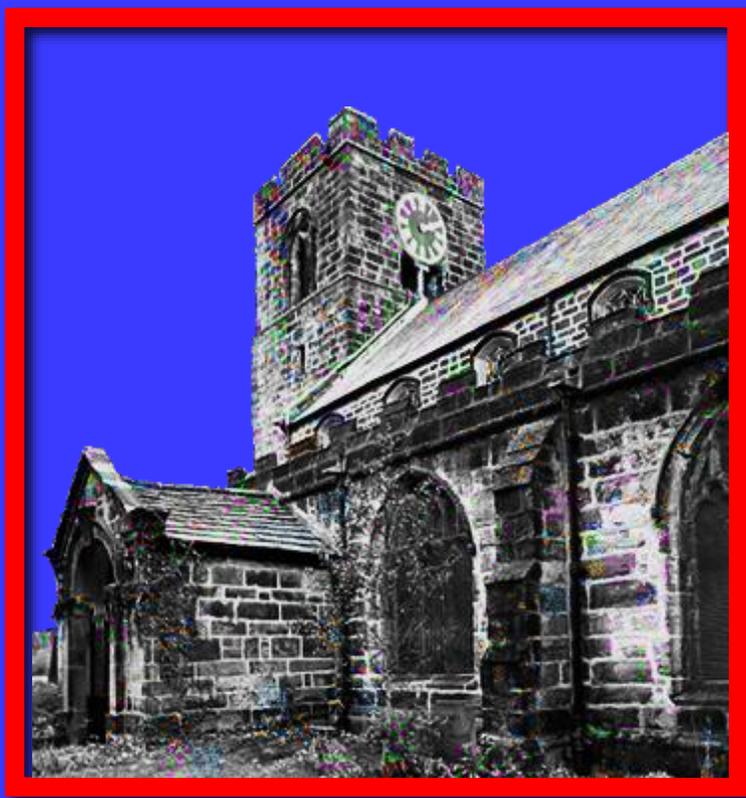


IN TOUCH

FEBRUARY 2025

£1



Otley Parish
CHURCH



O**TLEY PARISH CHURCH** is the oldest building in Otley. It's at the heart of our town and, for over 1,000 years, people have been gathering here for worship, with significant family as well as community events.

We are a gathering place for pilgrims on a journey of discovery, kindling hope as we go, and helping one another to be more fully alive to the wonders, the joys and the sorrows of life. We'd love you to share the journey with us.

We want to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to Christ and in service to our local community.

Join us in worshipping our God together on Sundays and in daily life; be with us as we study and discern how to use the Bible in the 21st century; also learn with us what it is to be disciples in the 21st century following Jesus, and help us, with other churches in the town, to bring good news to Otley and far beyond.

**“There is a place for everyone,
with CHRIST
at the centre of it all”**

CONTENTS

3

DEAR FRIENDS LETTER

Martin Hird writes this month's letter to us all

5

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL 2024

A look back at another wonderful 4-day celebration

9

IN THE HOT SEAT

With Fiona Williams

12

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE BIBLE VERSE?

Victoria Dalton tells us about hers

13

FAMILY NEWS

Here at Otley Parish Church

24

MY DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS

Phil Moon writes about his

26

BEYOND LEAF PATROL

Autumn in our churchyard

28

CREATION CARE

Environmental Sustainability

29

SILVER THREADS

A poem by Eileen Barr

30

COME WORSHIP WITH US

Our Sunday and mid-week church services

Dear Friends Letter



I was recently sitting in a 2 hour meeting, facing the window in The Chestnuts, with the view pictured below. The meeting was the Carbon Net Zero group, which is exploring how OPC can reduce dramatically our production of Carbon Dioxide, to try to prevent more global warming. These meetings are always interesting and busy - but I have to admit, on that occasion, I was distracted by the distressing view of these mangled trees.

I have been wondering whether the Bible has anything to say about God's relationship with creation as a whole, or is it all just about God's relationship with people? Was the distress I was feeling about these trees in any way an echo of God's own reaction to the degradation of the planet's natural world? Does God care about deforestation or about the pace of species loss? Up until now, my own passion for addressing climate change has been driven by concern about people - our neighbours - often in poorer countries who are most vulnerable to the negative effects of global warming and; about my children and grandchildren and the world they will need to live in. Is God similarly only interested in climate



change as far as it affects people - or is there divine interest in the natural world itself?

