

June - July 2026

Number 713

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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Dear Friends,

Leadership has been very much in the news over the last couple of months. Our own country is currently gripped by a political drama about who is best able to lead our government. We all know the significance of the Makerfield By-Election! In April, His Majesty the King made a State Visit to the United States of America to celebrate the 250th anniversary of their independence . . . from Great Britain! There he delivered, what I think was, a master class in diplomacy. What he said was powerful and challenging and he delivered it with humour and style. The contrasting images of leadership between the King and the President were clear to see. The U.S. President has also been in a leadership tussle with Pope Leo XIV. The President sees leadership as an exercise in power, the Pope as an act of service. Questions of leadership are being explored around the world!

What sort of leadership do we expect to see in the life of the church, and where do we get our model of leadership from? At our Wednesday Communion Services we are now working our way through the Acts of the Apostles, the second volume of work by the author of Luke's gospel. This book tells the unfolding story of the spread of the Gospel and focuses on those who took up the mantle of leadership following the Pentecost experience. They sought to shape a new community and they based their leadership on the example of Jesus, his work, his message, his death, and his resurrection. It was not the leadership that those who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday thought they were going to see. On that day many believed that he came into the city intending to overthrow the Roman government and free the people from the occupying power.

He did not do this. He disappointed many, not least Judas, who betrayed him into the hands of those who would go on to kill him. All seemed lost after he died, but then those who had been faithful to Jesus encountered him in unusual and inspiring ways, they found new confidence as they remembered the things that he had said to them, the way he had encouraged them to live, and the leadership he had modelled so faithfully.

What does the leadership that Jesus offered look like? He has a very clear vision of what he is about. When he stands up in the Synagogue, at the beginning of his ministry, and reads from the Scroll of the Prophet Isaiah, he aligns himself with God's justice. As he enacts that ministry, he does not allow power, vested interest, popularity, or lack of it, to sway him from his mission.

He reaches out to the poor, the marginalised, the sick, the children, the women and raises them up to their full potential as he seeks to build a new world reflecting the values of the Kingdom of God. But he does not do this alone. Jesus gathers people around him to share in his work, he exercises a collaborative style of leadership.

This is the leadership that we are called to show in the world. We need to be clear about what our mission is, as Jesus was clear about his, we need to be courageous in carrying it out, as Jesus was, and we do it collaboratively, as Jesus did. Together, we seek to build a Church in which all people play a part, each using their own skills and talents, each working with, and valuing the other, each striving to transform this world into the kingdom that God desires.

Love,

Jason



THE BRIDGE CHURCH - PREACHING PLAN
21st June – 9th August 2026

Sunday 21st June – Fourth Sunday After Pentecost

Jason is preaching elsewhere in the Synod, as Pastoral Committee Convenor.

The Service will be conducted by the Reverend Michael Mewis.

**Sunday 28th June – Fifth Sunday After Pentecost
Taste and See Service - A Wandering People**

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Exodus 12. 37-39

**Sunday 5th July – Sixth Sunday After Pentecost
Sacrament of Holy Communion**

Jason is at the United Reformed Church General Assembly.

The Service will be conducted by the Reverend Mirella Moxon.

Sunday 12th July – Seventh Sunday After Pentecost

Jason is preaching elsewhere in the Synod, as Pastoral Committee Convenor.

The Service will be conducted by the Bridge Church's Growth Group.

Sunday 19th July – Eighth Sunday After Pentecost

Jason is at the Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders Conference standing in for the Yorkshire Synod Moderator.

**Sunday 26th July – Ninth Sunday After Pentecost
Taste and See Service – Sea Sunday**

The Reverend Jason McCullagh

Mark 4. 35-41

**Sunday 2nd August – Tenth Sunday After Pentecost
Sacrament of Holy Communion**

Jason is preaching elsewhere in the Synod, as Pastoral Committee Convenor.

The Service will be conducted by the Reverend Mirella Moxon.

Sunday 9th August – Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Café Church in the Church Hall

The Reverend Jason McCullagh and Mrs. Ailsa Cummins
Healthy Emotions

MINISTER'S REGISTER
1st April – 31st May 2026

FUNERALS

24 th April	Mrs. Janet Marsden	The Bridge Church
1 st May	Mrs. Jean Padgett	The Bridge Church

A SUMMER INVITATION

Looking for some summer fun?

The Bridge Church is hosting a 'just for fun' Walking Treasure Hunt and BBQ on Saturday, July 26th.

It's the perfect opportunity to get outside, explore Otley, and catch up with friends and neighbours.

Here is everything you need to know:

When: Saturday, July 26th at 4:00 PM

Where: Meet at The Bridge Church to collect your treasure hunt clues, then head out on foot around Otley.

