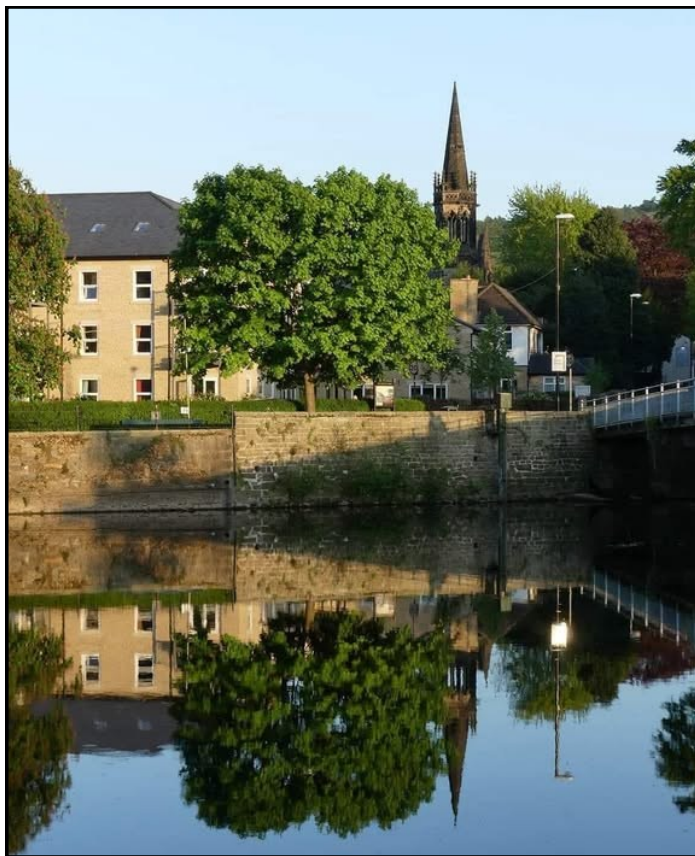


October - November 2026

Number 715

The Messenger

The magazine of the Bridge Church, Otley



The Bridge Church

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH IN OTLEY

The official Magazine of the
Bridge United Reformed Church, Otley

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Dear Friends,

The summer was hot, very hot! People responded to this heat in different ways. Some people revelled in it while others feared it; some people were happy to be out in it while others stayed inside for safety. Whichever way we felt about the summer of 2026 there was no escaping the fact that climate change is now a stark reality, a reality we have created.

At the celebration of our Harvest Festival, we looked at the world in which we live, and we thought about how we are interconnected with those we live alongside. We thought about how we need each other to make the world an abundant and fair place to live. We are going need to remember that, and put that into action, if we are to tackle the climate crisis for time is against us. Years, if not decades, of warnings have been ignored and now the truth is laid bare. While we in the U.K. endured temperatures exceeding 30° those who live in countries further South experienced temperatures exceeding 40°. This threatens dire consequences for agriculture and animals, and human migration will increase as high temperatures make some places uninhabitable.

What can we do about it? I often hear it argued that if China, India and the United States of America will not do anything, what difference can we make? I hear this argument, but I think that it is a defeatist attitude. We can do what we can do. We can take small steps, small steps that can make a difference.

Over coffee after the Harvest Festival Service, I asked members of the Uniformed Organisations what small steps they thought we could take to improve the world in which we

live. They gave me the following answers:

- Don't litter
- Save water
- Take shorter showers
- Buy an electric car
- Use alternative energy sources
- Stop pollution
- Don't litter the sea and, as I said in my sermon on 27th September, this comment was followed up with: 'even if we start to take litter out of the sea today, there will still be litter in the sea in 50 years'.

We have a responsibility to do all that we can for our brothers and sisters across the planet, for generations younger than us, and for generations older than us. We all share this one planet, and it is to all our benefits that we take small steps to protect it.

One small step can lead to significant change. As individuals, and as a church community, let us pray that God will show us the small steps we can take, and give us the courage to take them.

