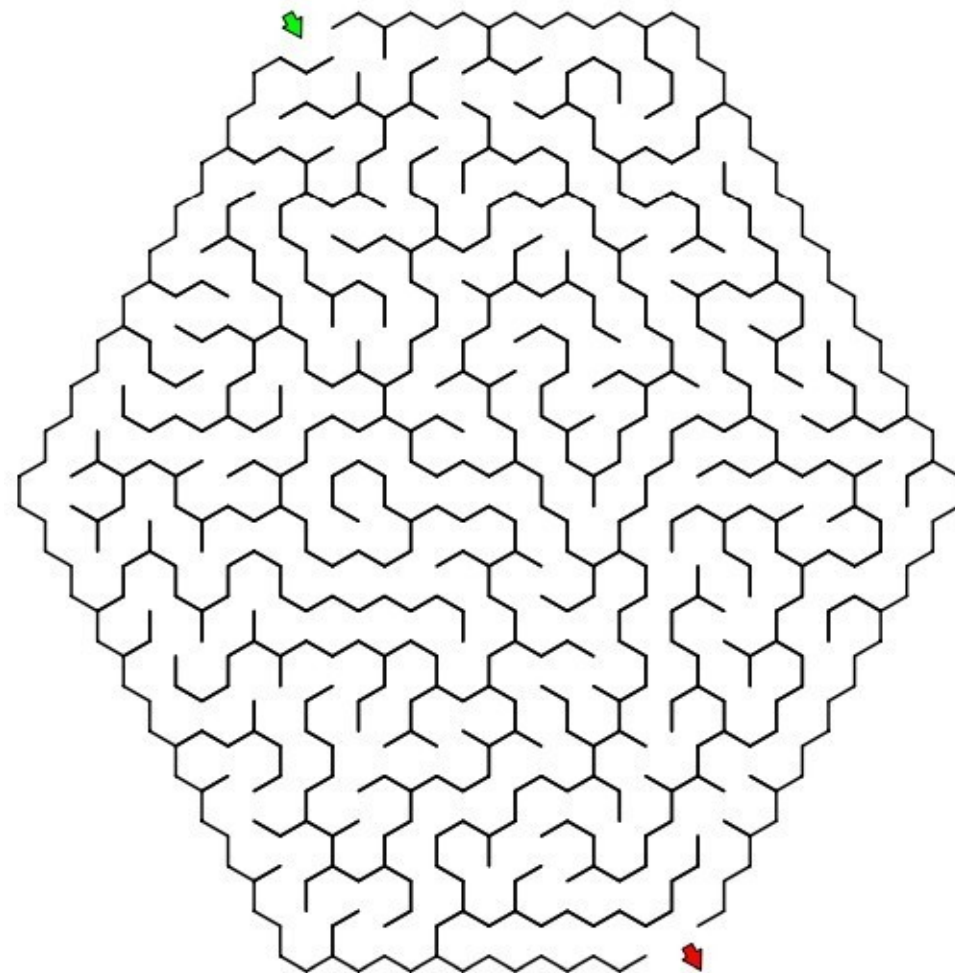
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Tel: 01943 880503 Mobile: 07778 677646

Email: janobleandson@live.co.uk

CHRISTMAS

STORY. PUZZLES AND COLOURING-IN



Shepherd's & Angel Word Search

m	a	r	y	h	m	a	n	g	e	r	u
s	p	a	l	a	c	e	p	m	q	k	s
k	l	b	c	h	r	i	s	t	h	w	h
y	q	h	e	a	r	d	e	s	e	n	e
q	p	j	c	t	o	z	e	n	a	i	p
p	r	e	n	g	h	f	n	t	v	g	h
c	a	r	e	f	u	l	y	e	h	e	
h	i	l	l	s	i	d	e	o	n	t	r
c	s	a	v	i	o	u	r	h	c	m	d
s	i	n	g	i	n	g	w	n	e	k	s
a	n	g	e	l	b	a	b	y	a	m	s
r	g	l	o	r	y	g	o	o	d	e	o