The Reward: After working up an appetite, we will head back to the church for a freshly cooked BBQ.

Tickets: Just £2 per person.

How to join: To help us get an accurate headcount for food, please reserve your tickets in advance by emailing Michelle Howard at michelleskinner@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you there!

Prayer
Breakfast



OTLEY CHURCHES TOGETHER

PRAYER BREAKFAST

**Saturday 4th July 8am –
9.15am
Venue TBA**

Come and enjoy breakfast and fellowship with Christians from around the town.

News of the Family

New Arrivals

Happy news for Linda Walsh as she became a Great Grandmother on the 2nd of May 2026. Ava Laura was born slightly early but weighed 6lb 8oz.

Also, another happy event for Liz Wilkinson who became a Great Grandmother again on the 4th of May 2026, when Skylar Rose was born weighing 7lb 5oz. Claire therefore has another Great Niece!

Do please pass on any good news that you would like to share to one of the pastoral elders.

Thank you,

Margaret Armitage

NEW CHURCH TELEPHONE NUMBER

The new number is a mobile telephone number held by Jason.

His number is:
07506 319570

People should start using this number now as the church land line will cease to exist in the next few weeks.

FACEBOOK

I am touched that many of you wish to follow me on Facebook, but I do not accept requests from members of my congregation. I do hope this does not cause offence. I will continue to post on the Church Facebook page where you can follow me!

Jason

We continue with articles by Canon Paul Hardingham about Old Testament books ...

An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament: Proverbs

The Book of Proverbs is an anthology of sayings ('*mishle*') that are generally attributed to Solomon (Proverbs 1:1), who uttered 3000 proverbs (1Kings 4:32). The purpose of these oracles is '*for attaining wisdom and discipline*' (1:2).

Solomon was concerned that people, especially the young, would understand '*the sayings and riddles of the wise.*' (1:3-6). His guiding principle is that '*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.*' (1:7).

To give an idea of the recurring themes in the book, here are a few examples:

Knowing God: '*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding*' (9:10).

Guarding Our Speech: '*A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver*' (25:11).

Marital faithfulness: '*May your fountain be blessed and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth*' (5:15-20).

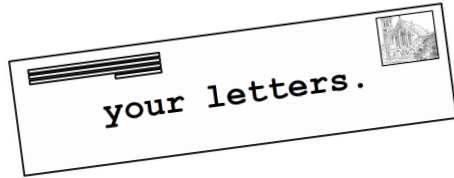
Our Work: '*Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!*' (6:6-11).

Dangers of Strong Drink: '*Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise*' (20:1).

Justice and Honesty: '*The LORD abhors dishonest scales, but accurate weights are His delight*' (11:1).

Underlying these sayings is a conviction about God's omniscience, '*For a man's ways are in full view of the LORD, and He examines all his paths*' (5:21); providence, '*Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails*' (19:21) and goodness, '*The LORD is far from the wicked but He hears the prayer of the righteous*' (15:29).

Proverbs reminds us that God is concerned with the way we live today. '*Wisdom is the art of living skilfully in whatever actual conditions we find ourselves*' (Eugene Peterson).



Dear Friends

I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone for the kindness and support shown to me following the death of my Jean.

Your cards, messages, visits and prayers have been such a comfort and have meant more than I can say at this difficult time. It is such a comfort to know that so many people loved and cared for her.

Thank you also to all the friends who were able to come to her funeral to celebrate her life and memory.

With my love, thanks and gratitude.

Geoff Padgett

Dear Friends

Once again I would like to thank you for the support you have given to my Easter fundraising for St Gemma's Hospice.

Very much appreciated.

Thank you.

Phyllis Heslop

SALEM CINEMA

Our friends at Salem United Reformed Church, Burley in Wharfedale invite members and friends of The Bridge Church to their next cinema - which will take place on

Saturday 27th June at 7 pm in their Church Hall

BRIDGE CHURCH ROUND UP

REDEDICATION OF ELDER'S

The Elders who were reelected at the Church AGM in



February were formally rededicated in a recent church service. Barbara Scholes and Alan Anslow are pictured with Jason and treasurer, Alison Anslow following the formalities!

TODDLER'S WORLD CUP FEVER



At a recent meeting of the toddlers group they made banners and bunting to celebrate the forthcoming football World Cup in Canada, Mexico and the USA.

LEGO MORNING

There was some amazing brick building at the Bridge Church at the recent Lego Day!



SUPPER CLUB ANNUAL DINNER - WITH A TWIST!



The Supper Club recently held their Annual Dinner at the Royal Oak at Dacre Banks. However, it was the first time that it has been a 'mixed' event. Over 30 people attended and a good time was had by all!

