

December 2025 - January 2026

Number 710

# The Messenger

The magazine of the Bridge Church, Otley



## The Bridge Church

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH IN OTLEY

The official Magazine of the  
Bridge United Reformed Church, Otley  
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## **Messenger letter**

Dear Friends,

As the nights get longer and we move towards the shortest day of the year, the lights get stronger. The dark streets of our town are now illuminated by the colourful lights that herald the approach of Christmas. It is not only the official lights that we can enjoy, for each year more people decorate their homes with lights. It fills me with joy to see these, and, when I do, it reminds me of the deeper message of the light that comes into the world at Christmas.

Christmas is a feast of light, angels fill the night sky with a brilliant light, a star leads travellers from the East, and in a stable in Bethlehem a light shines that will bring hope to the world. But, according to St. John, that light is not a dominant light, it is a fragile light, a gentle light, a light that pierces the darkness. So, what sort of light is it that we celebrate at Christmas?

That is what our Advent journey will reveal. We will look at powerful words written by the Prophet Isaiah, words that were addressed to a people facing terrible upheaval in their lives, as all they knew was ripped away from them and they were taken into exile. They lived in exile for many years. What does light look like for people in exile? Isaiah shows them!

After Christmas we continue our journey into Epiphany. Now we will explore what the light looks like in practice. Advent, Christmas, Epiphany – three parts of the same journey and light shapes the whole journey.

What does that light look like for us as we face the

challenges of our time? The darkness is clear for us to see, violence, oppression, discrimination, war, and it can seem hard to celebrate Christmas against this backdrop. But that light came into the world in just such a time and it pierced the darkness. It is a light that nurtures hope, gains strength through justice and love, and finds fulfilment in peace. It enters our hearts, changes our view of the world and our attitudes to others, and then, through us, changes the world.

I pray that as we embark on this journey, we will feel that light piercing the darkness, strengthening us in our service and radiating, through us, into the world.

May Advent inspire you with a renewed vision; Christmas fill you with love, and Epiphany challenge you in service.

With love,  
Jason



*The*  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**



**MINISTER'S REGISTER**  
**31<sup>st</sup> July – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

**BAPTISMS**

24<sup>th</sup> August

Aurelia Grace Spivey

**FUNERALS**

5<sup>th</sup> August

Mrs Claire Taylor   Rawdon Crematorium

**THE BRIDGE CHURCH**  
**PREACHING PLAN**  
**7<sup>th</sup> December 2025 – 8<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December – Second Sunday in Advent**  
**Sacrament of Holy Communion and Reception of New Church Members**

The Reverend Jason McCullagh  
Isaiah 11.1-10

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December – Third Sunday in Advent**  
**Gift Service Parade**

The Reverend Jason McCullagh  
Isaiah 35. 1-10

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December – Fourth Sunday in Advent**  
**Sacrament of Baptism**

The Reverend Jason McCullagh  
Matthew 1. 18-25

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December**

7pm – Carols by Candlelight.

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Eve**

4pm – Crib Service  
11:30pm – Christmas Communion

**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Day**

10am – Christmas Celebration

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December – First Sunday of Christmas**

Jason is on holiday  
No Service at the Bridge  
2:30pm – United Service at Salem U.R.C.

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026 – The Epiphany of the Lord**  
**Sacrament of Holy Communion**

The Reverend Jason McCullagh  
Isaiah 60. 1-6  
Matthew 2. 1-12

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January – The Baptism of the Lord**

Jason is leading Junior Church  
The Service will be led by Mr Malcom Wainwright.

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January - Second Sunday of Epiphany**

Jason is preaching elsewhere in the Synod.  
The Service will be conducted by Mr Gordon Justham.

## **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January - Second Sunday of Epiphany (cont'd)**

6 pm Evening Communion

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Isaiah 49. 1-7

## **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January – Third Sunday of Epiphany**

### **Taste and See – Peace**

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

1 Corinthians 12. 4-11

## **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February – Fourth Sunday of Epiphany**

### **Sacrament of Holy Communion**

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Micah 6. 1-8

## **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February – Fifth Sunday of Epiphany**

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Isaiah 58. 1-9a

A red poster for the Otley Brass Band Christmas Concert. It features a stylized Christmas tree on the right side. The text is in white and gold. The top left has the logo for 'The Bridge Church THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH IN OTLEY'. The top right has the 'OTLEY BRASS BAND' logo. The main text reads 'Otley Brass Band Christmas Concert' in large white letters, followed by 'Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm' and 'Admission £10 on the door Accompanied under 16's Free'. At the bottom, it says 'Proceeds to Mercy Ships, the church charity this year, and Otley Brass Band.' and a small 'COMMUNITY FUND' logo is in the bottom right corner.

