

# Oswald's Outlook



Nov 2020



St. Oswald's, Askriigg

From the Vicarage

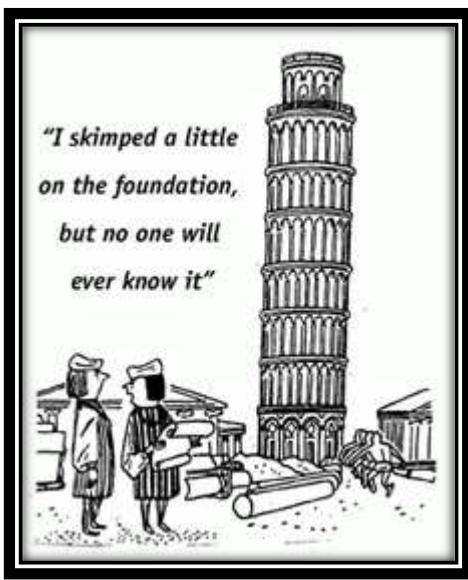


## Shakey Times Shakey Foundations

We are definitely living through historic days. The news from across our nation and the world brings sadness and concern regarding the spread of the virus, its toll on human life, the distress and worry of sickness, loss of employment and general uncertainty of all that we took for granted just a few months ago. Many in our communities are genuinely anxious and apprehensive about the future. From a historical perspective, it would appear that every generation has something with which they must face off and do their best to work through.

No one is dropping bombs on us (and many of you coped with that) but the misery, heartache, uncertainty, fear and distress are real enough and we will all feel the after effects of this pandemic for many years to come. Humans are social creatures, so perhaps this is why we find the virus so difficult to

deal with because it strikes at the very heart of what we hold precious; gathering together, relationship, friendship & fellowship. This is what makes it particularly difficult for those members of our communities who live alone. So, how are we meant to cope? What might we do, what might we say or think about that will help us through such a time as this? What brings you hope?



The fragile retail and hospitality industries reach out to us with promises of a better tomorrow through images of exciting purchases to be made or destinations to be visited and experienced. Is that where our

hope is? Perhaps rather than spending our cash in this way we should hold onto it to help cope with that 'rainy day' that may be just around the corner,

but with the Bank of England considering introducing negative interest rates where is the value of being prudent? It feels like so much of what we knew, what we have come to rely on, what we have taken as our foundations to build our lives upon is not as substantial or as steadfast as we thought.

*"What can an honest person do when everything crumbles?"* Psalm 11

So asked King David some 3000 years ago and it's a pertinent question to be addressed today. Covid 19 hasn't created fear and anxiety but it has certainly revealed it, so what should we do and where should we look for something reliable? For thousands of years, countless generations have spoken of and given testimony to the faithful and steadfast character of a God who has shown the reality of his presence in so many different ways and ultimately through his son Jesus Christ. To the sceptics this story is nothing more than that, a fantastical delusion, but billions of people alive right now will argue to the contrary. God's promise is that if we seek him with all our heart, then we *will* find Him<sup>Jer.29:13</sup> and many continue to do so.

King David answers his own question. When the going gets tough, the tough put their trust in one even tougher. Christians are facing the same challenges as everyone else in the world right now, but they face them in a different way because they have a hope in something, in **someone** that can be truly relied upon.

May you know the peace, the presence & the steadfast nature of the Lord  
in your heart and in your home.



### A VIEW FROM THE PEW

Love and Greetings from St Matthew's to the other three parishes in the Benefice and to all friends everywhere. Another Autumn - "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness..." Ahh! and a whole lot more besides, this year! Never will those familiar words have had a much more curious slant than they have had this year. Like so many other things we do, approached in a state of high alert and in some quarters, not a small amount of trepidation. Some might say "a step in faith", and certainly in hope; and where is the Christian teaching if we don't hold on to hope.

Some of us are becoming gradually used to the socially distanced services, and it is a huge comfort to meet up with our friends again and have some sort of catch-up. The past long months have taught us many things and made many of us address serious questions regarding the sturdiness of our

personal faith. It is often said that the pandemic has brought out the best and the worst in humanity. Hopefully, it has taught us to view situations with a philosophy of focusing on the most positive and better aspects in our neighbours and friends. Even those we have to deal with remotely, who sometimes appear to be bent on making the most simple tasks complicated and difficult.

