

August—September 2024

Number 702

The Messenger

The magazine of the Bridge Church, Otley

Prince of Peace
The Most High God
The LORD is peace
Father Son Holy Spirit
The LORD who provides
The God of Eternity
Wonderful Counsellor
THE ANCIENT OF DAYS
The LORD of hosts



The Bridge Church

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH IN OTLEY

The official Magazine of the
Bridge United Reformed Church, Otley
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Messenger letter

Dear Friends,

Our wonderful scarecrows are gracing our church lawn once more, rain has stopped play at Headingley, the roof of centre court at Wimbledon has been closed, Otley Carnival and our Teas on the Lawn got a thorough soaking, and our garden water butts are full to the brim. Whilst we might still have been keeping our coats and umbrellas close to hand, our lawns are lush, we have water a-plenty to drink and our land is truly green and pleasant. Yes, we are in the height of a great British summer!

As we get to this stage of our summer, schools have broken up and our various clubs, meetings, Uniformed Organisations and Junior Church are all taking a well-deserved break. Whilst for some, the prospect of a few weeks away from everyday activities brings excitement and the hope of long hot lazy days, or the anticipation of holidays away with family or friends, for others it can be the prospect of a time for missing the close fellowship of a regular meeting with friends and it may seem that there are long weeks ahead before all activities recommence with renewed enthusiasm and ideas. We should not forget that for some, loneliness, heartache and illness continue whatever the weather and time of year and those feelings can be heightened thinking that everyone else is having time away with loved ones and leaving their everyday cares and worries behind for a couple of weeks or so.

In September and the start of a new academic year, we think of the young people in our church family who are changing schools, moving on to university, or just moving up a year at the same school. We hope you all enjoy the

challenge of making new friends, of getting to know new places and to enjoy rekindling friendships from last term.

At the time of finishing this letter the weather has changed and it really does feel like summer! In fact, dare I see "it's just too hot?!" If only we could guarantee that the forecast for the remaining weeks of summer would be all blue skies and sunshine, as they always seemed to be, then it would give us all a much-needed boost. But we cannot. What we can guarantee though is that through rain or shine and whatever challenges and joys we pursue in the coming weeks, whether we are facing very new and unknown situations, or just getting along with the challenge of our normal daily lives, we can face them in the knowledge that we are surrounded by the eternal love of God and will be guided by the Holy Spirit, and that will never fail.

Maybe the long-term forecast isn't that bad after all!

With love,

Margaret Armitage.

MINISTER'S REGISTER: JUNE - JULY 2024

BAPTISM

30th June Imogen Hope Wragg

28th July Ella Isabelle Glennon

FUNERALS

5th June Mrs Lillian Todd Rawdon Crematorium

18th June Mr Ted Jackson The Bridge Church

20th June Mrs Barbara Deakin Shay Grange Crematorium
The Bridge Church

26th June Mr Tony Carruthers The Bridge Church
Otley Cemetery

PREACHING PLAN
18th August 2024 – 13th October 2024

Sunday 18th August – Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Mrs Helen Windsor

Jason is involved in an ecumenical service in Burley

**Sunday 25th August – Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost -
Taste and See**

Reverend Jason McCullagh

Jonah 4

**Sunday 1st September – Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sacrament of Holy Communion**

Reverend Jason McCullagh

James 1. 17-27

Sunday 8th September – Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Reverend Jason McCullagh.

James 2. 1-17

**Sunday 15th September – Seventeenth Sunday after
Pentecost**

Reverend Joe Amoah – Newly ordained Minister at St Paul’s,
Harrogate. Jason is on holiday.

**Sunday 22nd September – Eighteenth Sunday after
Pentecost**

Harvest Festival Parade Service

Reverend Jason McCullagh

**Sunday 29th September – Nineteenth Sunday after
Pentecost**

10:30am

Reverend Jason McCullagh

Esther 7. 1-6, 9-10; 9.20-22

2:30pm

Churches Together in Otley Harvest Songs of Praise

**Sunday 6th October – Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
Sacrament of Holy Communion**

Reverend Jason McCullagh

Readings still to be arranged.

Sunday 13th October – Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

Reverend Jason McCullagh.

Readings still to be arranged

News of the Family

Baptisms

It has been a delight to recently share in two baptism services.