**The Bridge Church**  
THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH IN OTLEY

**OTLEY BRASS BAND**

**Otley Brass Band**  
**Christmas Concert**

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm**

**Admission £10 on the door**  
**Accompanied under 16's Free**

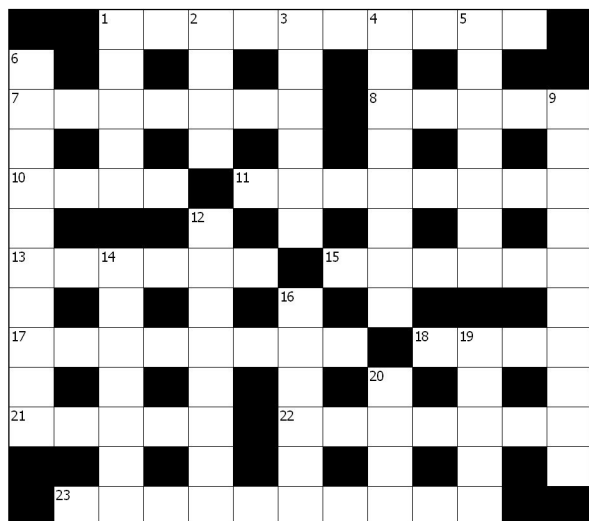
Proceeds to Mercy Ships, the church charity this year, and Otley Brass Band.

COMMUNITY FUND

## **CROSSWORD SOLUTION**

**ACROSS:** 1, Tabernacle. 7, Absalom. 8, Incas. 10, Roes. 11, Captured. 13, Fright. 15, Cavell. 17, Cyclonic. 18, Herb. 21, Sonar. 22, Amazing. 23, Settlement.

**DOWN:** 1, Taste. 2, Bold. 3, Ramiah. 4, Abiathar. 5, Lucerne. 6, Sacrifices. 9, Saddlebags. 12, Theocrat. 14, Incense. 16, Pilate. 19, Exist. 20, Save.



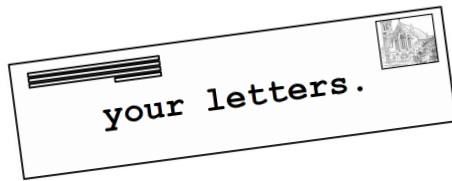
### Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)  
 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14,15) (7)  
 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)  
 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)  
 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)

- 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)  
 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith .... (6)  
 17 Stormy (8)  
 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone unclean (Numbers 9:11) (4)  
 21 Arson (anag.) (5)  
 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)  
 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

### Down

- 1 .... and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8) (5)  
 2 The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as ... as a lion (Proverbs 28:1) (4)  
 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)  
 4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19,20) (8)  
 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)  
 6 Offer your bodies as living .... , holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1) (10)  
 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)  
 12 One who accepts government by God (8)  
 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)  
 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)  
 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)  
 20 You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ... his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21) (4)



Dear Friends

Thank you very much for the flowers and prayers together with all the kind thoughts you have sent my way.

God be with you all.

Love

Margaret Bradley

### **LOO ROLLS MAKING A DIFFERENCE!**

Bumboo, who supply the Bridge Church with toilet rolls have recently announced that, not only are their products eco-friendly, but as a company have donated funds to help to restore wild habitats across the UK, from ancient woodlands to coastal wetlands

Our toilet roll purchases are doing far more than just reducing waste they're actively helping re-wild landscapes, support biodiversity and fight climate change.

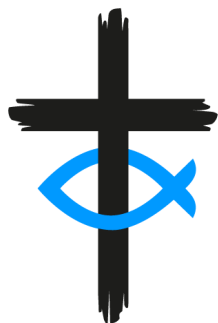
We are part of helping woodlands to grow wilder, wetlands to return to life and peat lands to be restored, which locks in carbon and protects against floods.