Women's Meeting

On Monday 30th March we had Mick Smith from Yorkshire Air Ambulance to talk to us about the 25 years that it has been in operation. Since it started from a portacabin at Leeds Bradford Airport it has grown, and there are now two stations and three helicopters; one is always on standby. In 2021 they also got two rapid response vehicles which are used when the helicopters are unable to fly due to inclement weather! Initially the helicopters had four blades, they now have five which makes for a smoother flight.

It is an independent charity. The yellow helicopters are known by us all for the wonderful service they provide; they carry five people, two pilots, two paramedics and a doctor. Since 2017 they have been able to fly at night and also carry blood. They cover the whole of Yorkshire and if needed will cover other areas too! It was a very interesting talk delivered with some Yorkshire humour as well.

Then, with our usual tea, we had a lovely chocolate cake, donated by the catholic church, who had had an Ester Cake competition and they were overrun with cakes!!!!

On Monday 13th April we had Janet Niepokojczycka to speak to us. Unfortunately we were in the Manor Room and as it was so light it was not suitable for the advertised talk. Luckily Janet had another topic, without slides, about her 1,000 mile walk with a pack horse, which she did for charity in 1991. It was an amazing journey, walking from Kendal to London then across the country to Wales, then headed north to Liverpool and finishing back in Kendal.

An amazing walk, especially with a sometimes rather naughty horse, known as Roy, but his full name was 'Royal Mail'. He was not happy when in new stables, such as the Royal Mews in London and the stables at Aintree Racecourse - he kicked out and did damage at both places! Janet wore the heels off her walking boots and was very pleased when someone from 'K Shoes' heard and brought her a brand new pair midway through the walk. Janet was given a tot of whisky at one of her stops and Roy was nudging her, so she put some in her hand thinking he wouldn't like it, but oh no

he wanted more and behaved impeccably for the next two days!! So interesting and also very funny talk.

On Monday 27th April we had Matthew Beynon Tullett to speak to us about 'Whiteknights' motorcyclists. He volunteers with them and they support the NHS. They transport blood and sometimes baby formula. It's a free out of hours service covering 7pm to 7am Monday to Friday and 24 hours at Weekends and Bank Holidays. In Yorkshire there are fifty volunteers, three are female.

They do now have three cars, which are used more during the winter when it is snowy or icy. The charity save the NHS thousands of pounds as this service used to be done by taxis. In Yorkshire it started in 2008. I don't think many of us knew about this service and is certainly a worthwhile charity. Their motto is 'we never presume to save a life, but we are proud to make a difference'. It is self funding, they buy their own helmets and hi viz jackets. A most interesting talk, thank you Matthew.

On Monday 11th May it was our AGM, which was chaired by Jason. After a hymn and a prayer and a birthday the meeting commenced. Sylvia gave the secretaries report and Carol delivered the treasurers report. Both Sylvia Sutcliffe and Dorothy Clegg are standing down from their roles. Jacqui, our vice president, will be taking over as secretary from Sylvia and I will be taking over doing the cards and flowers from Dorothy. Both ladies have done a sterling job for many years and they were presented with gifts, cards and flowers.

Afterwards we had cream cakes and biscuits made by Phyllis and chocolate goodies made by Sylvia's daughter all washed down with a nice cup of tea - a lovely end to a successful meeting. Well done everyone!

Pam Bradley



SUMMER FELLOWSHIP AFTERNOON

**THE PASTORAL AND FELLOWSHIP ELDERS
WILL BE HOLDING A FELLOWSHIP
AFTERNOON IN THE LARGE HALL ON
TUESDAY THE 18TH OF AUGUST 2026,
FROM 2.00PM – 4.00PM.**

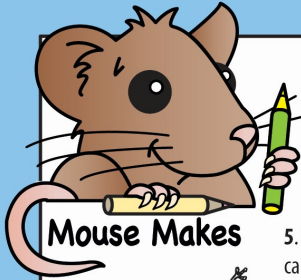
**A CHANCE TO COME AND SHARE IN A TIME
OF FELLOWSHIP, WITH SANDWICHES,
CAKES AND A QUIZ.**

ALL ARE WELCOME.