Love,

Jason

**OTLEY CHURCHES
TOGETHER**

PRAYER BREAKFASTS

Saturday 7th November – 8am
at Otley Catholic Church
(Parish Centre)

*Come and enjoy breakfast and
fellowship with Christians from
around the town.*

Prayer
Breakfast



THE BRIDGE CHURCH
PREACHING PLAN
18th October – 13th December 2026

Sunday 18th October – Twenty-First Sunday After Pentecost

10:30am

Jason is leading Junior Church.

The Service will be conducted by the Finance and Admin. Elders

6pm

Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Exodus 33. 12-23

Sunday 25th October – Twenty-Second Sunday After Pentecost

Jason is on holiday.

The Service will be conducted by Mr John Eveleigh.

Sunday 1st November – Twenty-Third Sunday After Pentecost

Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Revelation 7. 9-17

Sunday 8th November – Twenty-Fourth Sunday After Pentecost

Remembrance Sunday Parade Service

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Ecclesiastes 3, 1-8

Sunday 15th November – Twenty-Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

Jason is preaching elsewhere in the Synod

The Service will be conducted by The Reverend Mirella Moxon

Sunday 22nd November – The Feast of Christ the King

The Service will be conducted by Mercy Ships, the Church's current charity.

Sunday 27th November – Advent Sunday

10:30am

Jason is leading Junior Church.

The Service will be conducted by Mr John Eveleigh

6pm

Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Sunday 6th December – Second Sunday in Advent

Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Readings to be arranged

Sunday 13th December – Third Sunday in Advent

Gift Service Parade Service

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Readings to be arranged



MINISTER'S REGISTER

1st August – 30th September 2026

BAPTISMS

8th August Nolan Hendrix Mitchell

23rd August Samuel James Attwood

27th September Nicholas James Butler

WEDDINGS

8th August Corban Mitchell and Sophie Hall

19th August Jonathan Nixon and Amy Beedle

News of the Family

Weddings and Anniversaries

After ten years of being together, congratulations go to Claire Wilkinson on the happy occasion of her marriage to Nigel Macdonald on the 26th of September 2026 at the Registry Office in Harrogate. Two of their four Bridesmaids included Lilly and Letty, Claire's Great Nieces who are both in the Bridge Church Scouts, and her Great Nephew Jack who is in our Beavers was their Pageboy. Claire and Nigel had a honeymoon in the Lake District and we wish them every happiness in their future lives together.



Congratulations also go to Sylvia and Barrie Richardson, and Hilary and John Eveleigh who have recently celebrated special Wedding Anniversaries.



Sylvia and Barrie celebrated their Platinum Wedding Anniversary, having been married 70 years ago on the 11th of August 1956. They were married here at the Bridge, although it was then the Congregational Church, by Reverend Leon Cook. They had a honeymoon in Scarborough when it rained everyday apart from Sunday. Taking an opportunity to go for a walk on the prom whilst it was dry, they duly bumped unexpectedly into Sylvia's parents and Auntie and Uncle, prompting a few comments! Their anniversary was celebrated with forty-two of their family and friends at Clifton Village Hall, when they were with all six of their Great Grandchildren for the first time and a good time was had by all.

Hilary and John celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary, having been married 40 years ago on the 16th of August 1986 at Methley Methodist Church, by Reverend Janet Mackinder, and John's father Reverend Ralph Eveleigh did the address. Hilary remembers it being a particularly windy day, with the guests having trouble keeping their hats on! After the wedding Hilary and John honeymooned in Burnsall and Oban. They enjoyed their anniversary celebrating with some of their family.



New Arrivals

Liz Wilkinson has got her sixth Great Grandchild, with the safe arrival of Albie Kilmartin on the 29th of July 2026. Albie weighed 7lb and is the son of Liz's Grandson Steven & Claire, and is baby brother to Sebastian & Ellie. We wish all the family well.

Baptisms and Membership

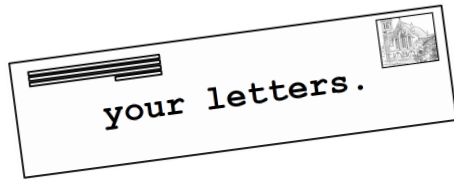
We were all delighted to share in the baptisms of two well-known friends of our church family. Sam Attwood was baptised on the 23rd of August 2026, then Nick Butler on the 27th of September 2026, before he and Natalie were brought into membership. Our prayers are with you all as you continue on your faith journey.

