LENT

The Benefice of Upper Wensleydale
'Church in the Home'

March 2026

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

Edition Number 123

From the Vicarage

I've just noticed the edition number for this month – 123. I got curious and chased back to our very first edition … 6 years ago. On the 17th of March 2020 the Archbishops of Canterbury and York published a letter calling on church buildings to close their doors for public worship in an attempt to stem the spread of Covid19. We complied and 5 days later on Sunday March 22nd (Mothering Sunday) a video service had been created, recorded and published and our newsletter was born. Initially it was a weekly publication on line and in print, endeavouring to ensure that as Church in the Upper Dale we stayed connected in our worship, in our prayers and as a community.
I remember the long time consuming sanitizing process every printed page went through before copies were delivered to homes without internet access and to Sycamore Hall. The first edition had contributions from Rev Vera and Pauline Hirst and concluded with these words: '*Remember that the buildings remain open for private prayer and worship and let us continue to witness and live lives rooted in faith and not fear. May you know the love, peace and presence of the Lord in your hearts and in your homes.*'

As a worshipping community, these thoughts continue to remain central to our identity; who we are and why we are here.

In my monthly article for the 'Upper Wensleydale Newsletter' this month I commented on how **'World Book Day'** falls in March and how a recent interview on Radio 4, whilst encouraged by the increasing sales of fiction in the UK was lamenting a decline in the sales of non-fiction. They failed to comment upon the continuing rise of sales of **'The Bible'** whose sales in the UK have increased by over 106% since the Lockdown. The increased sales are being linked to a desire to discover stability and meaning in a changing and confusing world. God never changes.Malachi3:6

As we move deeper into Lent my encouragement to you all is to continue to spend focused, designated time reading and studying God's word, for in it we find life, encouragement, strength and Hope. Our Ash Wednesday Communion service reminded us of the help we find in God's presence and our Lenten Study groups have begun exploring the many different ways that God equips us to serve His Church and to bless others around us. There is still time for you to join in our explorations and to discover afresh, or perhaps for the very first time, the wonder of who God has created you to be. *'I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;* Ps.139:14

Please take note of the many different services and events that will soon be upon us in Holy Week and add them to your calendar and diary. It's always good to have things ahead that as a worshipping community we can look forward to, embrace and enjoy together. With over 1,300 people engaging with us in December, wouldn't it be wonderful if Holy Week and Easter Day could see increased attendances as well. In troubled and confused times our World and communities need **HOPE** and it's there to be found in **Jesus Christ**. Let's pray together that we can make full use of this opportunity to share the truth there is in HIM.

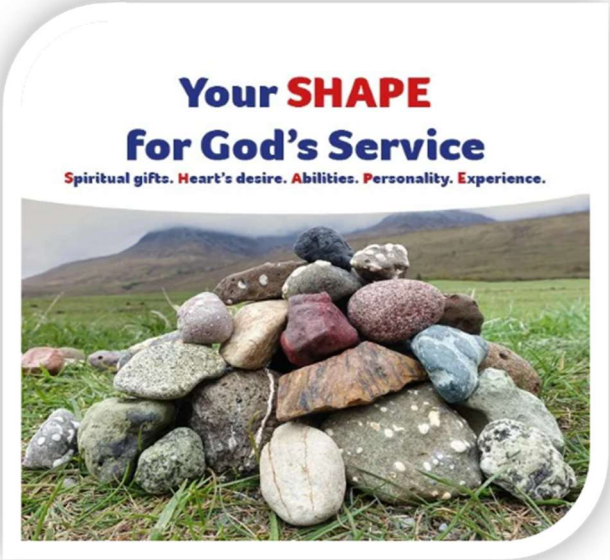
Rev' Dave.

The next **'Gathering'** will be on **Sunday 1 March**
at 10:30am at St Oswald's in Askrigg

'God Equips'

We continue in our exploration of how the Lord equips us to be the witnesses He has called us to be and how we can live our lives with the freedom and the victory that He died to ensure that we could. Our gathering together is an opportunity for us to unite as a Benefice in our worship and teaching, to experience who we are as a wider church and to encourage one another in our faith. We look forward to welcoming you there.

Be a Blessing – Be Encouraged – Be Church



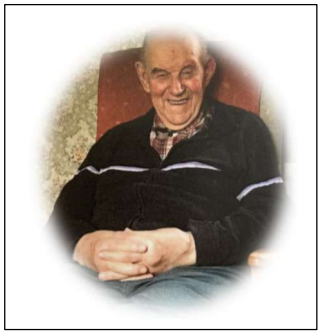
Our Lenten study groups are underway in Askrigg and in Hawes. An opportunity to discover and affirm how our God given Spiritual gifts, Heart's desires, Abilities, Personality and Experiences can be used in the service of the Lord's Church in the Upper Dale and beyond!

If you were unable to join a group in week one and would like to be involved please contact the Vicarage and let Dave or Steph know. 01969 667553

The funerals of Elaine Ewbank - 92 and Allen Iveson - 87 were held in St Oswald's and St Margaret's church on February 18th and 19th

Elaine farmed with her husband Tom in Raydale and Allen with his brother Tom in Gayle.

Elaine was the organist at Marsett Chapel for 80 years! Many have commented that it feels like a chapter of a significant generation in the Dale is drawing to a close. Please remember their families in your prayers



Shrove Tuesday in Stalling Busk

Young Chef in the making

Over 50 people came to join in the fun!