**SHEETS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO SIGN UP
NEARER THE TIME, JUST TO HELP WITH
CATERING NUMBERS. THERE WILL NOT BE
A CHARGE, BUT THERE WILL BE AN
OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DONATION ON
THE DAY.**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU,
SO DO PLEASE COME AND JOIN US!**

Young Peoples Pages



Mouse Makes

1. What bird makes its nest on high?
Job 39:27



2. What ate the seeds along the path?
Matthew 13:4



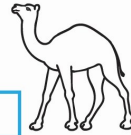
3. The hair of which animal was used to make curtains?
Exodus 36:14

4. What insect can we learn from?
Proverbs 6:6

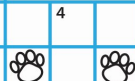
7. Which animal was Jesus compared to?
John 1:29



6. What animal would go through the eye of a needle easier than a rich person?
Luke 18:25



8. What bird did Noah release from the ark first?
Genesis 8:7



9 across. In what creature's mouth was a coin found?
Matthew 17:27



BIBLE CREATURES



9 down. What lives in holes?
Matthew 8:20



10. What insect would God send to destroy the enemy?
Deut 7:20



12. Which bird did the Holy Spirit appear as?
Luke 3:22



13. Which animal did Jesus ride on?
Matthew 21:7



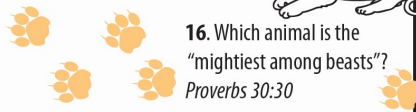
14. What bird did God provide for food in the wilderness?
Exodus 16:13



15. What insects did John eat in the wilderness?
Matthew 3:4



16. Which animal is the "mightiest among beasts"?
Proverbs 30:30



Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
1 Samuel 24

God chose Saul to be the King of Israel, but Saul chose to disobey Him. God said that the next king would not be Saul's son.

Saul didn't know that God had chosen David to be the next king.



David was very successful as a fighter and very popular.



David had to go on the run and hide.



One day, Saul and his army were in En-Gedi. Saul needed to pee, so he went into a sheep fold built next to a cave...

David and his men were hiding at the back of the cave!



David crept over and cut a piece off Saul's robe.



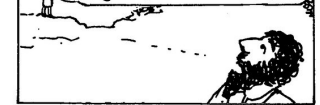
Then David felt bad.



David waited until Saul was far enough away then he shouted to him.



Your majesty, I could have killed you today, but I knew it was wrong. I want to prove to you I'm not trying to harm you.



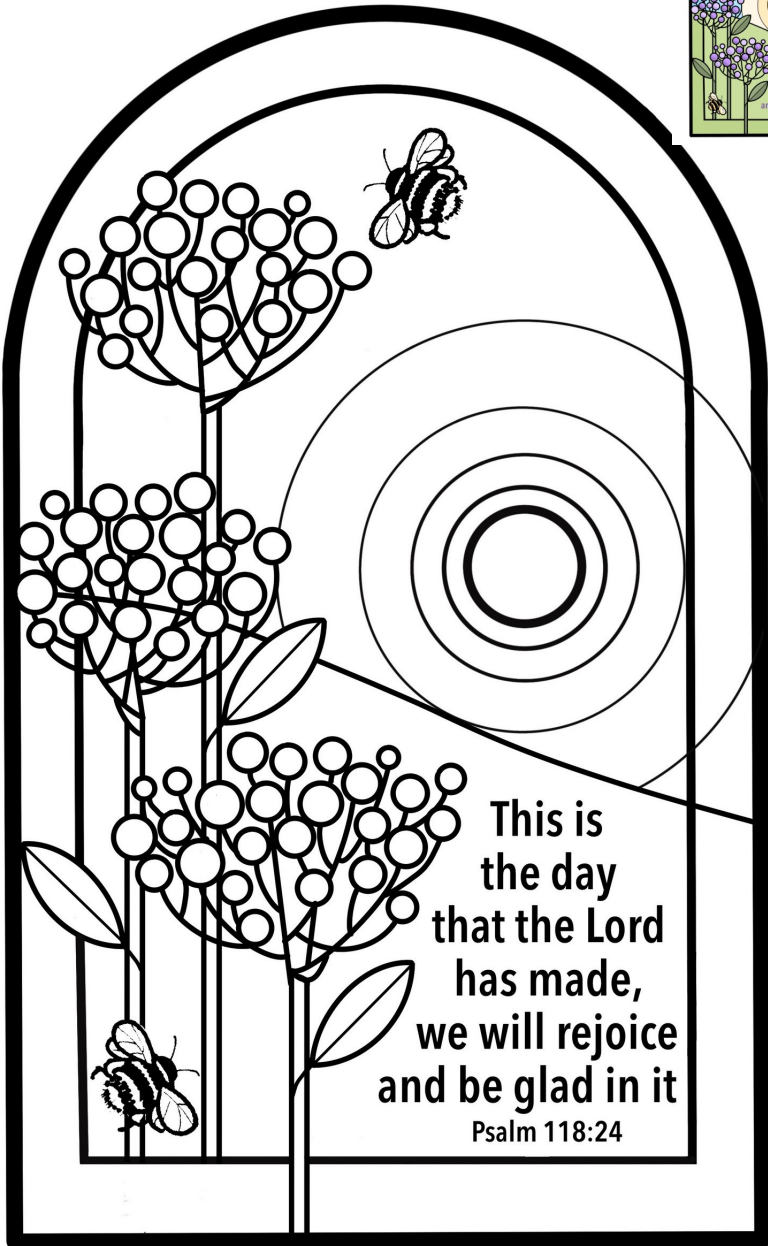
David, you are better than me. I would have killed you but you were kind.