Further Education

Congratulations go to Isabella Gardner, Karen's Granddaughter, who successfully passed her A-Levels with the grades she needed to go to Sheffield University to study Philosophy. We hope she settles into her university life and enjoys her studies there.

Do please continue to pass on any items of good news you wish to share in The Messenger to any of the Pastoral Elders.

Margaret Armitage.



Dear Friends

During my recent spells in hospital it was so nice receive all the good wishes, cards and notes, and to know that all your prayers were being said for me.

It meant so much to me to know friends were thinking of me. Also, thank you to many visitors and flowers that I received since coming home.

Many thanks again.

Joan Skeet

Dear Friends,

I would like to pass on grateful thanks to friends at church for the cards and messages which Barrie and I received on the occasion of our 70th Wedding Anniversary. They were all very much appreciated.

With love,

Sylvia and Barrie Richardson

Faith
Alive!

FAITH ALIVE & ACTIVE

Thursday 12th November – 7pm
Rev Simon Cross – 'Church as a resistance community'

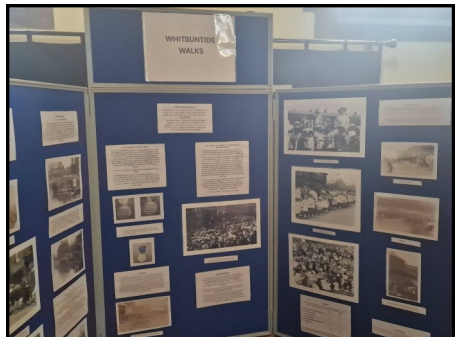
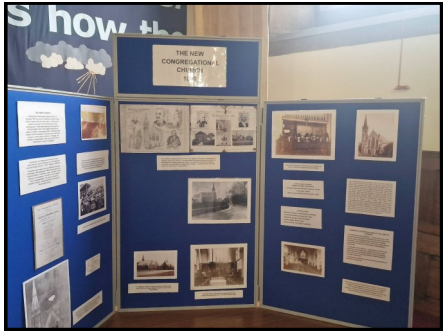
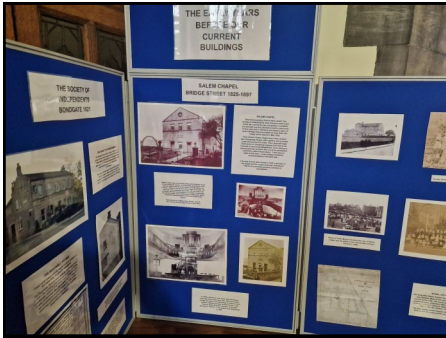
Please sign the list in the north transept if you would like a meal before the meeting.

HERITAGE OPEN DAY'S - SEPTEMBER 2026



Once again The Bridge Church opened its doors for the national Heritage Days.

Visitors were able to view the church, watch videos and look at the boards prepared by Andrew Howard, our church historian. The boards which depicted various significant events in the church's history and links with the town. Several of the boards are shown below.



WORSHIP AT THE BRIDGE

Liturgy is the religious word that we use for worship. It is derived from two ancient Greek words, meaning 'work' and 'people' and it can be translated as either 'work for the people', or 'work of the people'. Either way, it has always spoken powerfully to me about the corporate nature of worship.

The provision of worship in the United Reformed Church is changing. There are fewer ordained ministers, and fewer lay preachers and, some churches, can no longer offer weekly worship. We are fortunate that we are not one of those churches, but we must prepare for a challenging future.

We belong to a tradition in which we celebrate the 'priesthood of all believers', the involvement of all God's people in the life of the Church. In my previous church I established a worship group. We would meet to explore the meaning and structure of worship and they would plan worship, which they then led as a team. They continue to lead worship, ten years after I left.

I would like to explore setting up a similar group at The Bridge. This is your invitation to ponder if this is for you. This team needs people who have creative ideas, theological interest, musical skill, confident readers, willing leaders, and those who might become any of these! Please give this prayerful thought and then let me know if you would like to be involved. If we get a core group of people, then we can meet and move this idea forward.

