

Presentation of Christ



4th, 3rd & 2nd

Sundays before Lent

The Benefice of Upper Wensleydale 'Church in the Home'

February 2025

Tel: 01969 667553 Email: office@upperwenben.org

www.upperwensleydalechurch.org



Edition Number 111

From the Vicarage

What a wonderful time we have had in the upper dale as our various communities have come together to celebrate Christmas. I love the opportunity that the season brings to invite people into the joy and wonder of God's message of love. Since the Benefice 'Toy service' in St Margaret's on Dec 1st, we have hosted some 43 separate services and events inside and outdoors and in all kinds of weather. And amongst the worship and the fun, the wonderful lights that decorated our streets, our windows, our church yards, buildings and homes; have all added together to bring us joy in the darkness of the long winter nights.

It was last Sunday afternoon as our telephone service was drawing to a close that I looked out of my window and remarked how lovely it was to see that it was still light outside. This realisation always brightens my spirit.

The pervading chill and darkness of the months of January and February can often be a difficult time for many, yet despite the challenges that the cold spell in January brought for transport and heating (and most certainly to our farmers tending their livestock) it's hard to deny that the dale looked magnificent in the snow. The moor tops sparkled and the hillsides under the setting sun became like some giant artist's palette as the colours swirled and mixed together. It created a welcome distraction.

Celebrating light and the hope that it brings has always been a part of human behaviour. In the Christian calendar this begins in February with the ancient tradition of 'Candlemass'. Historically it is connected with Mary and Joseph fulfilling what was required of them under Jewish law, in bringing the baby Jesus (the 'light of the world') into the Temple in Jerusalem for an act of thanksgiving. It was there that Simeon seeing the Christ child remarked: *"Lord; now let thy servant depart in peace ... for mine eyes have seen your salvation ... a light to reveal you to the Gentiles"* ^{Lk.2:30ff}

The annual Roman and pagan festivals that celebrated the increasing hours of light at this time were frequently noisy, scandalous affairs and became so salacious that Pope Gelasius 1, banned their observance altogether. He encouraged instead a calmer and more prayerful focus and so began the practice of blessing candles for the joy that their light brings in the darkness and as a reminder of God's light in the world.

In Askrigg, to mark Candlemass, we have often taken our young people out to Mill Gill to place jam jar lanterns amongst the clusters of early snow drops for walkers to admire. As the sun begins to set, it can be a very special sight indeed. Perhaps this is something you might like to emulate in your own gardens and help to bring a smile to those who pass by?

The Bible is full of references to God's presence being as a light to us, but I love the way King David always finds the words: *'You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning – my God turns my darkness into light.'* ^{Ps.18:28} Whatever it is you might be facing or feeling right now ... the light of the Lord's love burns bright for you.

Per Dave.

The next 'Gathering' will be on **Sunday 2 February**
10:30am at St Oswald's in Askrigg



The God of Surprises

We look forward to welcoming you there!
Be a Blessing – Be Encouraged – Be Church

Car Parking available on the cobbles, at the Village Hall & at the former Carrs Billington site.

Been away and missed some of
Dave's sermons?

Listen to the podcasts!



Search 'Rev Dave from Wensleydale'
on your usual podcast platform

St Oswald's Coffee Mornings

Askrigg Village Hall 10am to 12 noon



Saturday 8th February

Proceeds This month to Benefice Community Fund

Wensleydale Filling Station



Thornborough Hall, Leyburn

Friday 14th February

Speaker: Stuart Dawling

Stuart lives in Masham and is part of the Hollybush fellowship. He has significantly been part of the outreach and witness throughout the Dale over many years and instrumental in bringing many to faith. Stuart regularly attends our Filling Station meetings.



Meaningful Chocolate Company



The idea for a Real Easter Egg began in 2008 when David Marshall, who founded Meaningful Chocolate, was given an Easter egg. On the side of the box it read: 'Easter is the festival of chocolate and loveliness'. He searched for an Easter egg which mentioned the Christian story of Easter.

It became clear that out of the 80 million eggs on sale there was not a single manufacturer who was willing to mention the religious aspects of the festival. So he asked churches and schools to help crowd fund The Meaningful Chocolate Company to manufacture the UK's first 'Real Easter Egg'. For it to be a 'Real Easter Egg' it had to reflect the Easter themes of hope and new life and do three things – have a copy of the Easter story in the box, be made from Fairtrade chocolate and support charitable causes.