Now I know you will be the next king, but please look after my family.

David promised, and Saul and his army went home.

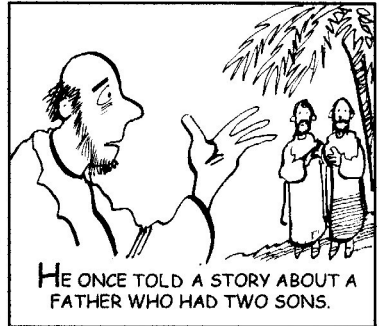




The tale of the Two Sons



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



THE FATHER WENT TO HIS OLDER SON AND ASKED HIM TO WORK IN THE VINEYARD



'NO I WON'T' SAID THE OLDER SON...



THE FATHER THEN WENT TO HIS YOUNGER SON AND ASKED HIM TO HELP IN THE VINEYARD TOO.

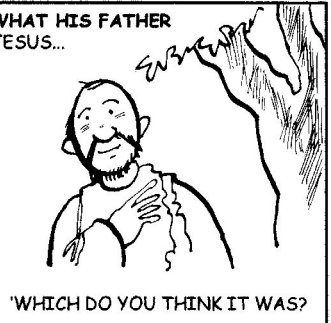


'OF COURSE I WILL!' SAID THE YOUNGER SON. BUT HE PROMPTLY FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT....

...AND DIDN'T DO A STROKE OF WORK!



'WHICH ONE DID WHAT HIS FATHER WANTED?' ASKED JESUS...



MOVING STORIES

WORLD JUSTICE PROGRAMME
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



Feature Story - First Aid Support for Schools in Zimbabwe

Many schools in parts of Africa operate without first aid kits, trained staff or reliable emergency response systems. During his sabbatical, Rev George Kalu received a grant from Commitment for Life and partnered with the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society to help change that reality. Together they delivered seven first aid kits to church-related schools serving less privileged communities in Zimbabwe, where government funding is limited.

The Falcon Junior School in Rainham, Harare, also received professional, certified training from Red Cross instructors. Headteacher Vimbai Nyamakambo described the week as “blissful... challenging but exciting” and said she is eager to apply the new skills and knowledge. George hopes this first visit will open doors to further support, enabling more schools to receive life-saving equipment and training. Thank you for supporting Commitment for Life.

Team Spotlight

NEW

Middle East Justice Appeal

The United Reformed Church have joined up with All We Can from the Methodist Church to support the State of Palestine and Lebanon.

Pray with us:

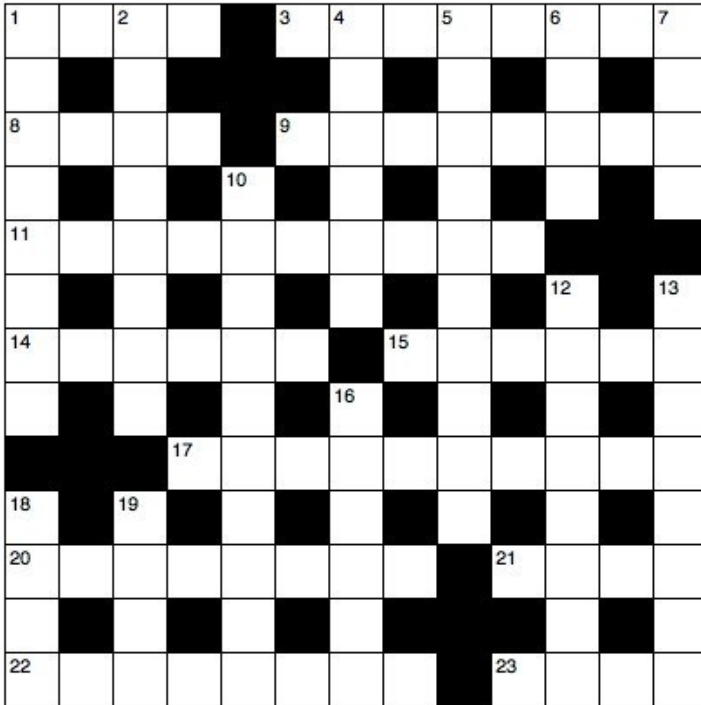


Oh Jesus, how can we call a land “Holy” when a festival site becomes a killing ground; when a hospital becomes a grave?
Christ, have mercy upon the land of your birth and all who know it as home.