I am in the early stages of answering this question, so please do let me know your thoughts and your understanding of what the Bible teaches. But for now, I think I am beginning to realise that God IS concerned about the whole of creation itself - going beyond simply how it serves and supports humanity.

The creation story in Genesis repeats on each day the aesthetic pleasure that God experienced at the whole of the creation, not simply at humanity. God looked and saw that it was all good. The word 'bara' that is used repeatedly, which in our Bibles is translated as 'made', has the fuller sense of 'to shape for a purpose'. As the creation story reaches its crescendo, I now wonder whether the purpose for which the world was created, was not as a dwelling place for humanity, but in fact as a place for God to rest on the seventh day. I understand that in other literature written in the same period, Gods were figured as resting in their temples - in contrast to these images. But the God of the Bible is pictured as resting in creation making this world in effect a temple.

Moreover, the language used when God's plan of salvation is described, goes beyond a plan of salvation simply of humanity. What do I mean by this? John 3:16 says, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son". That is, God so loved the *cosmos* - not just the people living in it. Then in the letters, Paul writes about God "reconciling *all things* - whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross" (see Colossians 1:19-20 and Ephesians 1:9-10). Lastly, in Romans he writes about "creation waiting in eager anticipation for the children of God to be revealed... creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God" (Romans 8:19-21). So, my thinking now is that God does have an interest in creation as a whole, and what's more has a plan for its liberation along with humanity.

So, I can be forgiven for feeling distressed about the trees ,even when they distract me from an important meeting!

MARTIN HIRD
Licensed Lay Minister

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL 2024



It's about 11.30am on Friday December 6th, 2024. Ninety children from St. Joseph's School are on stage singing carols. The seats in the nave are full of parents and visitors who have come or paused to hear the children sing. Standing on a chair behind the children is Father Christmas paying us a surprise visit!

The café is very busy and there are a lot more visitors walking round and viewing the Christmas trees so imaginatively decorated by the many local charities and organisations who bring their own light to the world. In the middle of all this there is a party of tiny children and their carers from the Monkey Puzzle Nursery, totally unfazed by the crowds. The atmosphere is electric and, to adapt the church's motto, it really feels like Otley is a town for everyone with the church at the centre.

The first thing to say about the Christmas Tree Festival is that it is a team effort. Allan, Barbara, Beryl, Margaret, Rusty and Stephen are supported by an army of volunteers from both the church and the charities helping out both in the church and in the café. The Festival couldn't happen without this army of volunteers, so a big thank you to everyone who helped out!



The Christmas Tree Festival means different things to different people. For many of us, it is our Festival of Light celebrating the arrival of the light of Christ into an often dark world at a dark time of the year. The work done by the forty organisations that decorated the trees this year is a practical example of the fulfilment of Christ's commandment for us to love our neighbours as ourselves. For the charities involved, the Festival provides an opportunity for them to tell people about the work they do and to raise funds to carry out that work. We were delighted that, despite the financial challenges people are facing, more than £4,395 was raised for the charities involved over the four days of the festival. This is slightly more than we raised last year.

One of the most notable features of the Festival is the number of visitors it brings into the Church. We gave out over 1,000 programmes, many of which were shared by couples or families. In addition to these visitors, children from the schools in Otley and local singers came and sang, as well as both the choir and Crooked Willow from our Church. It was especially pleasing that the Christmas Tree Carol Service was really well attended, including many people from the charities with their families. There were many positive comments about the Service and what it had meant to the people who came.

Many visitors also took the opportunity to put a prayer on the Prayer Tree, underlining the need that some people had for spiritual solace not, perhaps, available to them elsewhere.



The Prayer Tree

OTLEY PARISH CHURCH

Christmas
TREE FESTIVAL
December 4th - 7th



ADMISSION FREE DAILY
Wednesday 4th 12noon - 5pm
Thursday 5th 10am - 5pm
Friday 6th 10am - 5pm
Saturday 7th 10am - 5pm
Musical performances
throughout each day

**CHRISTMAS TREE
 CAROL SERVICE**
Sunday 8th at 4pm
Tea and coffee with mince pies
will be available from
Thursday to Saturday and
after the Carol Service



FRIDAY CONCERT
at 7pm
with the
Chippendale Singers
& Westgate School
Adults - £5
Children - Free

● It is important to us that the Christmas Tree Festival is a community event that is free to visitors and charities and that people can enjoy some of the light and magic of Christmas without having to count the cost.