Born
Virgin
Immanuel
Bethlehem
Ruler
Israel
David
King
Just
Right
Healing
Blind
Deaf
Lame
Mute
Crucified
Pierce
Hands
Feet
Gloat



Sudoku

9			6					
2	7			8				6
	8	6		4	3	1	9	2
	9			1	6	5		
		5				2		
		3	4	5			7	
7	5	9	1	6		4	8	
3				7			2	5
					5			9

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	5					3	7	
			2	7	6			
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2		3		1				
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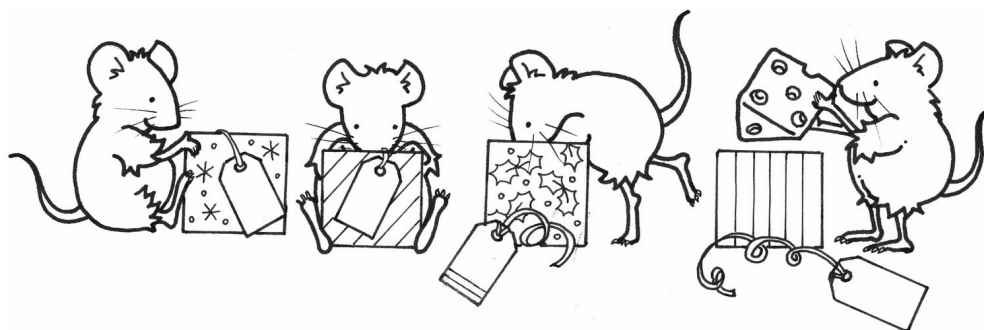
Bible Bite

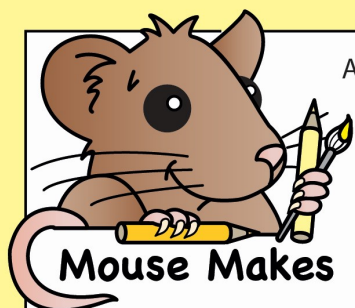
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke chapter 2 verses 8 to 20

Shepherds were paid to look after the flocks out on the hillside. Uneducated and rough, they were usually avoided, or overlooked.







At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus,
God's Son and our Saviour
coming into the world as a baby,
and we look forward to the time
when Jesus will come again,
not as a baby but as the
King of kings and Lord of lords!

read
John 14:3

A baby needs clothes
to keep warm like
a snugly sleep suit
or a vest and nappy.

What were you dressed in?

Jesus was wrapped in

.....
read Luke 2:7

A baby needs somewhere
to be born like at home
or in a hospital.

Where were you born?

Jesus was born
in a stable in

.....
read Luke 2:1-6

A baby needs
somewhere
to sleep like
a crib or a cot.
*What did you
sleep in?*

Jesus slept in a

.....
read Luke 2:7

A baby needs
a name.

*What name were
you called?*

Jesus was given
a special name
that had a
special meaning.

read
Matthew 1:21-23

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

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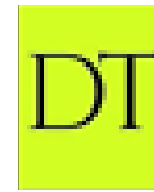
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Protecting Birds of Prey – Inside the Work of UK Wildlife Crime Policing

Following on from its **Eyes on the Skies** campaign launch in October (watch at: www.youtube.com/@friendsofthedales), Friends of the Dales next campaign event will be an online talk taking place **Tuesday 27 January, 5:30pm – 7:00pm**. Join **Detective Inspector Mark Harrison** of the **UK National Wildlife Crime Unit** for insight into the real-world challenges of protecting vulnerable and **endangered birds of prey** in North Yorkshire.

In this exclusive online talk, Mark will share **true stories from the frontline of wildlife crime policing**, revealing the realities, challenges and successes faced by officers working to safeguard some of our most at-risk species.