Imogen Hope Wragg was baptised on the 30th of June 2024. Imogen is the baby daughter of Stephen and Rebecca Wragg and was supported by family, some of whom had travelled from Doncaster to share her special day.

Ella Isabelle Glennon was baptised on the 28th of July 2024. Ella is the baby daughter of Liam and Lyndsay Glennon and Ella was also supported by family and friends. It was good to have both families with us and we hope the memories of the baptisms will remain with them.

Education Changes

Several of our young people are having changes to their educational lives this September.

Paul Bettie is starting school for the first time and will be going to the Whartons Primary School, where he will join big brother George.

Ella Paterson has done well in her SATS exams and is leaving Askwith Primary School to start at Prince Henry's Grammar School.

William Moffat is moving up to the high school section at Woodhouse Grove School.

At the other end of school life, Noah Dockar has now left Prince Henry's and is looking to study Bio Medical Sciences in University at either Cardiff or Liverpool, dependant on his A-Level results We will miss you Noah during term time but look forward to seeing you again when you get chance to come back home.

Amelie Stringer, Maureen's Granddaughter, has also left school and is hoping to study at Leeds College to eventually work in Mental Health and Social Care.

We wish you all the very best of luck as you adjust to new

places, new friends and the joy of learning new knowledge.

Uniformed Organisation Awards.

Our dedicated Uniformed Organisation leaders have been collecting awards and medals throughout the year, as we know, and we have heard of yet another! Congratulations go to Janet Marsden who has received the Girl Guiding Award for 50 years of service, plus the Yorkshire Rose award for exceptional service to Girl Guiding in Leeds.

Please do pass on any items of good news you wish to share to the Pastoral Elders.

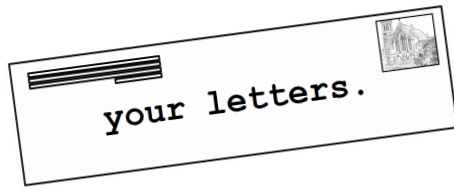
Margaret Armitage.

TEN YEARS OF SINGING 4 FUN

The Bridge Church Singing 4 Fun Group recently celebrated their tenth Anniversary. The group has regularly met on alternate Monday evenings and has performed a several concerts, sung at weddings and also entertained the 'Womens Meeting' on several occasions.

Throughout this period the group has been more than ably led by Anne Wigglesworth, and even managed to keep going during the pandemic (via Zoom)! To celebrate this momentous occasion the group sang their favourite songs as voted for by the members of the group and this was then followed by cakes and prosecco. Anne was also presented with a gift to thank her for her dedication and enthusiasm.





Dear Friends

Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers you gave me after church. The colours are gorgeous and so uplifting. I feel very touched to know that I have been thought about during my hospital stay. Although I still feel rather weak and tired, I think I am making good progress!

Evelyn Friend

Dear Friends

On behalf of my Grandson Faisal, I would like to thank everyone very much indeed for sponsoring him on his recent sponsored walk. This was held in Leicester and he managed to raise £440 for the Alzheimers Association, which contributed to a total amount of £4,500 raised by the whole group.

Irene Woolley

Dear Friends

A big thank you for my gifts, flowers, plants, phone calls, visiting me and your prayers.

Love from the bottom of my heart.

God Bless

Margaret Crossfield

THE KNITTED BIBLE IS COMING TO THE BRIDGE!

The knitted bible exhibition is coming to The Bridge Church for the month of October. The 'Knitted Bible@ belongs to St George's URC in Hartlepool who kindly loan it out to other Churches across the United Kingdom, its journey this year has taken in churches in Essex, Lincolnshire, Warwickshire, Powys and Gwynedd. It will travel to Cumbria before arriving with us.

The knitted bible comprises displays of 36 biblical events covering both Old and New Testaments of the Bible.



TASTE AND SEE

Our 'Taste and See' Services have now been running for three months and this month we will conclude our journey through the Book of Jonah. Thank you for engaging with this new style as enthusiastically as you have.

There will two more 'Taste and See' Services this year:
Sunday 27th October when will be celebrating Bible Sunday.
Sunday 24th November when we will be celebrating Christ the King.

If you feel that you can help by either chairing the discussion group or offering a creative activity, please get in touch with me so I can share more of what these themes will be.