MORE ABOUT CHRISTMAS

I would just like to say a big thank you to all who helped out this year to make Christmas a special occasion.

Flooding in church during the Christmas Tree Festival, then the toilets breaking down, did present a great challenge. Then on top of that, Aaron wasn't well. Christmas was beginning to feel like climbing Mount Everest!

Just recently while trying to keep up with SACRED (Simply A Chapter Read Each Day) I came across in Jeremiah 5, the notes saying, "*know Christ better and make Christ better known*".

This made me think about our preparations for Christmas and all the people who came to our services over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. We had just under 1,200 people including the Christingle Services which once again were very popular.

I am convinced that as a church community hosting these services, we indeed made Christ Better Known. I wish you could have seen the look on faces when giving out the Christingles no matter what the age - whether very young or old - the look of joy in receiving the simple gift of a Christingle. In Jeremiah 1 God promises, "I am with you".

A sum of £1,460 was raised for the Church of England Children's Society.

Please look at these photos taken on Christmas Eve morning of the production line in making the Christingles.



Tom Raper



IN THE **HOT** SEAT

with

Fiona Williams



We know that you are fairly new to Otley Parish Church, Fiona, and many of us will know you by sight but not really know much about you. Will you please answer a few questions that will help us all to get to know you a little better? *Thank you!*

When were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in October 1955. When I was 2 years old we moved to Heaton in Bradford where we lived for 8 years, and then moved to Saltaire near Shipley, West Yorkshire.

Where did you go to school?

I went to Rossfield School in Heaton, and then to Bradford Girls' Grammar school.

Did you go to college or university – and if so, where and what did you study?

I went to Aberdeen University where I studied English Literature.

When did you become a Christian?

Although I was brought up in a strict Christian home, my Christian life really began when I started attending Otley Parish Church in 2018 when we

moved here from Surrey.

When and where did you meet your husband?

Trevor and I met in Edinburgh in 1995. I was living and working there but had gone over to Edinburgh for a party. Trevor had come up to Edinburgh for the weekend and was staying with a friend who brought him to the party. The rest is history!!

Do you have any children and grandchildren?

Yes, Trevor and I have 3 children between us. 2 of them live down south, and the youngest lives in Manchester. We have 3 grandchildren – Katie who is 22, Charlie who is 16, and now Evelyn who has just turned 1. We are very blessed with them all.

What was your occupation and where did you work?

I have been retired for a good number of years now, but during my working life I had a variety of jobs. When I left university in Aberdeen I started a graduate nursing course, but I only did that for a short spell much to my regret later in life. My last job was working as a P.A. for Novartis, a global healthcare company in Surrey

where we were living. This was a job I really enjoyed, supporting the head of a department which dealt with monitoring a particular drug.

Do you have brothers and sisters?

I have an older brother and an older sister.

In what ways are you involved with the church now?

I help on the Welcome rota and am on the *Local to Global* team. I'm also a member of a house group.

Do you have a favourite verse of Scripture? If so, what is it?

The verse that has helped me so much over the last few years is from Mark chapter 5, where Jesus tells Jairus, 'Don't be afraid only believe'. It's a very simple message but so profound.

Do you have a favourite Christian hymn or song?

'The Lord's My Shepherd', but the Stuart Townsend version. Also, 'Meet me in the Middle', by Paul Kelly.

Do you like classical music, and do you have a favourite piece?

Yes, I do! Probably my favourite piece is 'The Flower Duet', by Delibes.

What about modern songs or music - anything in particular?

'Perfect Symphony', by Ed Sheeran and Andrea Bocelli.

Can you play a musical instrument?

Sadly no. No patience!

Do you have a favourite part of Yorkshire that you like to visit?

I find Bolton Abbey has everything - peace, beautiful scenery, and a coffee at the end of a lovely walk!

Is there somewhere you would like to go on holiday where you've not been before, regardless of expense?

I would have loved to visit Israel. Obviously not an option now!

A book you enjoyed reading – Christian or general? Any special reason?

Recently I read, 'Small

Things like These', by Claire Keegan and thought it was beautifully written. It's a short story covering suffering and self-sacrifice in very moving terms.

Do you have a hobby or something you enjoy doing to relax?

I do play golf but I'm not sure that it's relaxing!! Walking is definitely relaxing and reading is too.

What would be your favourite meal - 2 or even 3 courses?

Hummus, homemade bread and lots of tapas dishes, followed by fruit and chocolates!

If you were to spend a whole year on a desert island *on your own*, what luxury would you like to take with you?