He will also **address common misconceptions on the role of policing in tackling birds of prey persecution**. Expect an honest and informative discussion about:

- The key challenges in investigating bird of prey crimes
- What's working well and where improvements are needed
- Future plans, strategies, and innovative policing tactics
- And, a look at a few fascinating real-life cases

Book your **free** place here: www.friendsofthedales.org.uk/events

You can also sign up to Friends of the Dales monthly e newsletter on its website homepage to be kept up to date with all Eyes on the Skies campaign developments and future events.



Titles: Short Eared Owl
Photograph credit:
Dave Dimmock

Leathley School – the story continues

On Monday 8th August 1881, Arthur Shepherd took charge of “Leathley Mixed School”. He was not impressed. There were only 10 children present, and he reported that he could “find neither reading books, chalk, pencils, paper or a work table”. By Friday Mr Shepherd reported that the sewing lessons had to take place in his own house as there was nothing in the school that could be used as a work table. Matters did not improve. By the beginning of September he reports “only 4 in attendance besides infants”. School closed for the Harvest Holidays. When it reopened, attendance was a bit better but still only 16, with nearly half the children on the register having never put in an appearance since the poor teacher started. A very welcome delivery did arrive, reading books, copy books, chalk, ink and pencils, courtesy of Mr Fawkes.

In the middle of October the School attendance Officer visited. He informed the master that he could not compel the attendance of the children who had been so irregular as the School Attendance Committee rules only applied to children living within two miles of the school. Excuses for absence varied from weather related, to work related, the latter including harvest work, watching over cows due to calve, churning butter and watching the baby! Mr Shepherd seems to have become very dispirited, lamenting the impossibility of progressing when attendance is so poor. Nonetheless, the report of the Annual Inspection in March 1882 states “The new Master has made a great alteration in this small school for the better”. The Reverend was a regular visitor, and assisted

in giving dictation, hearing reading and singing.

The winter of 1885 saw an outbreak of whooping cough, with so many absent there were some days with only 4 pupils. There continued to be tension between attending school and working. The record complains of one girl, age 11, whose parents wanted her to leave school to work. The Master noted that she had only passed two subjects rather than three in the preceding two years and so said she should stay at school. Nonetheless she was absent two thirds of the time as she was “employed by the Rector of the parish, who ought to know better”. Another pupil “had to be sent home again this morning to wash himself. He comes to school in a very dirty state although old enough to keep himself clean”. The School attendance officer made regular visits, noting those children in the village with poor attendance and addressing the parents, but it seems to have had little impact.

1987 was marked by a measles epidemic followed by an outbreak of scarlet fever. The school was closed at the beginning of March and did not re-open until the middle of April. The poor master faced a problem familiar to our present teachers. If he disciplined a child for poor behaviour, much of the time the parents would come to the school to complain and take the side of the child.

In mid-March 1888 the school was closed for a week due to snow storms. In December of that year the school was again closed due to an epidemic of

scarlet fever, remaining closed for 10 weeks. The exasperation of the master is evident in an entry for March 1889 "Mr H., the school attendance officer came today to enquire after absentees. This is his first visit since Oct 24th, nearly 5 months ago. He is of no earthly use here as he never goes to the peoples' houses" and so on! He did not mince his words about his pupils either "The above children are the most stupid backward children in the school. They are naturally dull".

By March 1891 the annual inspection reported that the school building inside and out was in urgent need of repair. Painting took place by May. Mr Shepherd left the school in August 1891, to be succeeded by Mr Broadwell. The latter was not impressed by the level of discipline, and did not last long, leaving in April 1892. Mary Hughes took over, and the register records the usual complaints about poor attendance. 10 years down the line, there are still requests for a boys urinal (I wonder what facilities there were for the girls?) Mistress Hughes handed in her resignation at the end of September 1893, apparently due to ill health. Annie Wilmot Ware

took over in January 1894. Again, not overly impressed, reporting among other things that "mental arithmetic is an unknown quantity". The Rev Canham continued to be most conscientious, visiting the school each day, and Mr Palliser each week, but this did not seem to give Mistress Wilmot sufficient support as she left in November 1894. Mr Isaac Helliwell took temporary charge until 4th March 1895, when Mr W Spencer took charge as Master.