Twelve years on more than 1.8 million eggs have been sold with over 1.4 million sent through the post. The rest have been sold through retailers and supermarkets. Over £420,000 has been donated to charitable projects with Fairtrade Premium fees paid to farmers allowing them to buy everything from school books and solar panels to providing fresh water. As such The Real Easter Egg campaign is one of the biggest evangelism initiatives in the UK. It crosses all denominations and offers a simple way to share the Easter Story.

Our eggs are no longer on sale in supermarkets. This is because we have additional costs by using Fairtrade chocolate and including the Easter story in each egg. This meant we could not compete with the likes of Cadbury for shelf space. Therefore, we hope you will go the extra mile and buy Real Easter Eggs directly from us. This year there are four ways you might do this by:

- Being a Champion and collecting orders from church, family and friends
- Buying a case to share with friends, family or a school
- Sending single eggs direct through the post
- Sponsoring an egg, case or pallet to be sent to a food bank.

This year's eggs...

For Easter 2025, there are five types of Real Easter Eggs available, all with new content. All Real Easter Eggs come with an Easter story in the box. The stories range from simple guides to 24 page activity book versions with a prize competition worth £200. The eggs are Fairtrade, Palm Oil free and plastic free.



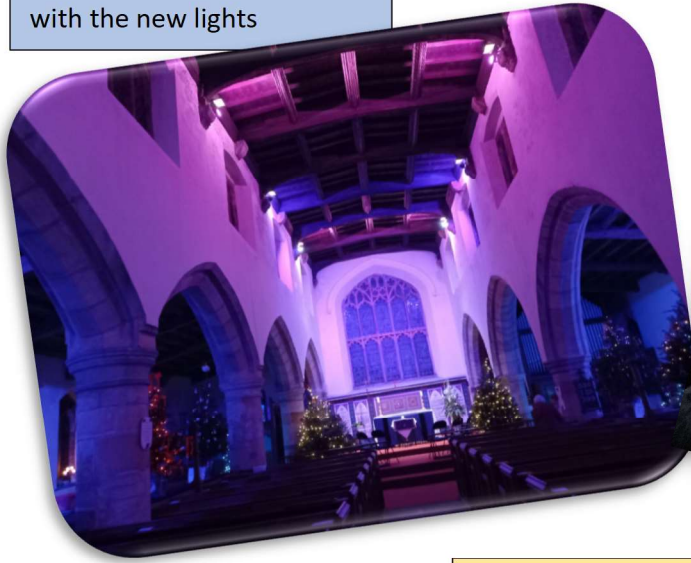
Buy a case for our lowest price plus free delivery offer

If you buy 3 cases of originals (18 eggs) then the cost of each egg is £5.50 and includes free delivery. Also online you can buy singles and many other items from our Easter range. You can also buy eggs as singles.

To order go to: meaningfulchocolate.co.uk

Advent, Christmas & New Year across the Benefice

Christmas Eve in St Oswald's with the new lights



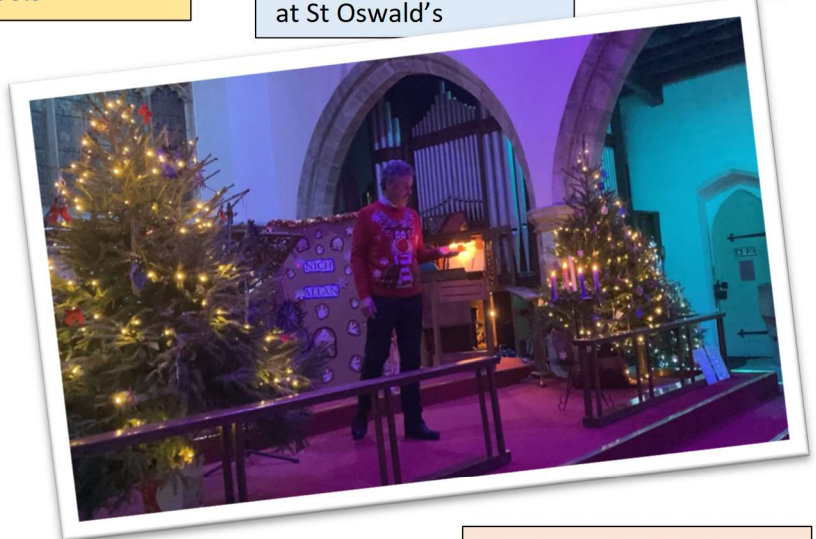
Magic of Christmas Concert at St Margaret's