Hilary Eveleigh

## What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding refers to both the actions taken to promote the welfare of children/young people and adults, specifically putting preventative measures in place to protect those who are at risk of, or experiencing abuse, harm or neglect; and having effective



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Reformed  
Church**  
**Yorkshire**

procedures in place should something go wrong. The URC's safeguarding policy Good Practice 6 defines a child as anyone under 18 years of age, and an adult as anyone aged 18 years or over. It recognises that, for certain purposes, Scottish law treats 16- and 17-year olds as adults. Adults at risk replaces the term 'vulnerable adults' and refers to adults who 'by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation are permanently, or for the time being, unable to take care of themselves, or to protect themselves against significant harm, abuse or exploitation.

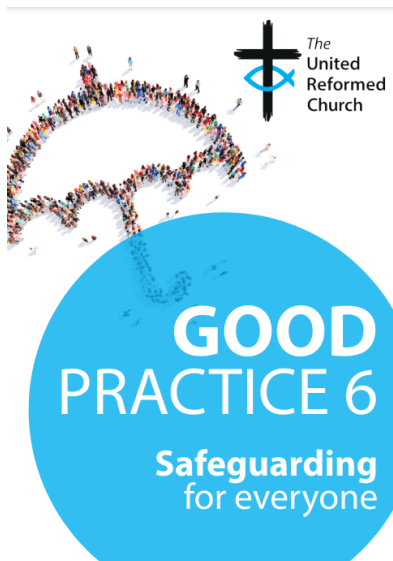
## Safeguarding and the URC

Safeguarding in the United Reformed Church is underpinned by Jesus' command to 'love one another as I have loved you' (John 13:34-35). The United Reformed Church Best practice, and the URC's aim, is that everyone involved in church life – as an expression of the love of God – shares the responsibility of protecting the most vulnerable and upholding the rights of the least powerful. Although the safeguarding coordinator may be seen as overseeing the church's safeguarding work, all church members and workers should be encouraged always to be vigilant and to play their part by:

- creating and maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for all, especially children and adults at risk, in which the dignity and rights of each person are respected



- acknowledging that the welfare of the child and adult at risk is paramount, and that the priority is always to act in their best interests
- responding without delay to every concern, incident or complaint which suggests that a child or adult has been harmed, or is at risk of harm
- challenging any abuse of power, especially where it involves someone in a position of trust
- managing risks and those who might pose a risk to the people and the welfare of the Church.



Taken together these steps will prevent the abuse and neglect of children and adults, and ensure the well-being and pastoral care of those who are or may be at risk.

## **Safeguarding at the Bridge Church**

The Safeguarding Coordinators at the Bridge Church are Alison Anslow and Colin Whitaker. If you have any concerns about something you believe could be a safeguarding issue please raise it with either Alison or Colin - their contact details are on the back page of this magazine.



Recently 25 Elders, leaders and helpers of various groups within the Bridge Church attended a training course run by Carrie Kaunda, one of the Synod Safeguarding Officers. We are committed to ensuring that the Bridge Church remains safe for all our members and visitors.

## CHURCH MEETINGS DATES IN 2026

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January**

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February  
(Annual General Meeting)**

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May**

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August**

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> November**



### **". . .ROOTED IN THE LOVE OF GOD. "**

The title of the 2025 URC Prayer Handbook "Immersive Joy" has challenged me throughout this year. The editors observe ". . . the promise of joy remains - a joy not dependent on circumstances but on being **rooted in the love of God**".

I have been reminded of this promise on many occasions, at unexpected times and from a variety of sources. A recent reminder came from a prayer by Desmond Tutu broadcast on a BBC Radio morning daily service broadcast in November.

"Goodness is stronger than evil  
Love is stronger than hate  
Light is stronger than darkness  
Life is stronger than death  
Victory is ours through him who loves".

A powerful prayer to consider using in the midst of the trials and tribulations world is experiencing these days.