On 19th September 1895 a Mr Rooper visited the school, and found the master was absent. The master and some older boys were at a choir practice in Church. Apparently the remaining children were in disorder and a complaint was lodged. The master received a copy of the complaint on March 25 1896, with the instruction to copy it into the log book, but the master notes that he had not received an answer to the letter he sent to the Education Dept. It is not clear what happened next, but Leathley Mixed School was closed in April 1896, and the remaining pupils transferred to Farnley School. Thus ended another era in the life of Leathley Parish Room

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

Thank you to all our readers.

A special thanks to all the contributors and the delivery teams who make the magazine possible



Washburn Heritage Centre

www.washburnvalley.org.
Follow us on Twitter and Facebook

The Tea Room at the Heritage Centre is open on **SUNDAYS** during the winter from 11am until 4pm. We welcome **NEW VOLUNTEERS**. If you can spare a few hours at the weekend once a month we would love to see you in the Tea Room. It's a busy environment, warm and friendly, but you are rewarded with cake!

Our new programme **A WINTER WELCOME** started last month with our **Well-Preserved Autumn Market**. It was a wonderful weekend of good food and good company. Well done to Judith who guessed the weight of the cake (4lbs) and will be enjoying that over Christmas. Also well done to our raffle winners who went away with a hamper, a Tea Room voucher and bottles of wine.

To book a place at any of our events in December please contact Jenny at the office on **01943 880794** or email centre@washburnvalley.org

Events in December:

Castle Howard Christmas Extravaganza, Tuesday 2nd December, 12 noon

Christmas at Castle Howard never disappoints, so we are pleased to announce that we have secured a group booking for their themed exhibition 'The Wizard of Oz'. We will meet in the car park at 11.45am. We have booked parking for five cars which is included in the price. If you are unable to car share, we can add extra cars at £7 per car. Numbers are limited so please book early. Cost £30 member,



£35 non-member. **** EVENT SOLD OUT ****

Washburn Book Group taster, A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens Thursday 4th December, 2.00pm – 3.30pm

19th December 1843 saw the publication of 6,000 copies of the first edition, and it was sold out by Christmas Eve. Since then, millions of copies have been sold worldwide. Come and discuss the phenomenon of this short novella with our friendly book group, share some Washburn cake and have an interesting afternoon. Cost £3 member, £4 non-member.

Make your own Christmas wreath, Saturday 13th December, 10am – 12pm
One of the Centre's most popular traditions! Florist Daphne Wilson will demonstrate how to make a fabulous wreath then guide us through the making of our own individual creations. Seasonal refreshments. Cost £24 member, £30 non-member.

Christmas lunch, Tuesday 19th December, 2.00pm – 4.30pm

Our usual festive meal is having a change in timing. We will meet at 2pm to share a Christmas lunch. There will be some in-house fun and a few surprises. Cost £19.50 member, £24.50 non-member. Bar available. **** EVENT SOLD OUT ****

With best wishes for a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year
From the volunteers at the Washburn Heritage Centre

The Birds in Your Garden



Mast years

Have you noticed the vast number of acorns lying under most oak trees? It certainly looks like a mast year. Masting is the term for bumper crops of seeds on certain trees which leads to a lot of well-nourished seed eaters. It can also signal a paucity of some species of autumn migrating birds, which have no need to make a perilous sea crossing to find food. We'll see.....

Only a few species have mast years, but as this includes three of our most common trees – oak, ash and beech, it is particularly noticeable.

Synchronised mass seed production (masting) results in 'predator satiation'. There is so much food available that the various seed eaters are unable to eat it all, so some is left behind to germinate and maybe grow. Then, in the poor cropping years, they struggle to find enough to eat, and populations decline as there is not enough food for all of them. This limits numbers ready for the next mast year. A natural cycle of boom and bust.