Being alone (apart from the continual presence of God's spirit) can make one more resourceful. And hopefully, clearer thinking about matters of faith, to understand that the Lord is there for us, no matter what the circumstances is a huge spiritual and emotional safety-net. I was reflecting recently about a conversation I had with one of my young grandsons many years ago. He was protesting, (not the first or last to do so), that he didn't believe in God anymore. My reply was " Oh really? Would you like to say why, perhaps tell me about the God you don't believe in.... because you see, it's quite possible that I don't believe in him either!" It is important to use solitary time well and to get to know who that God is that you really do believe in. To describe him to yourself and truly come to know him in all his immense love and compassion and be able to share that with others when needed. To love Him with every fibre of your being; that is what counts. It is painful to witness those we love and cherish, and who have perhaps said their first nighttime prayers at your knee, challenge their own faith, sometimes for many years. But it is through testing our faith that we grow. We must trust. and know that though they may currently not believe in God, He believes in them and loves them unconditionally!

It is a salutary lesson that it is not what we have or have not got in this life, but what we DO with it. And in this still painful time, and when the storm seems at its most tempestuous and never ceasing.- let us pray with His Grace to Dance joyfully in the rain !

Keep safe and well and feel God's Love winging to you all from all at St Matthews! God bless, with love, **Lesley**

## Bell jar money

It is obviously not possible to collect any money at the moment so keep on collecting please and we will let everyone know when we hope to take all the money in. We are very grateful for all the support we are getting and when this situation is over, we hope to have grants in place to start work on the tower.

## **WEATHER REPORT**

April 2020 was an extremely dry month with only 8mls of rain recorded. The highest temperature was on 24<sup>th</sup> April at 19.1 degrees, followed by a quick cold snap around 28<sup>th</sup>.

May continued to be dry with only 19mls rain in total with very warm days on 7<sup>th</sup> (20.5 degrees) and 20<sup>th</sup> (26.5 degrees) which helped us all enjoy our daily walks during lockdown.

June returned to more normal rainfall with 94 mls in total. There was a hot spell on 24<sup>th</sup> with a temperature of 29.6 and on the 25<sup>th</sup> of 27.4 degrees. A stormy breakdown of the mini heatwave resulted in 16mls rain on 26<sup>th</sup>.

July was unremarkable weather-wise with a very wet day recorded on 9<sup>th</sup> (21mls) and a total rainfall of 54mls.

August recorded 2 hot days on 11<sup>th</sup> (26.4) and 13<sup>th</sup> (26.2) and this was accompanied by very humid conditions. It was particularly wet during the second half of the month with Storm Francis on 25<sup>th</sup> producing 21.5mls rain in 24 hours. There were very cold nights for August on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> when the temperature fell to 4.2 degrees! Total rainfall this month 93.5mls

A quick note regarding my bird sightings – Dippers noted in Paddock Beck from 6 April, sandmartins seen at Worton 7 April, swallows from 11 April, a red kite seen at Aysgarth on 15 April, swifts first seen in Askrigg on 5 May and in much greater numbers than I have previously seen.      **Mel Willis**

## **Circuit Training**

We read about the necessity of keeping fit and a group of ladies, not as young as they were, decided to take this seriously and sign up to Kirsten Civil's circuit training sessions.

On Mondays and Wednesdays, we meet for an hour to follow a circuit of exercises designed to help flexibility and cardiac health. So, if you see us exercising you will know why. We can recommend it.

## **An Evening with Marie Little..... an update !**

Due to Lockdown, '*An evening with Marie*' originally scheduled for last April had to be postponed to October 17<sup>th</sup>. It will come as no surprise that we have had to reschedule this date as well.

The '*evening with Marie*' will now take place on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2021, almost a year to the day of the original date! The intent is to run the evening

as originally envisaged, however it may be necessary to modify the evening due to any Covid related restrictions that may still be in place then. If you have already purchased a ticket for the event and have not already been notified and the new date is not suitable for you, a refund will be available. Please contact us at [caseymal@live.co.uk](mailto:caseymal@live.co.uk).

The associated raffle which could well be the longest in history will be revived, along with concert ticket sales in the New Year. Thank you for your ongoing support of this event and we very much hope to be able to bring Marie to Askrigg next April to entertain you.