May Isaiah’s prayer for peace be heard today, where enemies come and eat together and the days of hurt and destruction are over. In Jesus’ name we pray.
Amen



BIBLE CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Proverbs describes her as being 'of noble character' (Proverbs 31:10) (4)
 3 'Shall we go up again — — against the Benjamites, our brothers?' (Judges 20:23) (2,6)
 8 A descendant of Shem (Genesis 10:28) (4)
 9 'Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my — ' (Luke 14:27) (8)
 11 Resentment (Ephesians 4:31)(10)
 14 In Cain(anag.)(6)
 15 'Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to—' (Psalm 139:6) (6)
 17 Intense (1 Thessalonians 4:5)(10)
 20 Third Order of the Roman Catholic Church(8)
 21 'At midnight the cry rang out, "Here's the bridegroom! Come out to — him"' (Matthew 25:6) (4)
 22 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made

perfect in — ' (2 Corinthians 12:9) (8)
23 'As the — pants for streams of water,so my soul pants for you, O God' (Psalm 42:1) (4)

Down

- 1 Nickname of popular First World War chaplain, the Revd G.A. Studdert Kennedy, — Willie (8)
- 2 Occasion of religious joy (Lamentations 2:22) (5,3)
- 4 'We three kings of — are' (6)
- 5 Allegation or charge (Jude 9) (10)
- 6 Kind (1 Chronicles 12:33) (4)
- 7 'Open your — and look at the fields!' (John 4:35) (4)
- 10 Also known as the Feast of Lights (John10:22)(10)
- 12 Area that saw the healing of two demon - possessed men and a herd of pigs stampeding to their deaths (Matthew 8:28) (8)
- 13 Forebear(James2:21)(8)
- 16 Name given to the first two books of the Apocrypha(6)
- 18 Esau sold his birthright for this (Genesis25:34)(4)
- 19 Rear(anag.)(4)

BRIDGE CHURCH OUTING TO SCARBOROUGH

Saturday 1st August

**Leaving church at 8am
Leaving Scarborough at 4pm**

**Adults £20
Children £5**

Please sign up – on the sheets in the North Transept (there will be a £5 deposit)



NEXT MESSENGER

Material for the next edition of the Messenger should be in the hands of the Editor by Sunday, 26th July and should be available for collection on Sunday, 9th August, 2026.

If possible, please send by e-mail to:

messenger@otleybridgechurch.org.uk

JANET MARSDEN

Janet, an extraordinary woman, was born in Harrogate on 9th April 1958, and woe betide anyone who accused her of not being from Yorkshire. She always had many tales to tell about the places in Yorkshire that she lived and the variety of characters her northern relatives were. Eventually, when in her teens, the family moved south to Wiltshire. As an older teenager Janet was hard-working, with several part-time jobs. She was a very



lively person who always lived life to the full. Janet married Les at Atworth, Wiltshire on what was carnival day, 1979. When departing from the reception in a very well-decorated car many thought the "just married" car was part of the procession.

Janet initial full time work was in chartered accountancy in Bath. She even discovered major fraud in a chain of restaurants. Excellent with numbers, she also could sew, make garments, knit and had all sorts of other skills from an early age. These abilities expanded over the years and meant she was always a font of knowledge for all sorts of craft and creative activities that she organised.

Guiding continued wherever she moved to. Location was never a barrier but an opportunity. Local units suddenly had the excitement and energy that she always brought. She arranged international camps, local camps, visits to interesting places, presentations from well-known people. Always planning and executing guiding activities including encounters with Royals: hosting Sophie, Countess of Wessex in Surrey and welcoming Princess Anne when she visited a camp in Cyprus. Janet attended garden parties at Buckingham Palace, where, she was more interested in the Queen's corgis than trying to speak with the Queen!

Janet never missed an opportunity to explore history and culture. Cyprus was a stepping stone to the eastern Mediterranean. Visiting Petra in Jordan, Saint Catherine's Monastery in Sinai. There were also "Quickie trips" -

Bethlehem one day, the pyramids and Sphinx the next — then back to Cyprus. Always having fun travelling. She visited the Room of the Last Supper, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and sites around Lake Galilee. Janet paddled in the lake, fish swimming around her feet, and even floated in the Dead Sea.

Janet's other employments, were as a midwife, a command accountant for army forces in Germany, "information collator" (spy) for GCHQ.

Eventually retiring from working in Hampshire Janet relocated back to Yorkshire and after several years of organising / running guiding in Bridge along with Leeds County Guides, became a member of the Bridge Church.