**Wes Kennedy**

# Young Peoples Pages

m	a	r	y	h	m	a	n	g	e	r	u
s	p	a	l	a	c	e	p	m	q	k	s
k	l	b	c	h	r	i	s	t	h	w	h
y	q	h	e	a	r	d	e	s	e	n	e
q	p	j	c	t	o	z	e	n	a	i	p
p	r	e	n	g	h	f	n	t	v	g	h
c	a	r	e	f	u	l	l	y	e	h	e
h	i	l	l	s	i	d	e	o	n	t	r
c	s	a	v	i	o	u	r	h	c	m	d
s	i	n	g	i	n	g	w	n	e	k	s
a	n	g	e	l	b	a	b	y	a	m	s
r	g	l	o	r	y	g	o	o	d	e	o

shepherds  
 Christ  
 Saviour  
 glory  
 news  
 praising  
 hillside  
 singing

baby  
 message  
 night  
 carefully  
 palace  
 flocks  
 manger  
 good

heard  
 sky  
 angel  
 Bethlehem  
 heaven  
 Mary  
 God  
 seen

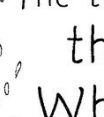
# Bible Bite

## A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in  
Luke chapter 2 verses 8 to 20

Shepherds were paid to look after the flocks out on the hillside. Uneducated and rough, they were usually avoided, or overlooked.






# The tale of the Wheat and the Weeds


**JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS**



ONE WAS ABOUT A MAN WHO  
SOWED SEED IN HIS FIELD.




THE SEED TOOK ROOT, AND SOON STRONG PLANTS BEGAN TO GROW.



... AN ENEMY OF THE MAN, CRYPT INTO THE FIELD, AND SOWED SEEDS AMONGST THE WHEAT.

AS THE WHEAT BEGAN  
TO GROW, SO DID THE  
WEEDS.



WHEN THE SERVANTS SAW THE WEEDS  
THEY SUGGESTED RIPPING THEM OUT.

NO, LET'S LEAVE THEM UNTIL HARVEST TIME!

IF YOU PULL THEM UP NOW,  
YOU MIGHT KILL THE WHEAT  
TOO. WE'LL SORT THEM OUT AT  
HARVEST,

A man with a beard, wearing a head covering and a long robe, stands in a field of wheat. He has a thoughtful expression, with his hand to his chin. A speech bubble above him contains the text: "IF YOU PULL THEM UP NOW, YOU MIGHT KILL THE WHEAT TOO. WE'LL SORT THEM OUT AT HARVEST,".

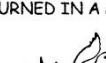
WHEN THE WHEAT WAS  
READY, IT WAS HARVESTED  
INTO HUGE BUNDLES.

BUT THE WEEDS WERE  
BURNED IN A LARGE FIRE.

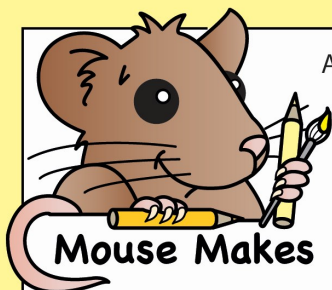


THE PARABLE TELLS US THAT  
ALTHOUGH WE LIVE  
ALONGSIDE BADNESS, WE  
CAN KEEP SEPARATE FROM IT.

BUT THE WEEDS WERE  
BURNED IN A LARGE FIRE.



THE PARABLE TELLS US THAT  
ALTHOUGH WE LIVE  
ALONGSIDE BADNESS, WE  
CAN KEEP SEPARATE FROM IT.



## Mouse Makes

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus,  
God's Son and our Saviour  
coming into the world as a baby,  
and we look forward to the time  
when Jesus will come again,  
not as a baby but as the  
King of kings and Lord of lords!

**read**

John 14:3

A baby needs clothes  
to keep warm like  
a snuggly sleep suit  
or a vest and nappy.

*What were you dressed in?*

Jesus was wrapped in

.....  
**read** Luke 2:7

A baby needs somewhere  
to be born like at home  
or in a hospital.

*Where were you born?*

Jesus was born  
in a stable in

.....  
**read** Luke 2:1-6

A baby needs  
somewhere  
to sleep like  
a crib or a cot.  
*What did you  
sleep in?*

Jesus slept in a

.....  
**read** Luke 2:7

A baby needs  
a name.

*What name were  
you called?*

Jesus was given  
a special name  
that had a  
special meaning.