Malcolm Carruthers (o/b/o PCC of Askrigg)

### **From the Belfry**

Whilst Church services have resumed, that is following the 'lockdown', it is very challenging at the moment to resume 'full circle' Tower Bell ringing. In order to adhere to current social distancing rules it is impossible for 6 ringers to stand a safe distance apart, in fact the spacing of the bell ropes would only allow for 3 ringers at one time. Ringing on just 3 bells is possible but has limitations and is not conducive to a tuneful sound.

You may however have heard a single bell rung recently, the limitation of just one ringer, but nonetheless a call to Church for Sunday Services. Oh, and though perhaps not the usually expected peal, we were able to ring a bell for a recent wedding to mark the occasion on the couples' special day.

For me however, the break has provided a timely opportunity to check the bells over for wear and for safety. This includes checking the frame upon which the bells sit, the castings, clappers, pins, pulleys, ropes and more, tightening nuts and making adjustments where necessary.

That aside, we have held back from hanging the chiming ropes for some time now as our 'Ellacombe' chiming frame needs repair if not replacement. However, as we have not been able to ring the bells 'full circle' I decided that if chiming the bells could be made safe then all 6 bells could be heard together until we are back to our 'full circle' ringing. So, with the help of Mal Carruthers and David Liddell we recently set about hanging the chiming ropes, a tedious job having to thread them upwards through floor voids and pulleys, then testing our knotting skills as bells have some fanciful attachments. Martin Durrant has also been instrumental in securing the 'Ellacombe' frame to the wall for us, as an interim measure.

Full Circle ringing is where a rope is pulled to swing the bell, the clapper that hangs inside the bell swings to hit the bell and make a sound. Chiming is where, with the bell in a static hanging down position, a thinner and lighter rope is pulled for about one foot distance within a frame, allowing the attached hammer to hit the bell from the underside to make a sound. This is the same action when you hear the clock and is why we have to stop the clock from sounding whilst the bells are in an upright position for ringing.

So, although there will be no Tuesday practice for the time being, you should now be hearing all 6 bells ring again for Sunday services and weddings, somewhat different and quieter than usual but just as tuneful, only this time by just one ringer.

Kevin Sorsby, Tower Captain

### **Tower Up-Date**

As you might expect the last few months have delayed everything to do with the Tower restoration and we are in a sort of limbo as regards grants etc. You might remember that there were 2 possibilities for us to consider.

One was the re-pointing with lime mortar which entailed taking out all the old mortar & finding every fissure in the stones before the lime mortar could be applied. The second was to take out the old mortar, lime mortar and render the tower.

All the necessary professional advice that we took was of the opinion that although the first option was feasible it could take longer, cost as much, if not more, and last 50 rather than 150 years. Discussing all this at length with the architect, English Heritage and the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings it was clear that the second option was the better. This was supported by the Parish Council & the National Park.

We are now looking to the next steps we should take. In the midst of all this we have the usual maintenance of the church and in October will have the roof of the north aisle repaired where there is a leak. This is costing £2000 but we have applied for a grant to help with the cost.

### **School Update**

We are delighted to say that today we have welcomed back all of our children today at Askrigg, Bainbridge and West Burton. The staff have worked very hard to make sure all relevant procedures are in place to keep our children, staff and families safe. We are spending our first three days in school

enjoying practical activities and re acquainting ourselves with friends and routines.

Our philosophy for the present time is

- 1.Keep everyone safe
- 2.Lower anxiety
- 3.Make them laugh
- 4.Make them feel cared for
- 5.Teach them something, in that order.

Back in March we remained open for a small group of children of key workers and quickly developed an on-line learning platform. By the time the government announced that Nursery, Year 1 and Year 6 should return to school on 1<sup>st</sup> June we had a very effective electronic learning system established. All our staff have worked hard throughout the lockdown to support our pupils and their families to continue with their learning. We quickly assessed how many 'Bubbles' we could accommodate and invited back all our Year 6, Year 1 and Nursery/Reception as well as children of Key workers from all 3 schools. By 12<sup>th</sup> June we were also offering other 'Bubbles' on a Friday so that we could have the maximum number of children returning. By the end of June we had approx. 76% of our pupils spending some time in school. 85% of pupils were accessing our on-line learning platform Microsoft Teams which gave them daily access to teaching and in some cases a weekly meet up online.

Finishing on 17<sup>th</sup> July we were sad that we could not offer our usual 'send off' to our Year 6 pupils but they had some time together enjoying a local walk and ice-cream treat, to celebrate their years spent together.