Janet accrued over 51 years in Guiding. Always a great believer in women's rights and equality. Ensuring that all could have equal opportunity and realise their abilities was core to her work in Girlguiding - an ethos she held from the beginning as a Young Leader. She later held, District, Division and County roles before her metastatic renal cancer prevented her from being so active any more.

Janet's always said: It will be, what it will be! She is greatly missed by lots of people in many places.

Janet Marsden died on 3rd April 2026 aged 67 years. Her funeral was held at the Bridge Church on 24th April 2026.

Faith Alive!

The remaining meetings for this year, where we discuss contemporary issues as follows:

Thursday 9th July – 7pm Judy Rogers, Yorkshire Synod
Racial Justice Advocate 'Racial Justice in Action'

Thursday 12th November – 7pm Rev Simon Cross 'The
Quiet Revival'

JEAN PADGETT (An extract from her eulogy)

Jean was born in Otley on 23rd April 1936, the youngest of three children to Mabel and Tom Goodall. She is survived by her sister Betty who lives in Cambridge, her brother Deryck passed away some years ago, but who is remembered by several members through his attendance here and his involvement with the church's scouting movement.



Jean's father left the family home when she was very young and the family moved to live with her granny. Jean attended Westgate Infants School and eventually moved to secondary school. Jean's mother eventually remarried and they attended this church, then named Otley Congregational Church.

Jean became a member of the Church youth club for many happy years and made many lifelong friends including Elsie Wharton who now lives in Ebbw Vale. Jean would tell stories about her and Elsie arranging to meet boys in the market square, telling each one to wait in a different corner of the square whilst they watched from afar giggling at the boys waiting in vain!

After leaving school, Jean worked at Fearnley's Chemist in Manor Square as a beautician and managed to obtain a diploma in health and beauty, which she still put into practice in later life! She was also an excellent seamstress and made most of her daughter, Linda's clothes when she was younger and even used to dress the 'guy' for the local bonfire as well as make toffee apples!

Jean married her first husband Alec, in this church in 1954 and moved to Menston where they had their daughter, Linda. They later moved to London and then back to Menston where their son, Mark was born. Sadly, Mark died a few weeks ago aged 63, but due to her worsening dementia Jean could not really take it in.

After several years Jean and Alec's marriage broke up. Which left Jean struggling to make ends meet, paying rent on a house and being a full time mum and working at the same time! As the years passed she met Geoff and they actually married on Valentines Day in 1975. Jean had declared that it had to be that date as it was her mother's and granny's' birthday as well as her cousin David - deal or no deal - Geoff would have married her on pancake Tuesday if she'd wanted! Unfortunately, due to their previous marriages they

could not marry in church, but the vicar in Menston agreed to bless the marriage in church following the registry office ceremony.

Jean and Geoff moved into a house in Guiseley then moved to Otley on West Chevin Road, then Jean saw a house she liked on Burras Lane. Geoff was not keen and had to be dragged up to the front door - needless to say Jean managed to change his mind. Jean had various jobs with a watch/clock company, Wharfedale Hospital and the Wharfedale and Airedale Observer. Unfortunately she developed a brain tumour which required complex surgery but managed to make a remarkable recovery.

Jean wasn't going to give up over a brain tumour and did voluntary work with Otley Action for Older People and Otley Blind Club, which she ran for nearly 25 years. She also set up her own craft business, Fairfield Crafts, and would spend hours making crafts, with Geoff as her labourer, and then attended craft fairs at weekends.

Cooking was her favourite hobby, and one in which she really loved and excelled. Geoff said every meal every meal was a gourmet meal. Cooking and entertaining was at the heart of who she was. Jean loved her family and she took so much pleasure watching them grow up. She enjoyed family barbeques and insisted on sitting in a place not too far away from the barbeque and the facilities - the family had to partake in a game of musical chairs until Jean found the right spot!

As far as holidays were concerned Jean was terrified of flying, and Geoff had always wanted to go to California to visit his cousin. But they went and Geoff spoke to the cabin crew who looked after her by sitting with her and plying her with glasses of wine - which did the trick. She enjoyed motoring tours - before Sat-Navs and Google maps - she enjoyed reading maps and was very good at it, guiding Geoff around UK and Europe very ably.

Following Geoff's retirement they bought a static caravan in Pickering and spent many happy breaks there and worshipped at Pickering URC until closure and then at the Methodist Church. They had many friends there and several are here today.

Although we lost Jean in her beautiful earthly form on Good Friday, the family rejoice in the fact that Geoff was with her, stroking her hand and softly talking to her as she quietly and peacefully slipped away to a better place.

Jean Padgett died on 3rd April 2026. Her funeral was held at the Bridge Church on 1st May 2026.