A Kindle with a solar powered charger.

Which one word best describes your life right now?

Grateful.

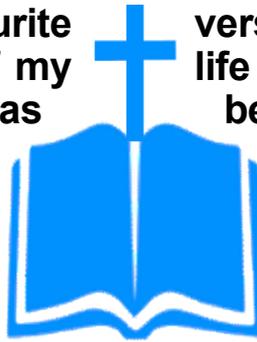
WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE BIBLE Verse?

John 13:34 (NLT)

*“So now I am giving you a new commandment:
love each other.*

Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.”

It may seem a bit of a cliché to choose this bible verse, but it is my favourite verse and a verse that I have followed all of my life since becoming a Christian. This has been one of the foundations of my job in healthcare. God unconditionally loves everyone that I see (patients and staff) and it is my responsibility to love, take care and respect them as God would want me to do. If I only loved the people who loved me, what type of Christian would that make me?



Victoria Dalton



Martin and Jackie Hird pulling and pushing Baby Hird up the middle of the road to church on Sunday morning 5th January after a night of heavy snow.

WONDERFUL!

**Many congratulations
to Jo & Michael Evans
on the birth of
GRACE ELIZABETH.**

**She was born on
Wednesday
27th November
at 4.42am
at
Harrogate Hospital,
and weighed
7lbs 13oz.**



Jean Butlin

8th April 1937 - 23rd November 2024



JEAN BUTLIN is here with her beloved husband Eddie when they celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary on 31st March 2024. Jean very sadly passed away on 23rd November last year. She was the much loved mum of Mandy, Yvonne, Helen and Paul, dearest mum-in-law to Mark and Lisa, and a loving grandma, great-grandma and great-great-grandma.

A LOVELY TRIBUTE TO JEAN

JEAN BUTLIN was a special lady. If there was the opportunity in a church service to share a response, or 'give a word', you could always count on Jean to have something to say. In fact, even when there wasn't an opportunity offered (!), Jean would often make it known that she had something to say. My memory is that it was always encouraging.

In one of his New Testament letters, St Paul tells us how he prayed for God to take away his weakness, what he called (mysteriously) his 'thorn in the flesh'. But God didn't take it away. Paul tells us that God spoke to him, saying: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness". So, Paul concluded, "When I am weak, then I am strong".

For me, Jean embodied this message. Over the 20+ years I knew her, she was often in hospital or unwell at home, suffering a number of ongoing health issues. And yet despite this apparent frailty, she remained an absolute tower of strength in practical matters for her family and a powerhouse of prayer and wisdom for the Church.

Jean and Eddie have been pillars of the church. For a large part of their lives this was especially focused on WEFC (Weston Estate Family Church) and the Friendship Club on the Weston Estate. They embodied service and, especially, generosity. They were a rock of 'love in action' to their family, and in the life of the Church, always spurring us to reach out to the wider community with deeds of kindness and a huge desire to make Christ known.

Jean was a prayerful person, someone who read her bible daily and lived in the light. Sometimes the pressures of life got to her, but mostly she felt close to God and loved to tell stories of God's goodness. She had strong emotions. I know that Eddie was not the only person she sometimes got exasperated with! But she loved to laugh and readily saw the funny side of things.

We shall miss her.

Graham Buttanshaw

Former vicar of Otley Parish Church (1999-2021)



**MARGARET
SHIPPEY**

**celebrated her 75th
birthday on 21st
December 2024.**

**She was born at
Four Gables Nursing
Home in Horsforth,
Leeds,
in 1949.**

We're delighted to say that after a 3 year apprenticeship with BMW in Pannal, near Harrogate, Sam has qualified, with a distinction, as an Institute of the Motor Industry and a BMW vehicle technician (mechanic in 'old money'!). He will continue to work there for the next year at least and at the same time enjoy restoring 'Penelope', a 1997 Volvo estate that he has been gifted!



SAM

son of Jo and Paul Briscoe



Bryan Dexter celebrated his 88th birthday on 20th December 2024. He was born in Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, in 1936. He and his family moved to Otley in November 1942 because of his father's work, and he's been here ever since – yes, for 82 years!