There are many suggestions as to how tree species synchronise mast years over such large areas.

Weather cues could be the trigger. Trees which respond to these cues pass on their genes, and the trait spreads via natural selection.

The internal dynamics of plants - how quickly they rebuild their food stores after the energy demands of a mast year.

Pollen exchange, allowing plants to act in unison even across wide landscapes. More recently, it has been suggested that communication is by chemical signals via mycorrhizal networks – the 'wood wide web' as its often called. For me the most plausible. Maybe it's a combination of factors, but it's a reminder that trees are far from solitary, they're part of a vast, living network

There have also been reports of bountiful fruit and berry crops this year, just look at the hedgerows. After the UK's hottest summer on record, fruiting trees like hawthorn and blackthorn have produced bumper crops that ripened earlier than usual. The National Trust has reported getting superb apple crops that have also ripened early, too.

While some trees use masting as a reproductive strategy, fruit producing species which need animals to eat or transport the fruit and disperse their seeds use a different strategy, and balance their cropping to avoid fruit and berries being wasted. So, the heavy fruit crop is probably a coincidence, most likely a result of excellent growing conditions.

One consequence of these surpluses will be population increases in the species which eat them, for instance small rodents, which will in turn (temporarily) boost their predator numbers, such as birds of prey, weasels and stoats.

But climate change is affecting the pattern of mast years. Beech is already showing signs of a reduced ability to synchronise nut production, possibly because of changing weather cues, and this is leading to fewer seedlings

becoming established. At a time when forest regeneration is more vital than ever, it's concerning that changing weather patterns could have a detrimental effect on the synchronisation of mast years.



Titles: Grey Squirrel
Photograph credit:
Mike Gray

All in the month of December

It was:

250 years ago, on 16th Dec 1775 that Jane Austen, novelist (*Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Persuasion*) was born. Over 30 million copies of her books have been sold, 7,000 of them in her lifetime.

175 years ago, on 4th Dec 1850 that William Sturgeon, physicist, electrical engineer and inventor died. He created the first electromagnets and invented the first British electric motor.

150 years ago, on 6th Dec 1875 that Evelyn Underhill, writer and pacifist was born. Best known for her books on religion and Christian mysticism.

80 years ago, on 27th Dec 1945 that The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development were founded. They had been created at the Bretton Woods Conference in July 1944.

75 years ago, on 25th Dec 1950 that the Stone of Scone, the coronation stone of

Continued on page 36

Phoenix Singers

Phoenix Singers in hearty voice at their a capella concert in St Helen's, Denton on Friday 7th November. They presented a selection of music from Orlando Gibbons to Elgar, the Beatles

and Billy Joel, enjoyed on a wet November evening by a very appreciative audience. Many thanks to all the singers and especially to Helen Cobley for organising the event.



Farnley Estate Womens Institute



Although 2025 is slowly ending our WI has still a lot to look forward to.

In November our speaker is Pat Brown who will give our members an insight into what is involved in training puppies as guide dogs for the blind. Pat was a very experienced puppy walking trainer and is bringing two dogs with her to the meeting.

Our year will conclude with a festive atmosphere as we all participate in a Christmas crafting evening which will be a lot of fun.

To view our programme for 2026

please visit <https://yorkshire-north-west.thewi.org.uk/find-wi/farnley-estate>. All our meetings take place on the second Wednesday of the month at Leathley Village Hall at 7-30pm unless otherwise stated. In addition on the 4th Wednesday of the month our new social events begin and these have been chosen by our members.

If you would like to come to any of the events above or want to know more about our WI please contact Diane Hanline our President by email to farnleyestatewi@gmail.com.