GETTING TO KNOW TRICIA COOKE

What first brought you to the Bridge Church?

We were sampling the churches in Otley after our removal from Stirling and The Bridge Church gave us the best warm welcome at the door and at coffee after the service. The service form was familiar to us after our years with the Church of Scotland and we liked Jason's style of preaching - so much more relevant than the highly academic sermons we had endured.



Can you tell us something about your faith journey?

I was christened in the Methodist chapel in Grassington where my parents were married and where Grandfather Clegg took a very active part. I remember Sunday School in the room attached to the Chapel and the familiar picture of Jesus with his lantern and the Victorian teacher's chair. (We bought a similar one on rockers from Haworth for our first marital home in Idle). When a new minister was appointed to Linton Parish Church (Rev. Baker) we moved to join that congregation where my Clayton grandparents had taken a very active role and by this time we had moved house nearer to that church. Here I joined the choir (practices every Thursday evening) and attended both morning and evening services until I left for university; Aged 13 I was confirmed by the Bishop of Bradford alongside my mother.

What is your favourite hymn and why?

Lord of all hopefulness. It's an optimistic hymn and asking for help is something we all need.

What can you tell us about your working career?

I have had a varied career. Before moving to Scotland in the early seventies I started as an unqualified Geography teacher

and then had spells in retail and marketing before becoming a Youth Employment Officer in Shipley - a job which I loved. After having a family and moving to Scotland, IT I did a teacher training course and then worked at the local high school for a couple of years then moved into special needs education which was rewarding but involved extensive travelling. I then moved to museum education, a job which I adored, and amongst other things, it involved using museum resources to support the school curriculum. Sadly due to a combination of cutbacks and illness I took early retirement. However, on recovery I returned to education /museum work on a part time basis and finally became Education Officer at Stirling Castle. I retired in the year 2000.

What hobbies do you have?

Gardening - a great way of relaxing and reflecting!

Singing - I sung with Stirling City Choir for many years and also the church choir before we moved to Otley. I continue to sing, badly now, with the Chippendale Singers and also enjoy Singing for Fun.

Orienteering which took us all over Scotland and England.

Where is your favourite place in this country?

I have two places - The top of Dumyat, the hill behind Stirling University - a Sunday afternoon walk when not orienteering. Secondly, the Ghaistrills Falls in Grassington where I swam in my youth.

Where in the world would you like to visit?

I would love to visit the South Island of New Zealand with its mountains and fjords,

If you could invite 3 people to dinner (dead or alive) who would they be and why?

Nelson Mandela for his commitment to racial equality and his survival of unjust imprisonment.

Judy Dench for her commitment to drama, an art form that has enriched the lives of so many people and introduced us to different ways of life.

Billy Connolly for his ability to make people laugh and his ability to communicate.

EXPLORING

LEADING YOUR CHURCH INTO GROWTH



An Introduction



Sample the Material



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The
United
Reformed
Church
Yorkshire

SUNDAY 28TH JUNE, 2PM - 5PM
THE BRIDGE URC CHURCH, OTLEY, LS21 1RW

Book your place: office@urcyorkshire.org.uk. Deadline 24/06/2026

NOW MISSION & CARE GROUP ANNUAL SERVICE Sunday 12th July – 2pm at WEST PARK URC, HARROGATE

Please sign the list in the north transept if you wish to attend – and indicate if you need a lift. Each church has been asked to supply their favorite Bible or other reading – please vote for yours by completing the form and posting it in the ballot box.

WHITSUNTIDE WALKS

As part of our Heritage Programme please see the latest display in the North Transept.

This covers Whitsuntide Walks - once a staple of many Northern towns.



CHURCH DIARY - FEBRUARY—MARCH 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

June 15th - 'Unity Ukes' - Ukelele players and
singers from Burley.

Food and Friends - 1st Wednesday of each month
at 10.30 a.m.

July 1st and August 4th.

Supper Club - 3rd Thursday of each month at 7.30 p.m.

Strictly Social - 4th Thursday of each month at 7 pm

June 25th - Evening meal at EFES.

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

15th June, 29th June

Messy Church - 27th June.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

DOWN: 1, Woodbine. 2, Feast day. 4, Orient. 5, Accusation.
6, Type. 7, Eyes. 10, Dedication. 12, Gadarene. 13,
Ancestor. 16, Esdras. 18, Stew. 19, Area.

ACROSS: 1, Wife. 3, To battle. 8, Obal. 9, Disciple. 11,
Bitterness. 14, Niacin. 15, Attain. 17, Passionate. 20,
Tertiary. 21, Meet. 22, Weakness. 23, Deer.

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