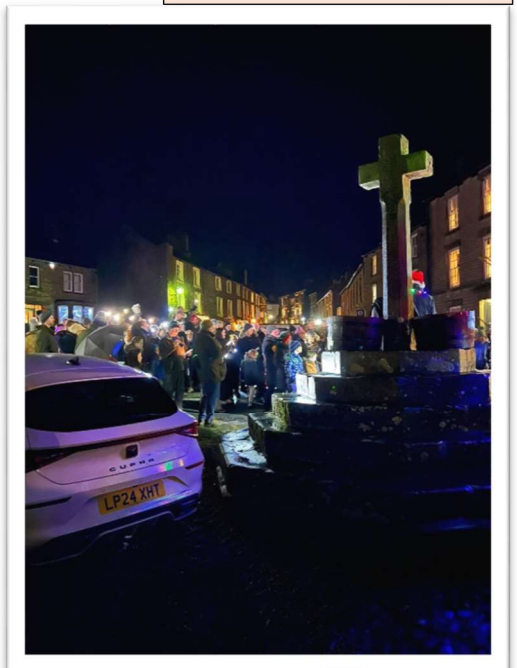
Bainbridge Lights and Carols



Community Christingle at St Oswald's



Carols on the Cobbles in Askrigg on Christmas Eve



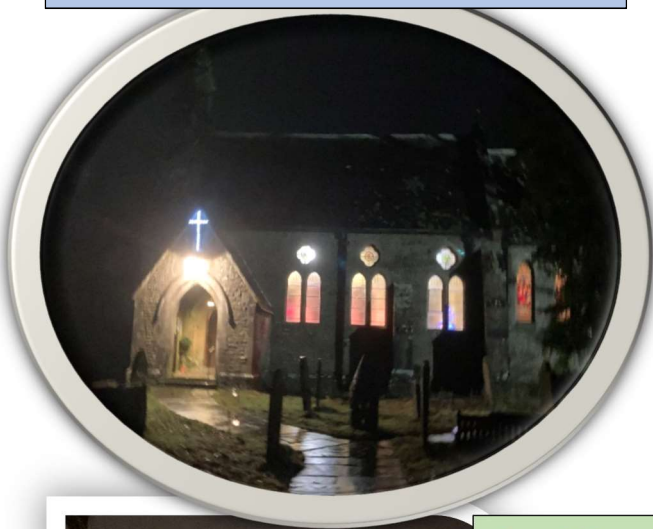
Nativity Service in St Margaret's



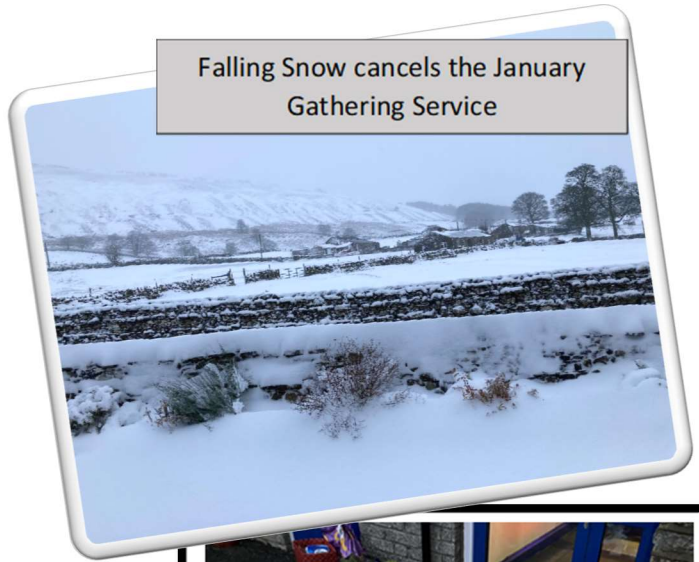
Did you have a Rev Dave Christmas Tree Decoration?