SAM MAYER'S BAPTISM

**Sam was baptised by Aaron Kennedy at OPC
on Sunday 5th January 2025.**

**He is seen here with his Godparents Geoff and Abi
(left and right of picture) and in the centre with mum
Katie and dad Rick, and brother Daniel.**

**Sam (8 months old) was born on 23rd April 2024,
and Daniel (4½ years old) on 3rd August 2020.**



The leaders of our Little Rascals which meets every Wednesday morning, had an enjoyable lunch together in November at the River Café at Wharfebank Mills, Otley



CWGC

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

HONoured GUESTS AT THE CWGC CAROL SERVICE 2024

I AM SURE that I cannot be the only Otley parishioner to have a relative in a Commonwealth War Grave. If you do have a family member in a war grave, then you need to know that there has been a big push this winter to record as many stories as possible about the deaths in service of military personnel for the CWGC Commission. The hope is to tie each story into a database so that when the graves are visited the story can be accessed as well as the bare details on the headstone,

Many deaths pass almost unnoticed apart from the loss to the family. Others are well documented despite them occurring in the turmoil of war. My son, Paul, has recently discovered the details of the death of my father, Frank Bolton, which was in September 1944 when he was shot down in his plane over Holland. It's a story of amazing sacrifice and heroism, and one which I know is replicated many, many times.

The publication of this story in the national press led to an invitation for me and my husband and our two children to attend the Annual Carol Service at the Guards' Chapel in London on 2nd December 2024 as honoured guests! Never having been an honoured guest at any public event we felt very special.

We didn't really know what to expect but the journey was planned. Hotels were booked and all arrangements made. Both our children work with logistics, so it was a near military plan. As they are both self-employed, they also had the flexibility to shepherd us!

The Chapel is on Birdcage Walk in Westminster, London, and is open to the public. It's well worth a visit. The Chapel itself was destroyed in June 1944 and the present day building contains the restored mosaic apse and a rebuilt central



**Flight Lieutenant
Frank Bolton**

area. Outside, the Eternal Flame was burning. We went in and introduced ourselves. A flurry of excitement was created - they're here! We were gathered up and ushered into the second row - not quite honoured enough for the front row!

And the service began. A long programme executed with military precision and at a quick marching speed. 'O Come O Come Emmanuel' set the pace. Interspersed with familiar carols was beautiful choir music and songs. A truly moving event.

Then we were asked to cross the parade ground for the reception in the Officers' Mess. I was completely overwhelmed by the number of people and dreaded that my hearing difficulties would make me feel isolated. Nothing could have been further from the truth. We were welcomed with open arms and whirled from one guest to another to tell our story. Everyone was so welcome and loving that I was often moved to tears.

It was a truly unique experience for us. But the point of my writing this for "In Touch" is to encourage you to share YOUR family story with the CWG Commission. The website for this is www.cwgc.org/stories. Here you will find "For Evermore: Stories of the Fallen" for you to read and for you too to add your own story about your relative.

Although many heroes came home, many were left behind. *We must not forget.*

Margaret Thompson



From left to right: Margaret's son Paul, Margaret Thompson, Anne Ridgway (Margaret's daughter), Richard Thompson (Margaret's husband)

Local to Global Curry Night

Our enjoyable curry night at the Red Pepper Indian Restaurant in Otley in support of our Local to Global charities of Leeds Faith in Schools and Kisiizi Hospital, Uganda, raised the sum of **£254**



My Devotional Thoughts

Phil Moon

“Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; to be a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel.”

Luke 2:29-32 (KJV)

THOUGHTS ON CANDLEMAS

I love these verses. They're known as the *Nunc Dimittis* from their opening words in Latin and were spoken by Simeon when he encountered Jesus. They form part of the Evensong liturgy, which is where I first heard them, sung week-by-week on Sunday evenings, prior to my attending the church youth group. They are part of a longer story in Luke as he describes Jesus' introduction to the Temple. In the Church Calendar we celebrate this at Candlemas on February 2nd, 40 days after Christmas.

One of the things that stands out in the passage is the interplay between Law and Spirit. A common perception among Christians is that the Holy Spirit brings freedom and opens up our perspective,

whereas the Law brings restriction and closedness. But it's not true. Here we see them working together in harmony, not in opposition. So, Mary and Joseph bring their 40-day-old child to present him to the Lord to fulfil the requirements of the Law. Meanwhile, Simeon, moved by the Spirit, greets them, recognising the true identity of the one they bring.

We see too the symbolism of light. "In him was life", wrote John, "and that life was a light for all people." Traditionally, in pre-electric times, all the candles to be used in the church through the year were blessed at Candlemas, echoing Simeon's words concerning Jesus' mission – "to be a light to lighten the Gentiles".