Please let me know by **Sunday 22nd November.**

I look forward to hearing from you.

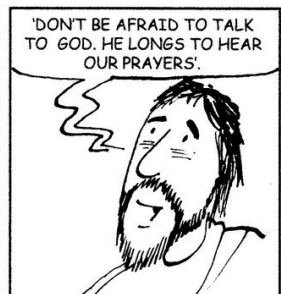
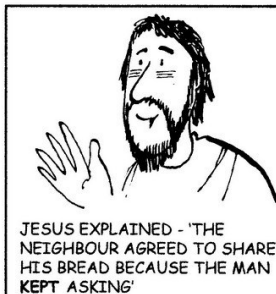
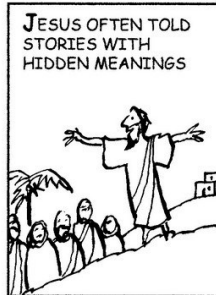
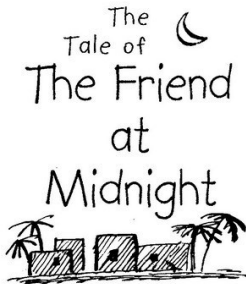
NEXT MESSENGER

Material for the next edition of the Messenger should be in the hands of the Editor by Sunday, 22nd November and should be available for collection on Sunday, 6th December, 2026.

If possible, please send by e-mail to:

messenger@otleybridgechurch.org.uk

Young Peoples Pages



Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

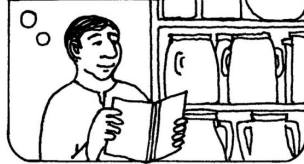
It can be read in the Bible in
Matthew 24:44-51, Luke 12: 40-46

Jesus warned his disciples to be always ready for his return at the end of time by telling the story of two servants

The good servant



My master could be away a long time; I will work as if he was here



When the servants came for their food, he had it ready



He made sure everyone got their full amount every day



Then his master came back



I am putting you in charge of everything I have



The bad servant



My master could be away a long time; I can do what I want!



When the servants came for their food, he chased them away!



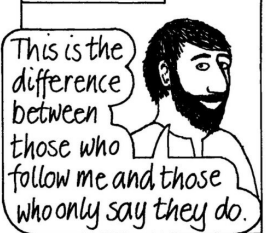
He had friends come round, and they ate and drank as much as they liked.

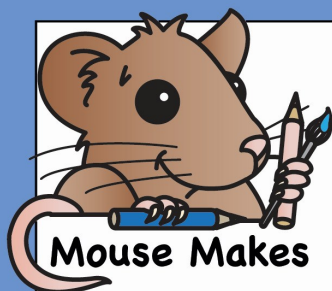


Then his master came back



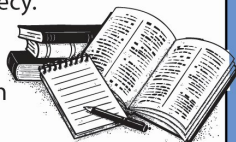
Jesus said





The **Bible** is a collection of books, written by many different people who were helped and inspired by God. The **Bible** includes books of history, law, poetry and songs, wisdom, testimony, letters and prophecy.

The **Bible** encourages us, corrects us and teaches us about God and how we can be friends with Him.



2. Which book of the Bible has the shortest title?

1. How many books are there in the New Testament?

2



3

3. The Word of God is sharper than a two edged

Hebrews 4:12



BIBLESUNDAY

4. He was an Old Testament prophet that has a book named after him.



5. The first book of the Bible.



6. God's word is like?

A _____ and a _____
Psalm 119:105

8. The last book in the Bible.

5

6

7

9. The Old Testament book of poetry and songs.

9

10

11

12

11. The last book in the Old Testament.

10. Who wrote the third book of the New Testament?

13

14

7. What are the first four books of the New Testament known as?

12. Which book tells the story of the spread of Christianity?



13. The Bible is also known as the

_____ of God.
Hebrews 4:12

14. A book of the Bible named after a woman



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

want
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We continued our meetings in August with a different format. The reason for this is that our members really miss getting together if we take a break in August. It was informal with a buffet lunch rather than our usual hot meal.