Recipe ~ Ginger Bread



This Recipe is reproduced from the All Saints Weston Recipe book, that was first printed 1st December 1956. 52 years later it was discovered by Reverend Marlene Wilkinson in her mothers possessions and reprinted again. She dedicated it to "Edith and all the other saints who made their Contributions"

68 years later we are sharing the recipes again.
Thank you to the people of Weston for their recipes

Ingredients

1 lb flour
9 ozs Brown Sugar
5 ozs butter
1 1/2 Teaspoonfuls of ginger
1 1/2 Teaspoonfuls of Nutmeg
1 1/2 Teaspoonfuls of Bi-Carbonate of Soda
9 oz of treacle (or treacle and Golden syrup)
1 egg beaten

Method

- Place all the dry ingredients in a mixing bowl and stir.
- Gently heat the butter, (in a pan

or microwave) treacle until just melted and combine with the dry ingredients. Gently add the beaten egg.

- Combine all the ingredients into a smooth batter
- Place the batter into a lined loaf tin
- Bake in a preheated oven 180C (160 fan or Gas mark 4) turning the oven down to 160C (140 fan or gas mark 3)
- Cook for 1 hour or until a skewer can be extracted clean.

Mrs Burke



... All in the month of December ~ continued from page 35

British monarchs, was taken from Westminster Abbey in London by four Scottish students. They transported it to Scotland but broke it. It was later returned to London and used in the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Since 1996 it has been kept in Edinburgh Castle, with the agreement that it will be transported to Westminster Abbey when needed for a coronations.

70 years ago, on 1st Dec 1955 that African American civil rights activist Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white man in Montgomery Alabama. This violated the city's racial segregation laws, and led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott (5th to 20th Dec 1956) and the birth of the modern American civil rights movement.

70 years ago, on 20th Dec 1955 that Cardiff was proclaimed the capital city of Wales.

65 years ago, on 9th Dec 1960 that the first episode of the TV soap Coronation Street was broadcast on ITV.

60 years ago, on 22nd Dec 1965 that Richard Dimbleby, journalist and radio-television broadcaster, died. The BBC's first war correspondent, he was one of the greatest figures in British broadcasting history. Father of the TV presenters David Dimbleby and Jonathan Dimbleby.

40 years ago, on 2nd Dec 1985 that Philip Larkin, poet, librarian and jazz critic died

Continued on page 36 (bottom)



Gardeners Corner



What a blaze of colour we have enjoyed in the autumn. Trees have been spectacular this year, giving us an opportunity to choose something to plant for future enjoyment. The dormant season (October – March) is the perfect time to introduce a new tree, as long as the ground is neither frozen nor waterlogged.

Apple trees can be pruned in the winter (but leave plums until summer). The idea is to get good air circulation and light through the crown of the tree. Remove any dead, diseased or crossing branches, cutting back to strong, mature wood. Blackcurrants bushes can also be pruned and opened up by removing old, thick stems at the base, leaving about six to ten upright shoots. Give them a mulch too. Recent days have been very

windy, so if you haven't already, do check roses and give them a prune to prevent wind rock, which can upset their roots.

Pinch out the tips of the sweet peas you sowed last month, once they are about 3 or 4 inches tall. This will encourage them to bush out and prevent them from becoming leggy.

If you are buying a cut Christmas tree, saw off the bottom couple of inches of the trunk and stand the tree in water. You can also spray the needles with a mister to keep them hydrated. Similarly, if you have a potted tree, keep it moist with regular watering, but don't sit it in a saucer of water. Plant it out in the ground after Christmas, or transfer it to a bigger pot ready to grow on for next year.



... All in the month of December ~ continued from page 36

40 years ago, on 7th Dec 1985 that Robert Graves, poet novelist, critic, translator and classical scholar died. Best known for *I, Claudius*, and *Goodbye to All That*.

30 years ago, on 22nd Dec 1995 that the British 'rogue trader' Nick Leeson was jailed for six and a half years in Singapore for fraudulent financial dealings which had led to the fall of Barings Bank.

30 years ago, on 8th Dec 1995 that Head teacher Philip Lawrence was stabbed to death outside his west London school while trying to protect a student who was being assaulted by a gang of youths.