Jason

Hebden Bridge Band Concert

On Saturday 13th July we were delighted to welcome the Hebden Bridge Band to the Bridge Church to perform a Last Night of the Proms style concert.

The Fund-Raising Team had done an excellent job of decorating the sanctuary in a red, white and blue theme, and thanks to Gordon we had lighting scheme in the same effect which looked great as the night progressed and the daylight started to fade.

We were delighted to see the sanctuary full of visitors, at least 130 people had come along to hear the band. Following the introduction by Ade, the bands conductor for the evening, we had the pleasure of hearing Army of the Nile, Greatest Storyteller, Donegal Bay - Troy Men of Harlech, All Through the Night and Pineapple Poll before the interval refreshments.

The second part of the evening commenced with I'm Still Standing Napoli – Chiron Leather, Eleanor Rigby, When I'm 64, Hey Jude, All in the April Evening, Fantasia on British Sea Songs, Pomp & Circumstance and Jerusalem to much singing and flag waving.

The event raised just over £600.00 towards our charity this year, The Hollybush Project.



Women's Meeting

On Monday 3rd June we had Doreen Hodgson talking to us on 'Setting up Schools in rural South Africa'. Doreen first went to South Africa after much persuading. It was a part holiday and part looking how schools were and how she and others could help improve things. She has since been many times improving schools and taking her grandchildren with her as they reached eighteen and they saved up so they could go and help with this wonderful mission. There are five grandchildren in all.

After helping near Johannesburg, they moved on and started the Masenale Project, first of all getting a supply of water, then building a school. Doreen could be seen (on slides) decorating the outside of buildings with colourful balloons and kites. They started a Toy Library which was mobile and most children had no toys at all! Unfortunately Covid meant that the schools closed, some have now reopened and more are expected to.

Doreen travelled at least twice a year to assist the teachers until she was over eighty. They now have a charity and are still supported by the original churches. A most interesting account of her days in South Africa and the wonderful work they did, and still do!

On Monday 17th June for our last meeting of the season we were entertained by the 'Singing for Fun' Choir. Led by Anne Wigglesworth, it is their 10th anniversary this year. We all joined in the 'warm up' song, and there was a range of songs from the 'Sound of Music' and a Medley of Disney songs. Gordon told a funny story about 'Yorkshire puddings', Angela read two poems, one about a Lamb and the other about smiling. We had more songs and then more poetry and a story from Chris and Jackie.

Songs from 'Mama Mia' and 'The Lion King' followed. Then a comical sketch from 'Cinderella', it was "alright"!! We ended with 'Bring me Sunshine', it really was such a variety, enjoyed by everyone. Afterwards we had wonderful cream cake, shortcake and strawberries, delightful!

Pam Bradley

Young Peoples Pages

The gardener and the Vine



JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONCE HE TOLD HIS FRIENDS ALL
ABOUT A GARDENER.

THE GARDENER'S JOB WAS
TO CARE FOR THE VINES



HE WOULD LOOK AT EACH
BRANCH CAREFULLY..

... AND IF IT WAS PRODUCING
GOOD FRUIT, HE WOULD CARE
FOR IT AND NOURISH IT.



IF IT WAS PRODUCING BAD
FRUIT...



...OR NO FRUIT AT
ALL...

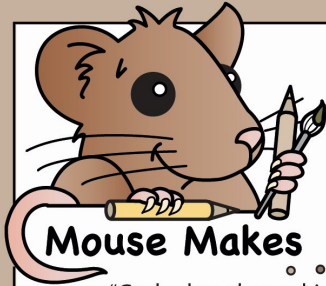


...THEN THE GARDENER WOULD
CHOP IT OFF, AND BURN IT IN
THE FIRE!!

JESUS WANTED HIS FRIENDS TO SHARE
THE GOOD NEWS - THAT'S LIKE THE
VINE BEARING GOOD FRUIT.



YOU CAN READ THIS SPECIAL PARABLE IN JOHN'S
GOSPEL, CHAPTER 15.



Mouse Makes

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

"May the peoples
 _____ you, O God!
 May all the peoples praise you!
 The land yields its harvest;
 God, our God blesses us."