**read**

Matthew 1:21-23



# HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

NADOLIG LLAWEN ★ NOLLAIG CHRÏDHEIL ★ NOLLAG SHONA  
JOYEUX NOËL • FELIZ NAVIDAD • BUON NATALE • GOD JUL • FROHE WEIHNACHTEN

## STRICTLY SOCIAL

The meeting to discuss ideas for the new group starting in January 2026 was well attended. Jason and I have put together a programme that will take us to June. Various names were suggested and Strictly Social seemed to have everyone's approval.

Strictly Social will be on the last Thursday of the month and will usually start at 7pm in the Large Hall.

### 2026 Programme

January 29<sup>th</sup> 7pm Film Night

February 26<sup>th</sup> 7pm Charity Wine and Cheese Tasting (S & B Fruit and Vegetables) and Tombola, proceeds for Mercy Ships

March 26<sup>th</sup> 6pm Fish and chips at The Wharfe Fish and Chip restaurant, followed at 7.30pm with a Otley Ghost Walk.

April 30<sup>th</sup> Calendar Girls the Musical at Ilkley Playhouse

May 28<sup>th</sup> 7pm Games Evening – Jason's "Bag Whist" and Supper

June 25<sup>th</sup> 6pm Dinner at EFES

Anne Howard

## OTLEY SNOWMAN TRAIL

Once again The Bridge Church is taking part in the Snowman Festival in Otley. This runs from 1<sup>st</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of December and has over the past few years become an integral part of the community.

This year, as well as the Giant Snowman which takes up residence in the entrance vestibule to the sanctuary, members and friends have been busy knitting snowmen. These will be displayed around the church.



# Women's Meeting

**On Monday 6<sup>th</sup> October**, Jason led our meeting, with our usual hymn, prayer and birthdays! Then we were introduced to our speaker Lesley Newham and her topic was 'Where Oceans Meet'.

Her talk was based on a holiday to South Africa, starting in Cape Town it covered many miles, through shanty towns, vineyards and rough coastal bays, with Dutch influence being found in the buildings. When the British arrived a more pleasurable look took over with flowers instead of vegetables. Ostrich farming, making bags, boots and the eggs are fashionable.

Onto the garden route there were beautiful flowers, baboons, and aloe ferox used for medication. The route eventually finished at the Cape of Good Hope, where the Indian and the Atlantic Oceans meet. Whales and penguins are in that area. A truly inspiring trip that we all enjoyed!

## **Pam Bradley**

**On Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October** our speaker was Jane McKeown, her talk was entitled "Music on the Move". She started her music career at 6 years old teaching herself to play the piano but was told she needed an instrument that she could carry around with her so had violin lessons and eventually the viola as fewer people play this instrument.

She was sent to a boarding school and joined an orchestra in Brighton which meant going out of the convent on her own, a real treat! She also learned to play the electric organ which led her to join many orchestras including the Huddersfield Philharmonic Orchestra, led by Sir Malcolm Sargent, who played with the Huddersfield Choral Society.

She and her husband moved 27 times in 32 years and she played in Denmark, Ireland, Belgium, England, Wales and U.S.A. Having 6 children, this was not easy but found making friends easier through Church, school, sports and music of course. They have 17 grandchildren and 14 of them play a musical instrument. She said music is good for team work, mental health, caring, physical stamina and fellowship. It is also very good for concentration and discipline for children.

## **Carol Smith**



**On Monday 3rd November**, Jason took the meeting. We welcomed Margaret Thompson to tell us the true and very poignant story about the loss of her father when she was a baby. She titled her story 'Wartime love lost and found', a very appropriate title being the week before Armistice Day.

Frank Bolton was shot down and a young boy in Holland collected bits of the plane. Eventually Margaret managed to find her fathers grave. In 2017, Margaret and all her family travelled together and met the man who held her fathers hand when he died! The man wept on meeting Margaret, in fact they wept together.

This story has been used many times by the War Graves Commission and newspapers. Unless you hear the story in Margarets' own words you could not possibly have the feeling that we all had on that Monday afternoon. Such a moving story. Thank You Margaret

**On Monday 17th November** it was Jacqui, our Vice-President, who led the meeting. After a hymn, a prayer and the birthdays, she introduced our speaker, Eric Jackson, who was talking on 'model villages, from Saltaire to Bourneville.