... and she lands the only catch of the afternoon! One out of 6

Miriam with a 'Stirling' Right Fling over the Bunting eludes the catchers

One to the Left for Amalie ...

Even with a shopping bag ... Rev Dave misses!

But Jack catches one on the head!

Wensleydale Filling Station

Thornborough Hall, Leyburn 7-9pm

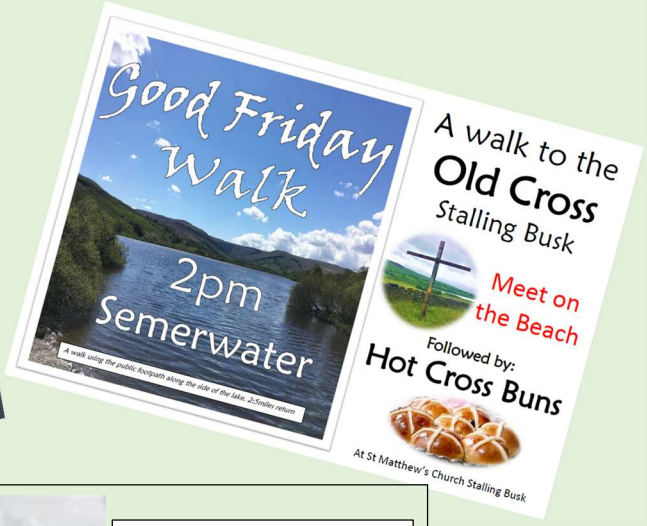
Friday March 13th

Speaker: Allen Langham

Allen Langham is a former professional rugby league player, whose life slid into a career of crime, drink, drugs and an association with the criminal underworld.
In a prison cell in 2013 he had a dramatic encounter with Jesus Christ, was 'Born Again' and life has never been the same since! Come and listen to a powerful testimony of God's Love and Grace and be encouraged. Transport available if required.

Easter – Advanced Notice For your Diary!

There are plenty of things going on this Easter in the Benefice – here is some advance warning of some of them…Full details to follow in the April newsletter.



Maundy Thursday

Meal at St Oswald's followed by Communion

Members of St Oswald's who are on the Electoral Roll will soon receive a form asking permission for their personal information (name, address, phone number and email address, if applicable) to be securely stored on new administration software that we are trialling for the Benefice. The software being trialled is iKnowChurch which is endorsed by the Church of England for use in Parishes and Benefices. If adopted and set to work, it has the capability to simplify administration for the Benefice Office, Parish Churchwardens and PCCs and improve our ability to communicate with our congregations. Please watch out for the form which will be sent via email or post and return it as directed. If the trial is successful, it will be rolled out to the other churches in the Benefice. Thank you.

Sycamore Hall Communion

For the last 9 years Rev Dave has held a monthly communion service for the residents on the first Friday of the month: 10-10:45am
There is a faithful and friendly worshipping community there who greatly value and appreciate the opportunity to gather together. It would be lovely if any of you would like to join him to get to know the folks there and to be faces of welcome and love and to help with the transition for when Dave and Sarah leave in August.
If you're interested in becoming involved please let Dave know.

Leisure: William Henry Davies

'What is this life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare.
No time to stand beneath the boughs and stare as long as sheep or cows.
No time to see, when woods we pass, where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.
No time to see, in broad daylight, streams full of stars, like skies at night.
No time to turn at Beauty's glance, and watch her feet, how they can dance.
No time to wait till her mouth can enrich that smile her eyes began.
A poor life this if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare.'

Take time this Lent to 'step out' of the routine – ponder and wonder at God's creation with thanksgiving.

FROM THE BENEFICE CALENDAR

Funerals

18 Feb	Elaine Ewbank	Askrigg
19 Feb	Alan Iveson	Hawes

Stay Connected and make the most of the **Bible teaching** taking place across the Benefice.

Search for:

'Rev Dave from Wensleydale'

Latest episodes include:

Feb 6th **'Be Equipped'** – Steph Durrant

Feb 16th **'Space and Place'** – Finding time with the Lord.

Feb 22nd – **'Temptation!'** – What it is and how to deal with it.

Available on Apple podcasts and Spotify ***OR:*** **Upper Wensleydale Church - CofE**

Join us for Evening Prayer

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 half an hour service of prayer and reflection

Upper Wensleydale Benefice Services

March 2026

	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	
1 March	**The Gathering - Benefice Family Service** St Oswald's Church, Askrigg at 10.30am				Evening prayer by telephone
6 March	Sycamore Hall: Communion Service in the 'Activity Room' – 10:00am				
8 March	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Café Style	12.30 Soup followed by Afternoon Prayer	Evening prayer by telephone
15 March	Holy Communion	Family Service	Morning Prayer		Evening prayer by telephone
22 March	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Afternoon Prayer Pathfinders and Explorers	Evening prayer by telephone
29 March	**The Gathering - Benefice Family Service** St Oswald's Church, Askrigg at 10.30am				No evening prayer

Prayer suggestions for March

- The SHAPE course leaders and participants
- Our children and teachers in Askrigg, Bainbridge and Hawes
- For our Lenten walk and preparations for Easter

Rev Dave Clark
The Vicarage, Burtersett 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)