Psalm 67:5-6 NIV

"God ... has shown kindness by
 giving you rain from heaven
 and crops in their seasons.
 He provides you with
 plenty of _____. He fills
 your hearts with joy."

Acts 14:16-17 NIV

"Let us fear and respect
 the Lord our God.
 He gives us autumn and
 spring _____
 at the right time.
 He makes sure that we
 have the harvest at
 just the right time."

Jeremiah 5:24 ERV

"Honour the Lord with your wealth
 and the first part of your harvest."

Proverbs 3:9 ERV

O A G A T H E R A I N S
 S V O G M A U T U M N P
 O G D O P R O D U C E R
 I H J O Y V S H A R E I
 L A N D H E P R A Y D N
 T H A N K S G I V I N G
 Y P F E R T I L E E P S
 B L E S S E D D E L R W
 S E A S O N F O O D A A
 U N R E W K I F R U I T
 N T T E N S C R O P S E
 N Y H D P R O V I D E R

HARVEST • THANKSGIVING • LAND • EARTH • FERTILE • SOIL • SEED • SOWN
 NEED • WATER • SUN • SEASON • AUTUMN • SPRING • YIELD • PRODUCE
 FRUIT • GATHER • CROPS • PLENTY • PRAY • GOD • PROVIDE • JOY
 BLESSED • GOODNESS • SHARE

Find the words from the questions too!

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Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Matthew chapter 20 verses 1-15

Jesus told a story to describe God's kingdom.
A vineyard owner went to the marketplace
at dawn to hire workers to pick his grapes.

I'll pay you the normal
wage for a day's work.



He went out again
at 9 o'clock ...



and again with just 1 hour
to go before sunset.



At the end of the day..



Pay the last workers first.

They were given a
whole day's wage..



and so were those who
had worked all day.



You paid them the same
and we worked all day!



My friend, you agreed to
work for a day's wage

I want to give those
who were hired last
the same as you got.



Can't I do what I want
with my own money?

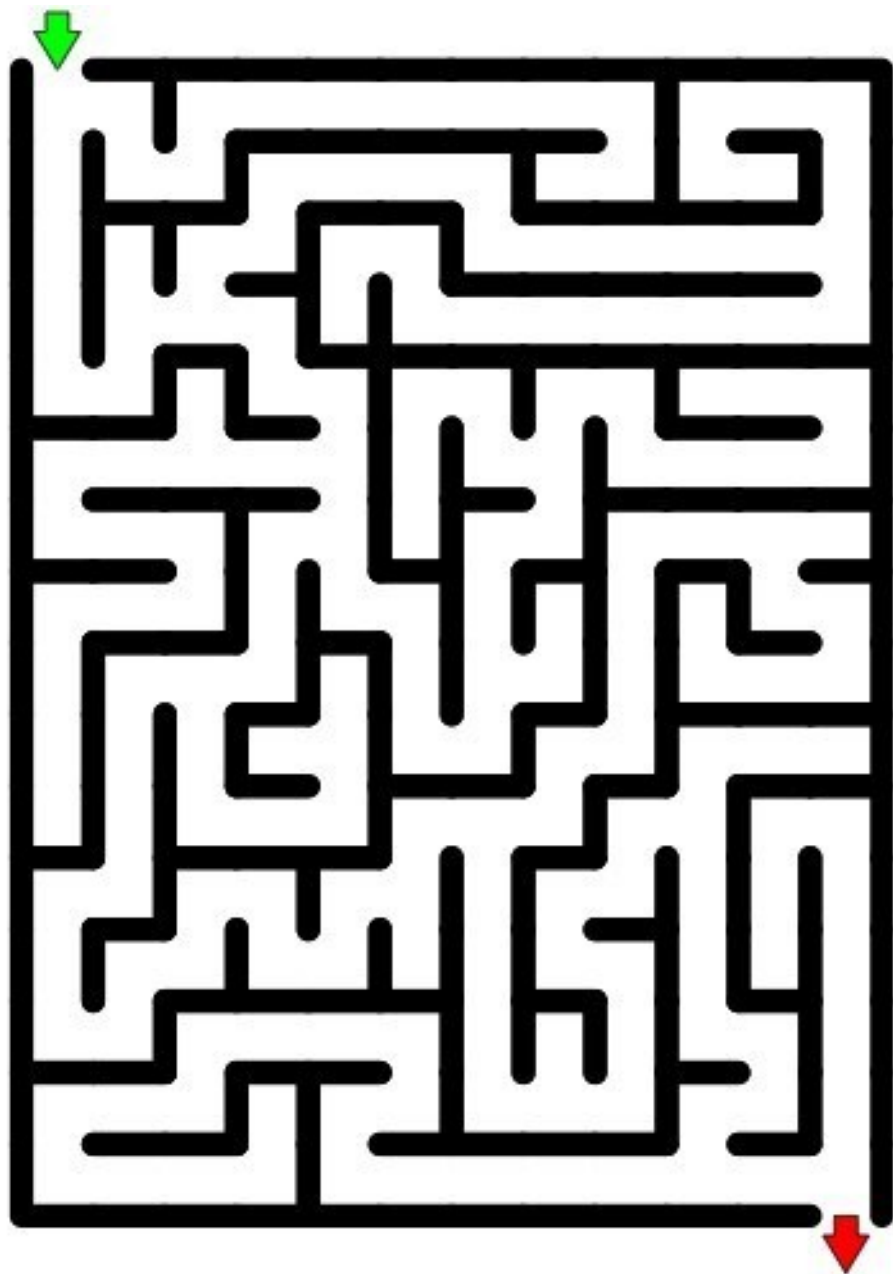
Or are you jealous because
I'm good to others?