Seven weeks later we are open again and it is marvellous to hear the buzz of children's voices in our schools and playgrounds. Covid has meant certain changes in our work practices but we are very aware we don't want it to take over and stifle the wonderful education opportunities that we offer our children in these three delightful rural schools.

Eleanor and Maxine (Interim EHTs at BAWB)

### **Report on Askri gg and District Produce (on-line) show 2020**

On behalf of the Askri gg and District Produce Association, I'd like to express how incredibly impressed we have been with the response we had from people near and far to our on-line show. When we first thought of the idea, we were very unsure about how well we could transfer what is a very traditional and very hands-on show into something very 21<sup>st</sup> century and

decidedly hands off! For anyone who didn't know, the Produce Show has been running for 80 years and we were determined that we were not going to break this impressive run for anything so we made a decision early in the year to see how we could keep the spirit of the show alive. The idea of an on-line show was launched. We were very unsure whether people would take to the idea and make the extra effort to photograph and send in their entries but we were determined to give it our best shot.

With a schedule to re-arrange, a website to build, social media and email account to set up, we had much to do. A very different set of challenges to contend with than usual – and would anyone enter? Any concerns we had about the appetite for a show in the midst of a Pandemic were soon dismissed as we started to get a steady trickle of entries coming in, building to an out-and-out wave by the last week. We ended up getting over 600 entries from more than 100 people which we might have struggled to fit in the village hall in other years. We had a little help from Rishi Sunak who very kindly featured us in his regular Darlington and Stockton Times article. We are also indebted to Betsy Everett for her very positive articles in local press. The overall show winner was Ruth Griffiths. Category winners were:  
Ruth Griffiths – Floral Art, Rhian Liddell – Roses, Ruth Griffiths and Karen Jones – Horticulture, Karen Jones – Vegetables, Sue Stokes – Eggs  
Christina Slater and Dawn Kirkbride – Home Cookery, Liz Connelly – Handicrafts, MaryRose Kearney – Art, Neil McNair – Photography, Lizzie Metcalfe and Ada Middleton – Pre-school, Jo Hodgson – Infants, Clari Hodgson – Juniors

Many thanks to all that entered. The standard was incredibly high this year and the judges had a hard time in choosing the winners. Many thanks also to them for taking the time to judge for us this year with the added technical challenge of posting results on-line.

We really hope that next year we will be back in the Village Hall for the 81<sup>st</sup> Askrigg and District Produce Show but we are indebted to the wonderful people of Askrigg parish who responded so positively to our challenge and made it such a success.

Mike Dechezeaux, Chairman – Askrigg and District Produce Show

## TALES OF LOCKDOWN

### The Bake-Well

Our lockdown began on Tuesday 24th March and it was definitely uncertain. We had only been open for 12 weeks; so it would be a lie to say that we weren't worried for the future of the business. However we were able to apply

for the small business grant and furlough our staff which was a huge weight off our shoulders. With the uncertainty of lockdown and not knowing how long it would last we had to keep busy, so we started doing some self isolated cooking. We advertised that our ready meals would be available and we started baking brownies, cakes, muffins, Bakewell Tarts to name a few; we lost count of how many Birthday cakes we made. This is where we cannot thank everyone who supported us enough, it was completely overwhelming how many orders and deliveries we got. If we are completely honest being a new business we actually think lockdown may have benefited us in many ways; we were able to reflect and review on things that we needed to change or adjust but also people weren't travelling anywhere so customers that perhaps hadn't really been into the shop before were now ordering from us. It was definitely a period that we certainly wouldn't want to experience again but for us personally we consider ourselves extremely lucky that we were able to carry on in a relatively normal way and to obviously have the support of such a wonderful community.

### **St Oswalds Church**

Lockdown came as quite a shock for many in the Church of England. It is likely that this is the first time in St Oswald's history that no regular Sunday service has taken place. When we refer to 'the church', many people assume that this means the church building, but the church is actually the people or the fellowship, and these, unlike the building, were very active. In the time between lockdown and the end of July, we developed 'The Church in the Home' leaflet which was delivered, physically or online each week. In addition, most weeks there was an online service, featuring Dave and Sarah and other members of the Benefice churches. It was lovely to see so many different people, participating in bible readings and prayers from their own homes. If you missed them, they are available on YouTube – just search for Upper Wensleydale Church. From August, following the Government guidance, we opened our church for private prayer during the week during supervised sessions and church services began again – socially distanced, using alternate pews and a lot of cleaning and with face coverings. Many things have changed – sharing the peace now involves gestures rather than a handshake; communion involves bread and no wine – but the message, the love and the fellowship of our community remains the same.