Population between 1801 and 1851 more than doubled as people moved from the country to the towns and cities. Slums were everywhere. Industrial model villages started to appear. In Scotland, New Lanark was built mostly of flats; they had rules to live and work by. Allotments were provided too!

Locally Saltaire was built by mill owner Titus Salt for his workers. He built 224 dwellings, 44 almshouses, a chapel, a hospital and a massive factory. Bradford at that time was a terrible place to live with open sewers, so such an improvement was welcomed by the workers. All over the country these villages were built by mill and factory owners. Notably the Cadbury brothers built Bourneville, Rowntrees in York built New Earswick and the Lever Brothers built Port Sunlight. It was very interesting to hear how all these model villages appeared during the nineteenth century. The afternoon finished with tea and biscuits.

**Pam Bradley**

## **CHURCH MEETING - MESSENGER FEEDBACK**

Firstly, we would like to thank you for the feedback given on the Messenger at Church Meeting. Obviously there is quite a lot of information for us to absorb, but it is heartening to know that 'The Messenger' is seen as an important part of church life.

Some groups mentioned a they would like a puzzle page so we have included a crossword in this edition. Things people would like to see are articles from groups and we will take this up with various groups. Some mentioned articles from uniformed organisations which we will explore. We did ask for feedback on the Young Peoples pages but we will need to explore this with individual families.

We will go through the feedback in more detail; and some issues need further exploration.

Just a word of caution we are limited in that the number of pages has to be a multiple of four - so we cannot always include everything what has been submitted

### **Alison and Alan Anslow**



#### **ADVENT MESSY CHURCH @THE BRIDGE**

The Advent MESSY Church on 29th November attracted around eighty young people from around fifty families. Below are some images from the day which show some of the preparatory work and also Jason conducting the service - or was it trying to bring some (dis)order to proceedings!



# BRIDGE CHURCH HISTORY

## OTLEY CONGREGATIONAL BAZAAR OF 1902

Andrew Howard, our church archivist recently set up a display in the transept of the church, featuring the Congregational Church Bazaar of 1902. The Bazaar raised money to pay off some of the debts incurred in the construction of the current church building.

As the blurb accompanying the exhibits stated a programme for the Bazaar was published and contained fascinating adverts from many of the business that were operating in Otley at the time.

It is interesting that the purpose of the bazaar was to raise money to pay for the building at a time when we are trying to fund the replacement of a major component of the original construction - the roof!!!

**GRAND BAZAAR**  
XXX IN AID OF THE XXX  
**Building Fund of the Otley Congregational Church,**  
WILL BE HELD IN THE  
**MECHANICS' INSTITUTE,**  
ON  
**WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY,**  
NOVEMBER 5th, 6th, 7th & 8th,  
**EACH DAY from 2-15 to 10 p.m.,**  
TO BE OPENED AT 2 o'clock.  
**WEDNESDAY: - D. FORD CODDARD, Esq., M.P.**  
Chairman--J. HASTINGS DUNCAN, Esq., M.P.  
**THURSDAY: - W. H. DAWSON, Esq., J.P.,**  
Chairman--W. H. DAWSON, Esq.,  
**FRIDAY: - - - THOMAS TURNBULL, Esq.,**  
Chairman--FRED T. HUNTER, Esq.  
**SATURDAY: - - No Formal Opening Ceremony.**  
Luncheon on Wednesday from 1 to 2 o'clock. Tickets 2/6.  
Music by the "OTLEY OCTETTE." - Entertainments.  
ADMISSION: - Season Ticket (not transferable), 2s. 6d.  
 Single Admission: - One Shilling. Saturday, 8pence.  
 BAZAAR SECRETARIES: - Mrs. G. DUNCAN, BRIDGE, OTLEY.  
 Mr. F. D. HUNTER, OTLEY.