But I think what I like best is simply the picture of this faithful old man tenderly clutching the baby in his arms, so certain that the child he held was almighty God come to dwell among us. No wonder he was now content to depart this earthly life in peace, for nothing could possibly surpass such a joy and privilege.

Lord, give us the strength to be obedient to your commands, the openness to be daily renewed with your Spirit, the opportunities to be beacons of your light in the world, and the faith to be your followers always; then may we too depart in peace. Amen.



BEYOND LEAF PATROL

FIRSTLY, I must wish everyone a belated Happy New Year and thank very much those 16+ volunteers who worked so well on Leaf Patrol and the Pruning Party in mid-November. Unlike me, they are mostly unsung heroes who shun the limelight and vain glory. They know who they are, and some can be seen in the photograph in December's In Touch, though the low sun and hats are disguising most.

Starting back in October Leaf Patrol built a pile near the north-west corner of the paths - almost the size of Penyghent. This will make a safe winter habitat for worms and hedgehogs. Eventually, it will break down into a fine leaf litter to mulch round trees etc. On the Pruning Party morning we cut up three big wind-blown branches to make habitat piles, and also cut brambles and ivy to free up graves and walls etc. We were careful, though, to leave some late flowering ivy for the wild bees who have moved their nest from the old willow to the south Church wall. This was all done with hand tools but for a while we had a mechanical leaf blower and increased the pile to nearly the size of Snowden (Yr Wyddfa). As if as a sign, an early snowfall melted everywhere except on the pile. Disappointingly though, it later shrank and sagged to be a lower but broader based Ingleborough.

I had hoped that Advent and the start of winter would form a symbolic and concrete end to Leaf Patrol. Most trees like the sycamores and cherries obliged by dropping most of their leaves before this. Some, particularly the old willow and some hollies, did not get the memo and retained a mass of green leaves while shedding enough golden ones to cover some paths and form a hazard, although looking pretty.

I may be wrong, but I half remember a legend that Christ's cross was made from willow, causing it to be cursed. Also, an old folk song talks of the boy Jesus cursing the willow after being hit by his mother, Mary, by willow twigs for being naughty at football:

"Oh, bitter withy, Oh, bitter withy
You've caused me to smart.
And the withy shall be the very first tree
To perish at the heart."

These legends are unlikely to be mentioned in the Bible, and seem an Anglicised explanation of why the willow tends to grow rapidly and then falls over, as ours is doing slowly. Remarkably, the fallen branches often grow new roots and perpetuate the tree, especially along moist soils of riverbanks. The bitter reference relates to aspirin, taken from its bark until made artificially. So, although rare in churchyards,



Gabriel Kennedy, 6½ years old, in the leaf pile he helped rake up with these green hand rakes

our old willow is welcome and valued by both people and wildlife. Many people stop to photograph and comment on the tree. It has been voted Otley's joint favourite in a Wildlife Friendly Otley poll.

Also in November, through a postponement elsewhere, Wildlife Friendly Otley came to prepare the south side wildflower strip ready for next spring. Four of us cut the stems and seed heads after the birds had taken their share. The area was lightly raked to create new ground for flowers. All was added to the habitat pile, and lots of new leaves were seen coming up in the strip. In the Deep mid-Winter, Spring might be seen as far off, but this is not the case. Around the time of February's Candlemas is the old Celtic festival of Imbolc when ewes come into milk ready for their lambs. Also, it is the time of 'quickenings' when the tree sap begins to rise. Modern equipment can hear this, but the sea of brave white snow drops heralds it too. Lent obviously means that the days are lengthening and heading towards Easter, when Jesus's resurrection coincides with Spring.

The Garden of Eden features in the Bible as well as in Islam and Judaism too. In Spain and the Middle East cool courtyard gardens are cultivated to evoke Paradise. We are in the wild north-west of Europe, but we can cultivate a glimpse of Paradise too. Our historic churchyard woodland site fosters nut hatches, woodpeckers, gold crests, tawny owls, bats, dragonflies and speckled wood butterflies, plus many common songbirds. Some of our volunteers are keen on another pruning day. We can do this before Spring to trim more bramble and ivy. After that it can be left for wildlife until Prince Henry's school comes in July. Churchwarden Tom and I are hoping to negotiate with Leeds Council for the far western section to be left for one late grass cut. Elsewhere, the short grass will tell our many visitors that we are proud of our historic churchyard.

If you would like to help in the future, please see me or Tom Raper.

