



## The Benefice of Upper Wensleydale

News Sheet: Dec 13<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>



### A Spirit of Thankfulness

I've often thought of John the Baptist as a rather dour character; not the kind of guy who'd be a whole lot of laughs at a party, but his lifestyle and his message should grab our attention. He was focussed, he was forthright and, crucially, he was full of praise and thanksgiving to God. His words remind us of the need to remove the obstacles in our lives that are preventing us from experiencing God in all His fullness. Isaiah speaks of the faithfulness of God, fulfilling all He said He would do and inviting us into working with Him. A cause for celebration. Mary responds to the news from the Angel with praise and thanksgiving because despite the challenges she knows she will face, she understands the honour and the wonder of God fulfilling His promises from centuries before. She chooses to celebrate. St Paul amidst his imprisonment and hardship speaks of the importance of keeping prayer and praise on our lips at all times. Despite the trials of this year, for those who know God there is always much to be thankful for, and being thankful changes us and those around us. We will always have struggles but focussing on the goodness of God helps us deal with them in a different way. When we're struggling we can ask for His help and when something goes well we should be grateful. Isaiah speaks of it, John draws attention to it, Mary sings of it and Paul writes of it. This is a way of us praying 'without ceasing'. *Rev Dave*



**This Sunday Dec 13<sup>th</sup>**

**St Oswald's Askrigg – 4pm**

**Dec 20<sup>th</sup> at St Margaret's Hawes – 4pm**

## 'A Candlelight Celebration of Christmas'

Come and enjoy the Christmas story told through readings and music both traditional & contemporary. Let's cheer ourselves with something 'Christmassie' *Limited numbers available*

**Adults:** please wear a face mask but perhaps you might want to make it festive!



**THANK YOU!**



A very **BIG** "Thank you" to you all for your generous donations in our 'Toy Service' last Sunday. The picture here shows a very grateful Major Colin Stevens and his wife from the Salvation Army who collected the gifts and will ensure that they are distributed to families in need this Christmas.