

Lower Wharfedale Benefice

Digital Newsletter - Issue 4

North Rigton, Pool in Wharfedale, Kirkby Overblow, Sicklinghall, Stainburn, Weeton

Welcome To Our Benefice

If you are joining one of our services for the first time, please introduce yourself to one of the Welcomers at the back of the church. They will be glad to answer any questions you may have or any assist you with any mobility assistance you may require.

CONTACTS AND WAYS TO GET IN TOUCH

Rev'd Stroma McDermott

Tel: 07791 499036

Tel: 01423 733341

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Rev'd Emma James

Tel: 07856 198293

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Benefice Office

Administrator - Davina Tyler

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For all Safeguarding queries and concerns, please contact our
Parish Safeguarding Office - Jeremy Cross - jem_cross@yahoo.co.uk.

Church Services

Monday 26th January

Pool School	Lego church	3:30pm
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1st February

Kirkby Overblow	BCP Holy Communion.	8:30am
Sicklinghall	Parish Communion.	9:30am
Kirkby Overblow	Celtic Service	11 am
Weeton	Family Service	11 am
Pool	Benefice Candlemas Service with St Mark's Choir	3pm

8th February

Kirkby Overblow	BCP Holy Communion	8:30am
North Rington	Parish Communion Family	9:30am
Pool	Family Service	9:30am
Kirkby Overblow	Family Service	11 am



Prayers and Care

We are always delighted to pray or visit those needing support or help. Should you wish to be remembered in prayer or receive a visit from the Pastoral Team, please contact:

Rev'd Stroma McDermott - Tel: 07791 499036
stroma.mcdermott@leeds.anglican.org

We remember in our Prayers

Louise, Hayley, Trevor, Rod, Baby Rosa, Baby Jonah, Susan, John, Kath,
Maggie, Doris, Neville Sam and Jo

Prayers for the bereaved:
The family of Jeremy Braithwaite.

Jesus Presented in the Temple

When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”, and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts.

When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required,

²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

For my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.

Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth.

And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

Epiphany



The Season of Epiphany (Candlemas) ends in February.

Candlemas this year falls on Monday, February 2nd, marking the traditional end of the Christmas season 40 days after Christmas, celebrating Jesus' presentation at the Temple and Mary's purification, with Christians often bringing candles to church for blessing as a symbol of Christ as the Light of the World. It's known by several names, including the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus Christ.

The blessing of candles reminds us of Christ as the Light of the World, guiding us through the seasons of faith. Preparing candles in advance allows this celebration to be marked with calm, reverence, and care.

May this feast be a quiet moment of light and renewal for your community.

Psalm 67

1 May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face shine on us—[b]
2 so that your ways may be known on earth,
your salvation among all nations.
3 May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.
4 May the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you rule the peoples with equity
and guide the nations of the earth.
5 May the peoples praise you, God;
may all the peoples praise you.
6 The land yields its harvest;
God, our God, blesses us.
7 May God bless us still,
so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

Reflection



Standing at The Door: - Jesus famously said

“ Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”

The Celtic monastic traditions have blessings for doors and blessings for entering into and leaving a house. Celtic and early Christian spirituality give a lot of emphasis given to thresholds, doors, windows and other crossing places as places of meaning, places of shifting seasons and times.

Very often when I have led a retreat we will end on an exercise of picking a door that somehow represents where we feel we are in our faith and life journey.

I like the picture of this abbey doorway, beckoning us to cross that threshold and come through into an inner place.

And I wonder as we still embrace this New Year, can you ask yourself these questions:

At which threshold am I now standing?

At this time in my life, what am I leaving?

Where am I about to enter?

What is preventing me from crossing my next threshold?

What gift would enable me to do it?

A threshold is not a simple boundary; it is a frontier that divides two different territories, rhythms, and atmospheres. Sometimes at a threshold it takes courage to cross, or imagination or someone to accompany us and encourage us on, sometimes we encounter joy, or maybe sadness and often hope.