Keith Wilson MSc. MICFOR (retired) and modest person

Creation Care

A monthly column for us to share environmental and sustainability ideas

Following the approval of the OPC Environmental & Sustainability policy (you can read the policy via a link on this page of the Church website: <https://otleyparishchurch.org/net-zero/>) one of the Carbon Net Zero actions is to encourage individual members of the Church and the community in taking steps to reduce their carbon footprints and to care for God's creation.

There are many small ways to do this so you may wish to choose a change to make this year. Be gentle on yourself and be realistic, but challenge yourself too. To help you make changes beyond New Year resolutions, you can sign up to <https://arocha.org.uk/wild-christian/> for more ways to enjoy, nurture and defend nature.

To take action as part of your church community, you can explore Eco Church resources <https://arocha.org.uk/about-us/our-resources/>, together we can protect and restore creation. Otley Parish Church has the Silver Eco Church Award, and we are working towards achieving the Gold one.

Look out for more tips in future editions of In Touch or you may wish to share any actions you have taken with the rest of the Parish.

SILVER THREADS



Soft as thistledown, strong as steel,
Run the threads of your love through my life.
Rooted in love before I was born,
Secure for all time through Christ's saving grace.

My life is my own, the choices are free.
Yet you call me again and again.
Shimmering, glimmering, now I can see
The threads of your love for me.
Reaching into the heart of my emptiness,
Calling me back to the joy of that love.
So I lift up my head, turn towards your face,
Open my eyes and my heart as I gaze.
You've given me life, its fullness I see.
What else can I do in the face of such love,
But promise again to worship anew.

© *Eileen Barr*



Otley Parish Church Services in February

Each 10.30am service is live streamed to YouTube:

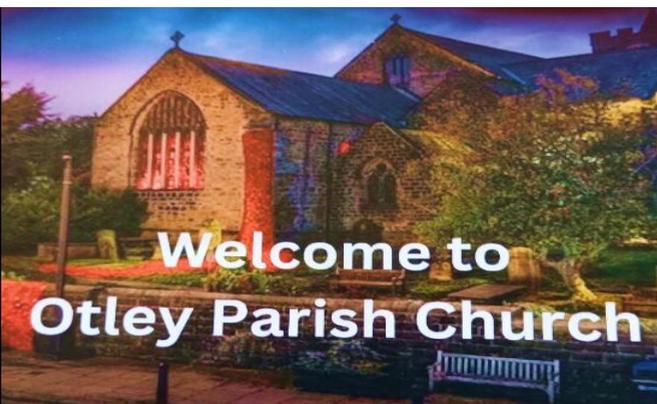
www.youtube.com/@otleyparishchurch

Sunday 2nd	10.30am	Service of the Word with Baptism Sunday Club (KS1, KS2 and pre-schoolers) OPC Youth Group (Yr7 and upwards)
	6.00pm	ACTIVATE Lively, informal and reflective worship <i>(followed by pizza)</i>
Sunday 9th	10.30am	Sunday Worship with Holy Communion Sunday Club (KS1, KS2 and pre-schoolers) OPC Youth Group (Yr7 and upwards)
Sunday 16th	8.30am	Holy Communion This monthly service of Holy Communion is based on Common Worship, with a short talk and no hymns
	10.30am	Service of the Word Sunday Club (KS1, KS2 and pre-schoolers)
Sunday 23rd	10.30am	Sunday Worship with Holy Communion Sunday Club (KS1, KS2 and pre-schoolers) OPC Youth Group (Yr7 and upwards)

Our Midweek Services in February

Every Tuesday	11.00am	Holy Communion A short service with no hymns <i>(followed by light refreshments)</i>
Every Monday to Thursday <i>except in school holidays</i>	4.30pm	Evening Prayer There will be a variety of approaches to prayer; also, a reflection on a Bible passage, and time for silence to pray for others

**ARE
YOU
NEW
HERE?**



**Welcome to
Otley Parish Church**

If you are fairly new to Otley Parish Church, you are indeed very welcome here!

If you'd like to get connected, involved, or find out more about us, please pick up a *Welcome to Otley Parish Church* card which you'll find on the table at the back of the church.

Please fill in the details and return it to us, or put it into the red wall safe on the back wall.

We will use your contact information to help you find a way to connect into the life of our church. We do take care to ensure that your data is kept secure.