We do like to stress the 'Friends' part of our regular meetings giving our members the opportunity just chat. Fortunately, Jason was able to join us, doing the devotions and spending some time talking to everyone. The caterer did us proud with a wonderful spread of food, much enjoyed by everyone.

At the September meeting we were entertained by 'Barnacle Phil'. His talk was about working on a boat/platform specially designed for ship repairs on the North Sea rather than in dry docks. The work was very dangerous; he did have a few serious accidents but carried on working despite a few spells in hospitals. During the talk he sang some sea shanty type songs which was very different and entertaining. He has had a couple of cancers and does his talks to raise money for cancer charities.



The 'crowd' eagerly await being fed at a recent meeting!

We look forward welcoming a speaker from 'Guide Dogs for the Blind on October 7th. At our meeting on November 3rd we have a speaker from Sue Ryder, and at the December 2nd meeting we will, hopefully, be entertained by The Prince Henry's Senior School Choir.

Enid Taylor.

Women's Meeting

On Monday 7th September we held our opening meeting of the season, this was led by Jason. The theme of the meeting was 'HOPE', and it was more interactive than our usual format.

We had a selection of hymns, prayers and bible readings and we did drawings on the theme and discussed what hope meant to us.

We also had a few birthdays and then a welcome cup of tea and biscuits. I think the meeting gave us food for thought.

On Monday 14th September we had Janet Niepokojczcka to talk to us about 'Three Highland Gardens'. All of the gardens were on the west coast of Scotland.

One on the Isle of Skye, at Dunvegan was virtually surrounded by the sea. Skye is located on the 'gulf stream' and it is surprising what plants could survive there. Until the building of the bridge the only way to get to the island was by Ferry; unfortunately it can be so busy at times that the police have to close the bridge!

The second garden 'Inverewe' is situated at the foot of Loch Ewe, it has lovely footpaths and little bridges. Lovely flowers and large vegetable plants grow there in abundance.

The third garden 'Attadale' has many interesting statues around every corner with interesting flowers, which seems surprising so far north!

A very interesting talk from Janet, who was a tourist guide up in Scotland some years ago.

Pam Bradley

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS
1 dare; 3 cherubim; 9 son Tohu; 10 yield; 11 ranch; 12 enlist; 14 Baalah of Judah; 17 Edward; 19 Sheol; 22 media; 23 open air; 24 apostasy; 25 Eton
DOWN
1 describe; 2 run in; 4 household gods; 5 royal; 6 blessed; 7 MIDI; 8 Joshua; 13 children; 15 added to; 16 Jasper; 18 await; 20 exalt; 21 YMCA

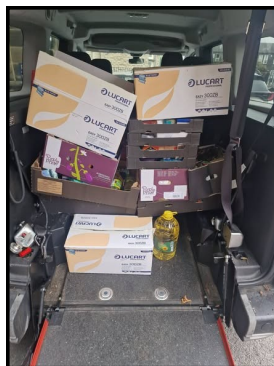
HARVEST GIFTS DONATED TO RETAS (REFUGEE EDUCATION TRAINING ADVICE SERVICE)

We had an amazing response to our Harvest appeal for our friends at [Retas Leeds](#), who work with refugees and asylum seekers living locally. We filled loads of boxes (packed superbly by our Scouts and Explorers).



Pictured is the van laden with goods before leaving church (right), and Margaret and Christine (two of our Pastoral elders) with Roger, the chief officer from RETAS (left) .

Roger was, once again, delighted to receive all of the boxes filled with tins and packets. 'We thank your church for such kindness again, these gifts will be put to good use!