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**William A. Mearns,**  
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**EDWARD HAYDON**  
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## **BIBLE STUDY**

In the Spring I will offer a lecture course exploring The Episcopal Bishop of Washington, Mariann Edgar Budde's, book 'How we learn to be brave'. The dates are as follows:

### **Session One:**

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March at 2:30pm  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March at 7:30pm

### **Session Two:**

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March at 2:30pm  
Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March at 7:30pm

### **Session Three:**

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March at 2:30pm  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March at 7:30pm

## **EASTER BREAK**

### **Session Four:**

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April at 2:30pm  
Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April at 7:30pm

### **Session Five:**

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April at 2:30pm  
Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April at 7:30pm

### **Session Six:**

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April at 2:30pm  
Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April at 7:30pm

### **Session Seven:**

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May at 2:30pm  
Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May at 7:30pm

Jason

### **A message from Karen Gardner**

Karen has asked the Editors to let everyone know that she is not sending Christmas cards this year and is instead making a donation to charity. She wishes everyone a happy Christmas.

## CHURCH CHARITY - THE BRIDGE CHURCH RAISES £11,460 FOR TCV HOLLYBUSH

At our Sunday service on 27th November we had the pleasure of handing over a cheque to TCV Hollybush, the church's charity for the last two years.

It has been great having Hollybush as our church charity for the past two years, and we're pleased to have been able to help such a worthy cause!

The image below is from the TCV Hollybush Facebook account.



## **An offer too good to miss?**

It's free and fresh, varied and trusted, and easily managed. It's something that arrives overnight on a smart phone which you can open whenever you wish and it only require 5 minutes or so to complete.

It comes from URC HQ. It's a daily devotion offered to anyone. I've used it for a few years and would recommend it. It has offered me an opportunity to give God a little bit of time each day by reading a few lines from the bible, a few choice words of reflection and a brief prayer. No need, of course, to gather together a bible, a commentary and a prayer book: all is included in one email.

It is put together by a variety of people so it offers a variety of points of view. Some of them chime with me more than others but they all stimulate something and, I hope, eventually broaden my tiny mind and deepen my inadequate understanding just a little. I think it allows for an outlook that grows just that bit deeper, bigger, brighter as the days pass.

If it seems a good thing to you (or *for* you), this is how you get started:

Search for **URC Daily Devotions**

Scroll down to **Daily Devotions**

Click the **email** option and fill in your email address.

(Other options are available.)

Done!

If you like to tell me, I'd be interested to know how you get on!

**Malcolm Wainwright**

### **NEXT MESSENGER**

Material for the next edition of the Messenger should be in the hands of the Editor by Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> January and should be available for collection on Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2026.

If possible, please send by e-mail to:

**[messenger@otleybridgechurch.org.uk](mailto:messenger@otleybridgechurch.org.uk)**

## **CHURCH DIARY - DECEMBER 2025-JANUARY 2026**

### **Weekly events**

***The Bridge Cafe - Every Thursday at 2p.m.***

***Parents & Toddlers - Every Thursday and Friday at 9.30 a.m.***

***Quiet Communion - Every Wednesday at 10 a.m.***

### **Regular Events**

#### ***Women's Meeting***

December 15<sup>th</sup> - The 'Ladies Please' Choir will entertain.

January 5<sup>th</sup> - Whatever Next - Mirella Moxon.

January 19<sup>th</sup> - A Summer in Chicago - Rev. Jason McCullagh.

February 2<sup>nd</sup> - Is it a Jug..... Maybe? - Roger Smallwood.

February 16<sup>th</sup> - Anchorage to Banff by Road - Anne Howard

***Food and Friends 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month at 10.30 a.m.***

January 5<sup>th</sup> and February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

***Supper Club - 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7.30 p.m.***

December 11<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Dinner, prepared by the Explorer Scouts.

January 15<sup>th</sup> - Quiz Evening - Rev. Jason McCullagh.

***Strictly Social - last Thursday of each month (normally 7 pm in the large hall)***

January 28<sup>th</sup> - Film Night (7 pm)

***Singing for Fun - alternate Mondays at 7.30 p.m.***

12<sup>th</sup> January, 26<sup>th</sup> January, 9<sup>th</sup> February

***Messy Church - 7<sup>th</sup> February.***

**The Bridge United Reformed Church**  
**Bridge Street**  
**Otley, West Yorkshire, LS21 1RW**  
**[www.otleybridgechurch.org.uk](http://www.otleybridgechurch.org.uk)**

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Christine Paterson - 01943 467159

**Church Safeguarding Co-ordinators**

Alison Anslow and Colin Whitaker  
(contact details above)



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