Please Keep in Touch

We would love you to keep in touch and tell us what you'd like to see in *your* monthly **IN TOUCH** Church magazine. If you've got something you would like to share with us in the March edition of **IN TOUCH**, please send it to our editor, stephenhey01@gmail.com

NO LATER THAN

Saturday 15th February



Otley Parish CHURCH

Kirkgate ● Otley ● West Yorkshire ● LS21 3HW
Vicar: Revd. Aaron Kennedy

Registered Charity Number: 1153498

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

Sarah McCormack

CHURCH OFFICE

“The Chestnuts”, Burras Lane, Otley LS21 3HS

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday - Thursday, 9.30am - 3.00pm

TELEPHONE

01943 465927

EMAIL

info@otleyparishchurch.org

CHURCH WEBSITE

www.otleyparishchurch.org

*see our website for details of Church services
and a link to our streamed services on YouTube*

FACEBOOK: [@otleyparishchurch](https://www.facebook.com/otleyparishchurch)

X (TWITTER): [@otleyallsaints](https://twitter.com/otleyallsaints)

CHURCH BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS

Account name: Parochial Church Council of Otley

Sort code: 20-37-13 **Account No:** 10088811

Gift Aid: if you are a tax payer, please consider signing a Gift Aid declaration, available on the Church website or from the Treasurer, Tony Pike

KEY CHURCH CONTACTS

VICAR

Rev. Aaron Kennedy 01943 462240 vicar@otleyparishchurch.org

ASSOCIATE MINISTERS

Rev. Roger Dedman 01943 467540 rogerjdedman@gmail.com

Rev. Stewart Hartley 01943 464106 sr.hartley47@gmail.com

Rev. Colin Hopkinson 01943 514113 cchopkinson@aol.com

Rev. Phil Moon 01943 464731 familyofmoon@aol.com

Rev. Rachel Wilson 01943 968902 revrachel.wilson@gmail.com

LICENSED LAY MINISTERS

Jackie Hird 01943 462858 hirds@phoncoop.coop

Martin Hird 01943 462858 hirds@phoncoop.coop

CHURCHWARDENS

Tom Raper 01943 461567 thomas.raper@btinternet.com

Vacant: hoping for someone to step-in and offer their support

ASSISTANT CHURCHWARDENS

Martin Hird 01943 462858 hirds@phoncoop.coop

Kevin Keefe 01943 466177 kevin@keefe.org.uk

Barry Milner 01943 462472 barrynglynis.milner@outlook.com

Barbara Nicholls 07747 848074 babs.nicholls@gmail.com

PCC TREASURER

Tony Pike 07977 463562 treasurer@otleyparishchurch.org

PCC SECRETARY

Barry Milner 01943 462472 barrynglynis.milner@outlook.com

BAPTISM CO-ORDINATOR

Glynis Milner 01943 462472 barrynglynis.milner@outlook.com

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Jenny Liston 07743 330264 jenny@otleyparishchurch.org

CHURCH WEBSITE MANAGER

Kevin Keefe 01943 466177 kevin@keefe.org.uk

IN TOUCH EDITOR

Stephen Hey 01943 969624 stephenhey01@gmail.com

GROUP & ACTIVITY CONTACTS

BABY RASCALS / LITTLE RASCALS

Eileen Barr 01943 464382

Jean Boddy 01943 466182

BELL RINGERS

Julia Thornley 07979 957394

Jenny Liston 07743 330264

CARBON NET ZERO

Norman Barr otleybarrs@gmail.com

CHOIR & BAND

Pam Beck pam.beck@hotmail.co.uk

CRAFTYNUTS CRAFT GROUP

Lynne Barber 01943 466493

FLOWER ARRANGING

Val Tait 01943 464032

LOCAL TO GLOBAL

Stewart Hartley sr.hartley47@gmail.com

MUSIC GROUPS & WORSHIP TEAM

Rick Mayers richardmayers87@gmail.com

NEWALL LADIES FELLOWSHIP

Val Tait 01943 464032

OPEN HOUSE

Barry Milner barrynglynis.milner@outlook.com

STEEL MAGNOLIAS

Shirley Parker shirleyparker@btinternet.com

SUNDAY CLUB

Mary Pike sundayclub@otleyparishchurch.org

YOUTH GROUP

Katie Mayers youth@otleyparishchurch.org



Otley Parish CHURCH

OTLEY PARISH CHURCH

Kirkgate ● Otley ● West Yorkshire ● LS21 3HW

www.otleyparishchurch.org

Vicar: Reverend Aaron Kennedy

Registered Charity Number 1153498