I like the fact in most churches the font, the place of baptism and entry into the family of the church is near the door, near the threshold, reminding us Christ is there, stood at the door and waiting.

And i'm always happy to bless people's homes when they move in, to encourage a place of welcome, peace and safety where God makes His home too.

So maybe look around you, ask those questions for yourself and listen to the inner voice calling you forward. The time has come to cross.

Prayer

Prayer of Blessing :

Bless this house and those within.

Bless our giving and receiving.

Bless our words and conversation.

Bless our hands and recreation.

Bless our sowing and our growing.

Bless our coming and our going.

Bless all who enter and depart.

Bless this house, your peace impart.

Amen.

Lent

This Lent we will be following the Archbishop's Lent Book 'Dancing to the Heartbeat of God' and the associated resources 'Draw Near-Life Giving Habits in Lent' for the six weeks of Lent from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

The book and materials will help us look at core practices and habits of being a Christian and are based on James 4:8 'Draw Near to God and He will Draw Near to You'.

Christian's across the UK will be following the study and participating in the many online and social media resources available so you can participate any time and anywhere.

More details and dates to follow.



Upcoming Events

BENEFICE CANDLEMAS SERVICE

ST WILFRID'S POOL IN WHARFEDALE

SUNDAY 1 FEBRUARY 3PM



WITH THE CHOIR OF ST MARK'S HARROGATE

REFRESHMENTS SERVED AFTERWARDS



All Welcome

PEACE & PRAISE

A new and uplifting worship service

**Third Sundays of the month
6-7pm St John's, North Rigton**

Sunday 18th January 2026

Sunday 15th February 2026

Sunday 15th March 2026

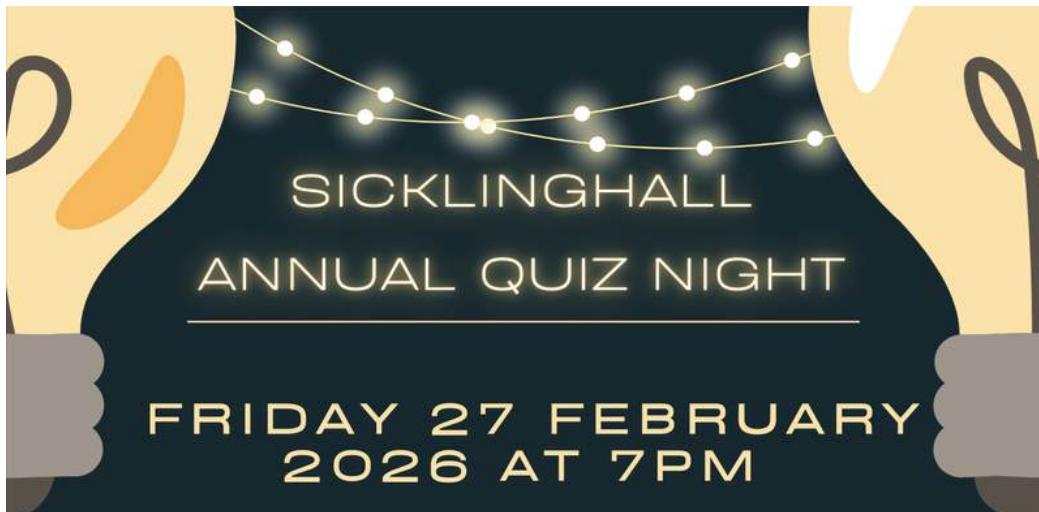
**An informal and sociable evening of
uplifting music, peace & prayer.
Coffee, tea & cakes from 5.30pm!**

More info: emma.james@leeds.anglican.org

**Pilgrimages Day at Ripon Cathedral
to help churches become Pilgrim
Places**

Churches from across the Diocese will be able to learn about how pilgrimages can help them engage with their communities and beyond at a Pilgrimages Day at Ripon Cathedral on Friday, January 30.