Jesus concluded...



So those
who are
now last will be
first, and the first last.



A MESSAGE FROM THE OUTGOING OTLEY TOWN MAYOR

Jason recently received a letter of thanks (and congratulations) for the work of the Bridge Church in Otley!

(Dear Jason)

As I approach the end of my time as Otley Town Mayor it would be quite wrong if I did not write to yourself and your church members to congratulate and thank you all on your magnificent, selfless contributions to this, our Community of Otley. In Summer it is difficult to walk past the church without being cheered up at the site of your wonderful scarecrows on display for all passers-by to see and admire. At Christmas time you present to us all the real meaning of Christmas with the tasteful Nativity displays and later, at Easter time we see the story of the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus seen in the thought-provoking Easter Garden.

You have provided a warm place for the poor and lonely and the Bridge Cafe seeks to welcome and sustain both locals and visitors. I have seen that you provide: Junior Church, Women's meeting, Singing for fun, Food and Friends, Supper Club, T Club, Parents and Toddlers group. For young ones there are Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Brownies and Guides. Phew - and that's not all! Concerts and displays in the Church are relatively frequent and are open to the community.

Thank you Reverend McCullagh and please may I ask you to pass thanks on to your congregation. These thanks are also sent on behalf of the Town Council and the citizens of Otley. Your contributions to the Town are greatly appreciated and most welcome.

With every good wish.

Cllr. Ray Smith
Otley Town Mayor

Hollybush project update

In the middle of July we were able to let the Hollybush project know that we had, so far, raised £4,800 for them and these were the reactions we received from John and Caroline at the Project:-

Just a short note to say "thank you". I'm truly humbled to hear of the congregation's generosity. I look forward to meeting some of them this autumn.

And also a huge thank you to yourself and the church officials for their part in enabling this to happen.

Kindest regards

*John Preston (he/him)
Development Manager, The Conservation Volunteers,
Hollybush Conservation Centre*

Wow, that is amazing! What an incredible amount, thank you all so much, we really do appreciate it.

We have various plans afoot for equipment we would like to buy so we will let you know exactly what we buy.

Caroline Aylward, Team Leader, Hollybush Project & Café

Forthcoming activities

In the coming weeks the Hollybush Project are going to be involved with Piano Planters in conjunction with the Leeds Piano Competition/Festival. The Competition has been awarded funding by Kew's Grow Wild Fund, to create Piano Planters for the Leeds and Bradford Piano Trail Festival, 31st August – 21st September 2024.

Gardeners, allotment holders and community gardening groups all over Bradford and Leeds will grow native, pollinating plants, flowers and vegetables to fill the planters. The planters will go out onto the Leeds Piano Trail as part of this year's Festival, as beautiful, curiosity-inspiring additions to the public realm in their own right, and to highlight the bio-diversity crisis that is often overlooked when we consider the effects of climate change.