As I write, the Covid situation is updated and we enter a new National lockdown on November 05<sup>th</sup>. Sadly this means that our services must now cease until at least Sunday December 06<sup>th</sup>, but since August 02<sup>nd</sup> we have been in the building for as near a normal a pattern of services as possible, albeit with facemasks, social distancing and no singing. Café style services

were not possible and were replaced with morning prayer. The Remembrance Service will be changed – see Stop press section. The Memorial Service (beginning of December) and Christmas Services will all need changes – please look out for updates of our noticeboards, facebook and our website.

We are also acutely aware that many people visited our church and wrote requests for prayers in our prayer book, which can no longer be done as a result of the restrictions. The church has an active ‘prayer chain’ and welcomes requests from anyone. Please speak to me (667944), the office (667553) or any member of our PCC or congregation and we will pray into your situation.

**Stephanie Durrant**



Due to the restrictions in place over the first National Lockdown in March and guidance that has been in operation since then, we have been unable to enjoy having our families in church for many months. So; It was with great JOY that we managed to find a way forward that didn't compromise the ‘bubbles’ created with our children at school and launched our first ‘Praise in the Pen’ on October 25th at St Oswald’s.

‘Pens’ were reserved by making a booking through the office and this ensured that every family was seated at a safe distance from everyone else. Families had their own individual packs of resources for the craft activity and age related materials to support what it means to have God as our Shepherd. There was praise, craft, prayer, dancing, Bible Story and fun as we celebrated God and being back together again. Sadly, our next meeting scheduled for Nov 22nd will now have to wait but .... we will be back!

### **St Oswald’s Gift Day 2020**

Given the restrictions and the effect that lockdown had on many families’ finances, St Oswald’s did not hold a Gift Day in August, as it has for many years. If you would like to make a donation to the church, please put it in a envelope and it can be left with Mary Rose Kearney (Summerdown, Silver Street) or Tricia Selby (The Manor House). The money will only be used for capital projects, like the roof, and not for day to day expenses.

## **Silent Art Auction in aid of St Oswald's Tower Appeal**

Over 50 paintings by artists including: Piers Browne, Norman Ackroyd RA, Diana Armfield RA and Andrea Hunter will be on sale to the highest bidder at a Silent Art Auction in December. The full catalogue is now available to view on our website <http://upperwensleydalechurch.org/silent-art-auction/>. The paintings will be on exhibition in the Askrigg village hall from 10-12 Dec but due to COVID restrictions, you will have to book a time slot to visit by contacting Piers Browne [piersbrowne@gmail.com](mailto:piersbrowne@gmail.com) or 01969 650434 mobile 07876233310. Sealed or 'Silent' bids will be accepted at the Exhibition or can be emailed in if you are unable to attend. The highest bidders will be contacted by 7pm on Dec 12<sup>th</sup>. I hope you will be able to support the event and help us raise funds for the tower.

Exhibition opening times:

Thursday Dec 10<sup>th</sup> 10-2 and 3-7pm

Friday Dec 11<sup>th</sup> 10-2 and 3-7pm

Saturday Dec 12<sup>th</sup> 10-2 and 3-6pm

## **Register**

25 July 2020	Wedding	Alex Clarke & Jessica Iveson
23 October 2020	Wedding	James Moffitt & Jenny Bainbridge

## **STOP PRESS.....**

**Due to the new National lockdown all regular services of worship are suspended until further notice. Our act of remembrance will still be commemorated on November 08<sup>th</sup> when bell will toll at 11.00 at St Oswald's. Perhaps you would like to consider joining the nation by standing by your door for one minute's silence at that point.**

**For anyone wanting to use a building for private prayer, St Matthew's Stalling Busk will be open every day and for your safety the church will be sanitised every 24 hours.**

**We would hope that services will resume on Sunday December 06<sup>th</sup>. We will be posting updates on our website, facebook page and by email. Until we are able to meet again pleased be re-assured of our prayers and we encourage you to join with us to pray for all our communities and our Nation at this time.**

**Upper Wensleydale Benefice Office**

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