25 years ago, 13th Dec 2000, that George Bush finally claimed the US presidency, 36 days after the election was held. The results

were delayed by disputed votes in Florida.

20 years ago, on 27th Dec 2000 that British pharmaceutical companies Glaxo Wellcome and SmithKline Beecham merged, to create the world's largest pharmaceutical company, GlaxoSmithKline.

15 years ago, on 16th Dec 2010 that Ireland was granted a 67.5 billion Euro bailout from the European Union to rescue its banks and other financial institutions from collapsing.

10 years ago, on 19th Dec 2015 that Jimmy Hill, football player, manager and host of the BBC football TV series *Match of the Day* (1973-88) died.

WASHBURN & MID-WHARFE CHURCHES MAGAZINE

Feeling inspired?

The magazine is created by compiling contributions from readers, the many people associated with running the churches, societies, clubs and event holders. Thank you to everyone for sending in items each month.

If you feel inspired to write an article for the magazine. Share some news, a poem or a seasonal recipe, please send them to the editor.

Email your items to:
magazine@washburnmidwharfebenefice.org.uk

Or send by post to;
C/O The Heritage Centre Office
Washburn Heritage Centre
Fewston Church
Harrogate
HG3 1SU

Our magazine

The magazine was created to link the communities of the Anglican and Methodist churches in the Mid-Wharfe and lower Washburn Valley. The Anglican churches of the United Benefice are All Saints Weston, Saint Helen Denton, Saint Michael and Saint Laurence Fewston, St Andrew Blubberhouses, All Saints Farnley and Saint Oswald Leathley. Norwood chapel is in the Wharfedale & Aireborough Methodist circuit

Please find contact information on page 2.

The magazine is managed by our Treasurer Ann Johnson, Distributors who include Cheri Beaumont and the Editor Anna Bowman.

Advertising

We encourage business that are happy to provide a service in our rural parishes to advertise with us.

Please contact Ann Johnson by email ann@apmj.co.uk or Tel: 01943 880000 to discuss your advert

Our Prices are £100 for a half page or £50 for a quarter page, per annum (12 issues).

We are also happy to discuss single adverts for events.

Magazine Archive

To see past issues we have an online archive. Thank you to Paul (one of three Pauls who help create and deliver the magazine) for editing the website www.fewstonwithblubberhouses.org.uk/church-life/parish-magazine/.

How to Subscribe

The magazine costs £7 a year to have 12 copies of the magazine delivered by hand or £17.50 to have it posted directly.

Please contact the Editor if you would like to arrange delivery and payments

Answers to the November Magazine puzzles

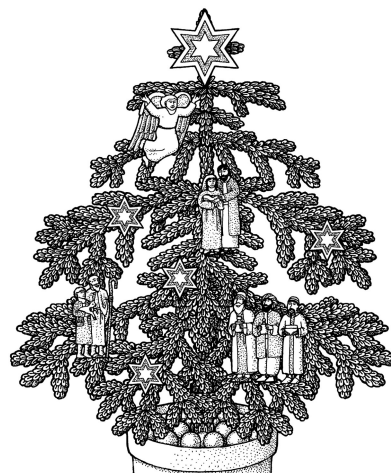
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a	f	r	a	i	d	n	s	c	l	f	g
w	o	o	l	j	a	r	s	k	h	u	g



We've got online carol-singers again!



The printer
This magazine is printed by Avenue
Printers of Harrogate



Please see the Community Notice Board and notices on pages 7 - 12 for events, notices and future dates for your diary.

- Birds of Prey talk see page 29
- For the Washburn Heritage Centre see page 32
- For the Farnley Estate Womens Institute see page 33

Puzzles and colouring in the centre pages



Sara preferred to let people work out the
hymns for themselves



Next Contribution Deadline: 6th December

2025 Deadlines;
10th January, 10th February, 10th March

Edited by Anna Bowman

Email; magazine@washburnmidwharfebenefice.org.uk
For more information about the magazine and how you can contribute
subscribe or advertise please see page 38