*More
events to
look
forward to*



**SICKLINGHALL
ANNUAL QUIZ NIGHT**

**FRIDAY 27 FEBRUARY
2026 AT 7PM**

Venue – Sicklinghall Village Hall

£18 per person Supper Included

Sicklinghall's annual quiz night returns for its 11th year and as many know this is consistently a sell-out event. It's a great way for new members of the community to meet people – you don't need to raise a team as we can match you to an existing team. If you do want to raise a team, any size of team works as we have a handicap system in place [the smaller the team, the greater the advantage]. Bottom line is, come along and meet new people and test your wits against some of the old guard!

Trophy for winning team. Licensed Bar. Raffle. Auction

News from the Diocese

New Diocesan Net Zero Church Buildings Officer to support churches

The Diocese of Leeds is pleased to welcome Alasdair Hicks as our new Net Zero Church Buildings Officer. Alasdair will support churches across the diocese to improve the energy efficiency of their buildings and work towards Net Zero Carbon targets.

He brings extensive project management experience from a career in railway construction and has long been involved in sustainability, including serving on a Community Land Trust board in York and the Environment and Sustainability Group at York Minster.

Recently, Alasdair and the Church Buildings Team were joined by Adrian Fox, Environmental Sustainability Officer for the Church of England, for training visits to Leeds Minster and Holy Trinity Boar Lane, exploring the challenges and opportunities of reaching Net Zero by 2030.



HOW DO I MAKE MY FAITH COUNT?

Come along and find out...

Events 2026

10 February 2026, 7pm-9pm @Leeds Minster

Discussion Evening – Bishop Chris Edmondson will help us think about how we hear God's call

22 April 2026, 6pm-9pm @Wakefield Cathedral

Vocations Fayre – connect with people from a broad range of ministries, including lay, ordained and chaplaincy. Pre-event Choral Evensong at 5:30pm

13 June 2026, 10am - 3pm @Bolton Abbey Priory

Vocations Retreat Day – Spend time discerning with God and others whilst immersed in the history and beauty of Bolton Abbey

23 September, 7pm-9pm @St Peter's Huddersfield

Discussion Evening – Hear about real experiences of starting a new ministry for lay and ordained

18 November, 7pm-9pm @Church House Leeds

Discussion Evening – Hear perspectives on ordained ministry from the new and the retiring

For more details email vocations@leeds.anglican.org

Registration via Eventbrite

Contacts

Exploring Vocation Together



Jenice Guild
Administrator
jenice.guild@leeds.anglican.org

Revd Canon Sean Robertshaw
Diocesan Director of Vocations
sean.robertshaw@leeds.anglican.org

ELM Children and Youth Learning Session

We warmly invite all children and youth volunteers and leaders to our first learning session, where we'll support and celebrate the important work you do throughout the deanery.

This is a unique opportunity to come together and learn from one another's experiences in children and youth ministry.

We'll have time for open discussion and short, engaging spotlights on working with mixed-age groups of children and young people. If you have favourite books, resources, or websites that help you plan your children's groups, please bring them to share.

This gathering is a great way to gain new ideas, support each other, and explore future training needs. Whether you're new to children's ministry or have lots of experience, we hope you'll join us to share, be encouraged, and leave inspired.

To book your place, please email Gayle Bryon ELM Coordinator Harrogate Deanery gaylebryonelm@gmail.com by the 3rd of February 2026.

Eco Tip of the Month

Single Use Plastic

- Avoid Single-Use Plastic: Ditch cling film for reusable wraps, choose refillable soaps, and say no to plastic bottles.



Would you like to stay on our newsletter list? Or know somebody who would like to receive it? Please drop us a note at lowerwharfedalebeneficeoffice@gmail.com

We're excited to keep in touch and welcome new readers!