After the finals, the planters will go back to the community

groups who made them, where they can be looked after and replanted each season. There is funding for materials – seeds, plug plants, compost etc – and to cover people’s travel expenses into the city centre to fill the planters.

Timeline

Designing/planning/sowing/planting – May – June

Cultivating/growing – June to August

Filling the planters in their city centre locations – End of August

Festival – 31st August to 21st September

Planters go back to the community groups who made them – after 21st September



HELP SAVE THE PLANET.....

One tree at a time!

Plant a tree every day, for free, without getting your hands dirty or even getting out of your chair!

Treeapp is a global tree planting organisation that lets you plant trees for free by watching short adverts from sustainable brands. It takes less than a minute and enables anyone to help save the planet by planting trees where they are needed the most and so make an impact everyday. So far, over four million trees have already been planted in 13 countries.

Download the app on your phone from App Store or Google Play depending on your phone and sign up!

Hilary Eveleigh
Bridge Church Environmental Officer

NEWS FROM OUR MISSION & CARE GROUP

The Bridge Church is part of a wider group of churches in a Mission & Care Group. Each quarter the churches provide an update for the Synod Pastoral Committee, which details their work and mission. The following is a précis of the reports provided by each of the churches.

Please pray for all of the churches in our Mission & Care group.

BILTON GRANGE URC – HARROGATE

- Two new elders were ordained and inducted back in April
- The sale of their Manse has been concluded.
- They have set up a new group for children with disabilities and a group for Dads and their children called 'who let the Dads out?'
- Through their church meeting they continue to address their mission opportunities
- Their social events are well supported.



SALEM URC – BURLEY-IN-WHARFEDALE

- Quite optimistic – they have new people attending worship, and numbers are picking up.
- Their social events – like the Salem Cinema are also experiencing a growth in numbers.
- Recently held a very positive 'away day' at Norwood – and considered, among other things, how to make their building more attractive.
- The church plays an active role in village life.



DACRE URC

- Their former Minister Rev John Belderson and his wife, Elizabeth, who were both in membership at Dacre died within a couple of months of one another.
- They are addressing matters raised through their recent Quinquennial report.



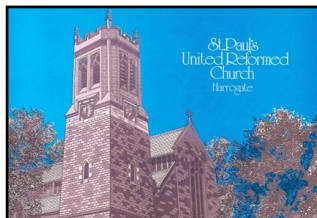
KNARESBOROUGH URC

- Remaining positive after their Minister's retirement.
- Maintaining events like their 'Welcome Café', 'Soup & Sweet', Playgroup and Bible Study.
- Holiday Club is planned for August
- Decided, with assistance from Synod, to rent their Manse – so they are looking for tenants.



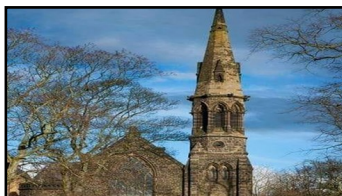
ST. PAUL'S URC, HARROGATE

- Have welcomed Rev Joe Amoah – their new Minister (induction 27th July) – they are grateful that their interregnum is over!
- Continue to hold monthly joint services with their neighbours from West Park
- Their Church Secretary recently stood down, and at the moment the duties of the secretary have been shared out amongst the eldership.



WEST PARK URC, HARROGATE

- Possible building project for the church is continuing to catch the imagination of the town.
- They recently held two concerts
- Planning to upgrade their Victoria Room.
- Continue to work with St Paul's with some joint services.



ST COLUMBA'S URC, YORK

- Held a joint coffee morning with the local Methodist Church to support Christian Aid.
- Hosted one of the York Mystery Plays 'Creation, to a packed church.
- Also hosted the Synod Moderators (from around the country) and their wives/husbands for worship and lunch.
- A happy occasion was celebrated when two former students from York – who met at St Columba's were married in the church.



10 REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL – Our Church Secretary's Half Year Review – JANUARY – JUNE 2024

1. Sunday morning attendances

Our Sunday morning services for the first 6 months of the year have had an overall attendance of 2,555 people (an average of 98.6 people per service (compared to an average of 92 last year Jan – Dec 2023)).

2. Wednesday morning Communion

Holding its own with an average attendance of 15 people for the first 6 months of the year (identical to the average figure for 2023), but with a wider range of people attending.