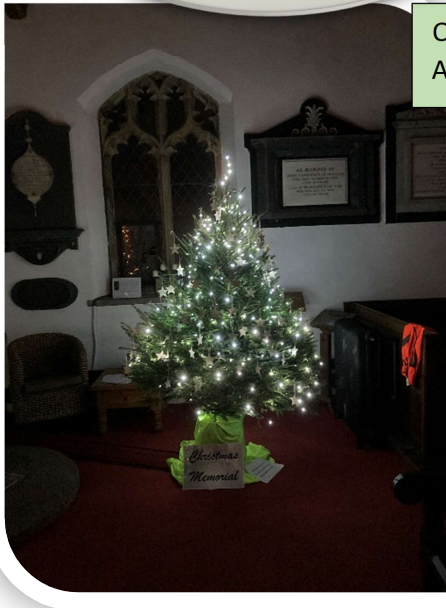
Christmas Eve in Hardraw



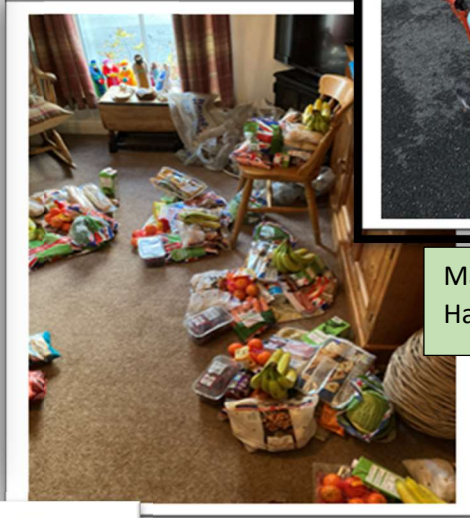
Falling Snow cancels the January Gathering Service



Over 250 names hang on Askrigg's Memorial Tree



Mammoth task of packing Christmas Hampers for the Open Pantry



Carols on Christmas Eve in Hawes Market Square



Invite someone you know to join us for **Evening Prayer** on a Sunday!

For some time now we have been offering the opportunity of sharing in a service of Afternoon/ Evening Prayer by telephone in your own home. It is very simple to join in. I am confident that there are many more people in the upper dale who would benefit from joining with us. You may be one of them, or you may know someone who would appreciate the chance to do so. If this is the case, then follow the instructions below and we look forward to welcoming you at 4pm on a Sunday afternoon.

As 4pm approaches, call this number **03330 164757**.

You will then be asked to enter the room number **893 277 00#** and the **PIN 2772#**. Then you are in!
Say hello, sit quietly, and join in with the short service of prayer and reflection



Upper Wensleydale Benefice Services

February 2025

	St Mary & St John's, Hardraw 9.00am	St Margaret's, Hawes 10.30am	St Oswald's, Askrigg 10.30am	St Matthew's, Stalling Busk 2.30pm	
2 February	The Gathering Benefice Family Communion St Oswald's Church, Askrigg at 10.30am				Evening prayer by telephone
7 February	Sycamore Hall – Communion Service in the lounge – 10am				
9 February	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	Café Style	12.30 Soup followed by Communion	Evening prayer by telephone
16 February	Holy Communion	Family Service	Morning Prayer		Evening prayer by telephone
23 February	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Afternoon Prayer Pathfinders	Evening prayer by telephone

Funerals since the last Newsletter:

28 November	Joseph William Lambert
5 December	Robert Heseltine
13 December	Betty Moore
17 December	William Featham
16 January	Margaret Rosemary Bloomer
21 January	Donald Arthur Horner
23 January	James Spensley

Thinking of becoming a Church Warden?

Thursday, February 20, 7pm – 9pm, online

If you are thinking of standing for election to become a Church Warden but are not sure what this might entail, then come along to this session to find out. We will cover what are the main duties of a Church Warden; what are your responsibilities and what support is available to help you in this role.

To book your place please contact your Archdeacon's PA:

Richmond & Craven: chloe.drummond

Rev Dave Clark

The Vicarage, Burtsett Road, Hawes, DL8 3NP

Tel: 01969 667553 Email: office@upperwenben.org Web: www.upperwensleydalechurch.org

Administrator: Stephanie Durrant (work hours 1-5pm Tuesdays and Thursdays)