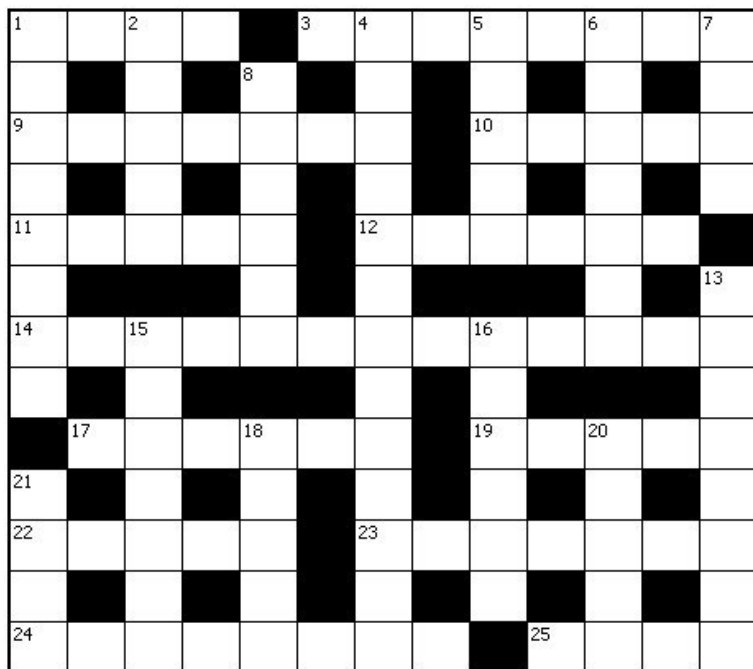
LOCAL MP ATTENDS HARVEST FESTIVAL

The Bridge Church were delighted to welcome our MP Katie White OBE to our Harvest Festival service.

She is pictured left with John and Jason



BIBLE CROSSWORD



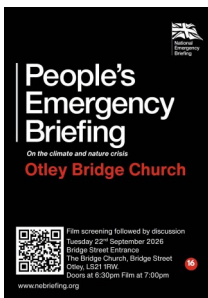
Across

- 1 'Those who were standing near Paul said, "You — to insult God's high priest?"' (Acts 23:4) (4)
- 3 They were assigned to guard the tree of life (Genesis 3:24) (8)
- 9 'Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the — of — , the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite' (1 Samuel 1:1) (3,4)
- 10 Surrender (Joshua 24:23) (5)
- 11 Where American livestock can be reared (5)
- 12 Listen (anag.) (6)
- 14 Alternative name for Kiriath Jearim (2 Samuel 6:2) (6,2,5)
- 17 He founded Westminster Abbey, — the Confessor (6)
- 19 Hebrew word for the place of the dead (5)
- 22 Allies of Persia in the fifth century BC (Esther 1:3) (5)
- 23 Where John Wesley was forced to preach a lot (4,3)
- 24 Rebellion against God; abandonment of religious belief (8)
- 25 Note (anag.) (4)

Down

- 1 Give an account of (Mark 4:30) (8)
- 2 'I — — the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free' (Psalm 119:32) (3,2)
- 4 'He took the ephod, the other — — and the carved image' (Judges 18:20) (9,4)
- 5 'You are a chosen people, a — priesthood' (1 Peter 2:9) (5)
- 6 The meek, the merciful and the mourners are all this (Matthew 5:4-5, 7) (7)
- 7 Musical Instrument Digital Interface (1,1,1,1)
- 8 He was the son of Nun (Deuteronomy 34:9) (6)
- 13 'Let the little — come to me' (Matthew 19:14) (8)
- 15 'About three thousand were — — their number that day' (Acts 2:41) (5,2)
- 16 In John's vision, the wall of the new Jerusalem was made of this (Revelation 21:18) (6)
- 18 'Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly — a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ' (Philippians 3:20) (5)
- 20 'Glorify the Lord with me: let us — his name together' (Psalm 34:3) (5)
- 21 Young Men's Christian Association (1,1,1,1)

THE BRIDGE CHURCH HOSTS PEOPLE'S EMERGENCY BRIEFING



The Bridge Church was delighted to host a showing of the People's Emergency Briefing in partnership with Otley '2030'.

The film followed by a discussion and input from interested parties attracted a good attendance from around the town. The attendees included the Town Mayor and representatives from Otley 2030, Wildlife Friendly Otley, Otley Lido, Friends of Otley Chevin and Otley Catholic Church.

There was even a recorded video message from our MP, Katie White OBE, who is Minister of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, Katie unfortunately could not attend in person, as she was attending the United Nations conference in New York!