3. New worshippers

We are attracting new people to worship with us, and there are encouraging signs that many of them are beginning to embed themselves into the life of the Bridge Church.

4. Messy Church

Messy Church is well established and numbers attending remain high. Thanks to Isobel for the organisation and leadership

5. Room Lettings

We have received £11,604.75 in the first half of the year from external room bookings – 70.7% of the budget projection for the year! Big thanks to Gill Mitchell, who does so much unseen work as our Room Booking Secretary, and to our caretaker, Peter, who keeps the premises in excellent condition.

6. Singing 4 Fun and Sunday Singers

Singing 4 Fun recently celebrated their 10th Anniversary. Big thanks to Anne for a decade of work!! Sunday Singers is

now a well-established group and enhancing our worship – thank you to Malcolm for his leadership.

7. Questionnaire

We had a big response to the recent members and friends' questionnaire. 68 individuals have volunteered for at least one role in the church (through the questionnaire) – several considerably more!

8. Church Gardens and Grounds

Our gardens and grounds come in for much praise – and are well used, not only for our own purposes (Scarecrows, Teas on the Lawn etc.,) but by informal community use. People appreciate our well-kept grounds and the many 'special' features that Chris provides (including the wellies created by the Messy Church children). Big thanks to Chris and our caretaker, Peter who keep our grounds to such a high standard.

9. Our presence

Leading Your Church into Growth (LYCIG) make great play of churches using and promoting their 'presence' in the community. Recent examples are Turin Shroud exhibition-estimated 700 people attended, Scarecrows and photographic exhibition, Teas on the Lawn again a great success despite the weather. See also letter from the outgoing Town Mayor.

10. Our on-going work

It is sometimes difficult to keep up with all that the church does week by week. Examples are Tea Club, Supper Club, Womens meeting, Food and Friends, Faith Alive and Active, Uniformed Organisations, The Bridge Café, Toddlers@theBridge, Otley Youth Drop in. These activities not only cater for our Church Family but also the wider community of Otley.

Food and Friends

Whilst Food and Friends, along with several other groups are taking a rest over the summer the July meeting attracted the usual large attendance as can be seen below. So much so that the convenors Enid and Mike Taylor found time to reflect on a job well done!



Supper Club

The Bridge Church Supper Club has a full programme planned for the 2024/25 session. We start on Thursday 19th September with a talk entitled 'Fact is stranger than Fiction' given by Stuart Sissons. The meeting is open to all men in the Church and start with a meal, usually prepared by Chris and Iain, to whom we are very grateful. We look forward to seeing both old and new members.

Geoff Swift- Chairman

Women's Meeting

Meetings will re-commence on Monday 9th September, when Jason will conduct our opening service. There is a very varied programme of talks to follow, to which all existing and new members are warmly invited. We meet every fortnight on Monday afternoons at 2.30 pm, and there is also an opportunity to chat to friends over a cup of tea. Hope to see you there!

Sylvia Sutcliffe - Secretary

CHURCH DIARY - AUGUST - OCTOBER 2024

Weekly events

The Bridge Cafe - Every Thursday at 2p.m.

Parents & Toddlers - Every Thursday and Friday at 9.30 a.m.

Quiet Communion - Every Wednesday at 10 a.m.

Regular Events

Women's Meeting

September 9th - Opening service - Rev. Jason McCullagh

September 23rd - Past times in the Cartmel Vale - Jane Niepokojczyka.

October 7th - Garden Birds and the wider work of the British Trust for Ornithology - John Preston (Hollybush).

Food and Friends 1st Wednesday of each month at 10.30 a.m.

September 4th and October 2nd.

T Club - 4th Thursday of each Month

September 26th - Opening service followed by Beetle Drive - Rev. Jason McCullagh.

Supper Club—3rd Thursday of each month at 7.30 p.m.

September 19th - Fact is stranger than fiction - Stuart Sissons.

Singing for Fun - alternate Mondays at 7.30 p.m.

9th September, 23rd September, 7th October.

Messy Church - 28th September

NEXT MESSENGER

Material for the next edition of the Messenger should be in the hands of the Editor by Sunday, 29nd September and will be available for collection on Sunday, 13th October 2024

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