Messy Church Harvest



Saturday 19th September at 10.30 saw the families arriving at the sanctuary doors for Messy Church. The children were keen to start their harvest celebrations. The harvest loaf displayed at the registration desk was admired by all. Overall

we welcomed 76 children from 43 families.

As they came through to the hall they found a range of craft activities. Soon excited children were busy with the activities our wonderful volunteers had prepared. The youngest were able to play in the creche room. It was a real social occasion with friends meeting up after the summer holidays – and a chance for us to renew friendships and welcome new faces. The excitement from all the activities spilled over into the church when we all got together for our harvest celebration. We sang familiar harvest songs and gave thanks for our food. The children all love to take part, but by noon they were eager for lunch back in the hall.



MessyChurch@ theBridge has been meeting since September 2022. We never know how many will attend, how many will stay for lunch, or indeed what surprises the morning will hold – we just go forward in faith. There is always a bustle of excitement and energy – it is never quiet and always exhausting for the Messy Church team.

Building upon the relationships with families we have formed through the Toddler group, we believe the Messy Church is also making a difference to how the Bridge Church is seen and experienced in our community. Our hope is that further children's and family activities can be established to build on this foundation so that as the children get older we may maintain and develop our relationship with the families we are getting to know.

Isobel and Chris Evans

CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH 2026

We are planning to do Christmas Day Lunch again this year, there will be a sign up sheet in October for anyone who would care to join us.

I will print some menu choice cards to be returned to me (Enid Taylor), as soon as you can, if you wish to join us. We need your details especially your menu choice and a contact phone number. We are limited with numbers so you will need to return your cards only to me so we have the correct number of guests for catering.

If anyone would like to make a donation, either cash or offers of help could you pass them to Mike or myself.

Thanks

Enid Taylor
01943 512194

New Members



We were delighted to welcome Natalie Field and Nick Butler into membership of the Bridge Church at our morning service on Sunday 27th September.

In Nick's case it was a double celebration as he was also baptised at the same event.

We look forward to see Natalie and Nick along with their daughter Ruby on their faith journey.

Natalie and Nick are pictured with Jason, John (Church Secretary) and Margaret (Natalie and Nick's Elder).

FORTHCOMING EVENTS AT THE 'BRIDGE.



December 5th - Christmas Ceilidh and Supper.

December 6th - Otley Victorian Fayre - Chocolate Tombola and Mulled Wine.

December 13th - Gift Service

December 19th - Otley Brass Band Concert.

December 22nd - Carols by Candlelight.

INDUCTION OF AILSA CUMMINS AS OUR CHILDRENS AND FAMILIES WORKER

During our service on 18th September Jason inducted Ailsa into her role as Children & Families worker with the Bridge Church following the successful completion of her probation period. Ailsa's appointment is a three year appointment largely funded by a grant from the URC Yorkshire Synod. Ailsa will be working closely with families within the Otley area and also with schools in the area.



Pictured with Ailsa is Jason, our Minister, Alison, our Treasurer, Ella, one of our Scouts and John our Church Secretary.

CHURCH DIARY - OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2026

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

- October 19th - The Origin and History of Nursery Rhymes - Mrs M E M Mckeown.
- November 2nd - Holidaying on Costa Rica - Susan Preston.
- November 16th - A journey on the Leeds Liverpool Canal - Alun Pugh.
- November 30th - Christmas Flower Arrangements - Margaret Crossfield.
- December 14th - Ukelele Players and Singers from Burley.

Food and Friends - 1st Wednesday of each month
at 10.30 a.m.
November 4th and December 2nd.

Supper Club - 2^d Thursday of each month at 7.30 p.m.

- November 17th - From Bridge Street to Bradford Road - a look back - Andrew Howard.
- December 10th - Christmas Dinner prepared by Explorer Scouts.

Strictly Social - 4th Thursday of each month at 7 pm

- October 29th - Puffin Pottery (6.30 pm).
- November 26th - Christmas Film Night

Singing for Fun - alternate Mondays at 7.30 p.m.
26th October, 9th November,
23rd November and 7th December.

Messy Church - November 28th.

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Comments and statements printed in the Messenger
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Find us on  **Otley Bridge Church**



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