



## Focus on January 2024



## WELCOME TO WESLEY CHAPEL

We are open for Sunday Morning Worship, 10.30am, see p3 for details of our services.

The Nidd Valley Circuit presents a weekly pre-recorded worship, TED Talk style. Please visit <https://www.facebook.com/NiddValley/>

Circuit Morning Prayer Live runs every morning Monday to Friday at 8am on Facebook. This is available for watching again after the live broadcast/ <https://www.facebook.com/NiddValley/>

All links (and much more) can be accessed via our website <https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk>

or if you need more information leave a message:  
<https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/contact>

### Wesley Chapel Contacts

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**Charity Registration** 1134055

***The deadline for 'Wesley Focus on February is 24 January. Please send any notices, news, articles, photographs to Judith Yeats: 07733064697 [judithyeats0@gmail.com](mailto:judithyeats0@gmail.com). Focus is also on the website. <https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/our-focus>***

## WHAT'S ON AT WESLEY

**SUNDAY 31 DECEMBER 10.30am.** Morning Worship led by Rev. Leonora Wassell.

**SUNDAY 7 JANUARY 10.30am.** Morning Worship. .Covenant Service. Led by Rev.Gordon Hay

**MONDAY 8 JANUARY 1pm.** Lunchtime Recital. See p14

### **SUNDAY 14 JANUARY**

**10.30am.** Morning Worship led by Josie Burdon and Celia Booth

**6pm.** Wesley Sunday Share via Zoom. (Link will be sent out or contact Les or Judith).

**SUNDAY 21 JANUARY 10.30am** Morning Worship led by Rev. Mark Godfrey.

### **SUNDAY 28 JANUARY**

**10.30am** Morning Worship led by Mike Greenberg

**6pm** Wesley Sunday Share via Zoom (Link will be sent out or contact Les or Judith).

**SUNDAY 4 FEBRUARY 10.30an** Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Rev. Anne Brown.

### **TUESDAYS**

**10.30am to 1pm.** Wesley Wheelie Welcome Café/Warm Welcome. Come and join us for a chat. Refreshments will be served.

### **NIDD VALLEY CIRCUIT DECEMBER ONLINE TALKS. SUNDAY 9am**

07 Jan – Livestream 10.30am

14 Jan – Rev. Andy Lindley

21 Jan – Rev. Andy Lindley

28 Jan – Rev. Andy Lindley

*Bless this house and all who inhabit it. Fill them with the light of Christ, that their concern for others may reflect Your love. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen*

## Thank You

Christine and Graham would like to thank everyone for all the prayers, phone calls, cards visits and help that they have received during Graham's recent illness. They were all very much appreciated during a very difficult time . Graham is now very much better and is able to get out a little. We feel we are very blessed to have so many good supportive friends. Thank you all very much.

## CHRISTMAS AT WESLEY

Wesley had a Christmas tree with lights, and the little boy below called Christoph, was passing with his dad and we asked them to switch on the lights. A few days later we had snow



## Shoppers Carol Service

We had a lovely Shopper's Carol service led by Gordon. Benjamin helped Gordon to do some unwrapping and liked the heart-shaped balloon that he unwrapped. (see p5)

Gordon explained to us all about the expression of Love that 'came down at Christmas'.

*Continued*

## Christmas at Wesley continued



*Gordon in Festive mode*

*Ben helps Gordon open his present*

And, at our last Welcome Café before Christmas we were thrilled to welcome the Goodwin- Hitchen-Hooper family. They travelled from the Faroes, Berlin and Harrogate! (see front cover).

### **Wesley Fellowship**

We finished our 2023 season with an afternoon of Christmas hymns, poems, readings, an amusing video of a version of Twelve Days of Christmas by the King Singers, a Christmas quiz and mince pies. As always, there was a great friendly and happy atmosphere. Thank you to everyone who participated, A special thanks to Les for organising, and Barbara for playing.

We've had a very successful year, with lots of enjoyable and interesting afternoons. We look forward to starting the Wesley Fellowship again in the Spring and to welcoming new faces. Watch this space for further details.

*Continued*

*Christmas at Wesley continued.*

## **Carol Service**

Sunday 17th was our Carol Service, led by Deacon Gary Hoare, who was preaching at Wesley for the first time since he joined the circuit in September. One of the highlights of the service was a video of the Muppets Christmas Story—Bohemian Rhapsody. If you missed it, or you want to watch it again visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJxTdJh15Ws>.

The service was well attended and it was good to welcome several visitors

## **Christmas Eve**

Gordon led our morning worship on Christmas Eve, a beautiful service with Gordon's usual meaningful message. Rachel and Anna delighted the congregation with their song 'A Donkey So Gentle' which was lovely, and was accompanied by dad, Philip. Again we welcomed lots of visitors from all over the globe, and we were thrilled that so many of our young church family were there, visiting grandparents for the Christmas holidays.

Because we are a town centre church the stewards thought it was important to open our doors for a Christmas Eve service, and a 6pm service was planned as a local arrangement.

We didn't have any visitors, and in fact the only people there were five stewards, including Mike who was leading the service. We made the decision to sit round in a circle and read a verse each of the first two hymns, which were not quite so well known but the words very significant. (StF 226 and 220). We stood round the piano to read the words to 'It Came Upon a Midnight Clear' whilst Judith played all the verses—the third verse is particularly relevant to the world-wide situation today. We sang the last hymn, Silent Night standing round the piano, and the singing was good (who says we no longer have a Wesley choir?). Mike delivered his message, and he invited us to 'chip in', which we did. It couldn't have been more special if there had been 50 people present. A wonderful way to begin the Christmas celebrations.

*Continued*

*Wesley Christmas continued.*

## **Christmas Morning Service**

We had a lovely Christmas morning service with young and old gathered together, and an elf. The elf was formally attired in elf green and led the service; thank-you Mike. Ulrike and Andrew's granddaughters Juno and Scarlet helped light the white Christmas candle and also showed us Christmas presents they had received. Margaret showed off her new cardigan and Maureen a lovely picture of her two daughters.

## **Activities at Wesley in December**

In addition to our own activities, Wesley has been a busy place this December..



The Ashville College Senior choir at its Carol Concert

Stray Notes choir gave a concert. .



## WESLEY WHEELIE WELCOME CAFÉ 2024 DUTY ROTA

	<b>10.30 to 12 noon</b>	<b>12 noon to 1pm</b>
09 January	Eileen and Ian	Judith and Jackie
16 January	Jean and Wendy	Jenny and Philip
23 January	Shelagh and Pat	Shelagh, David, Laura,
30 January	Christine and Les	Christine and Les
06 February	Jean and Wendy	Maureen and Mike
13 February	Shelagh and Keith	Shelagh, David, Laura
20 February	Jean and Wendy	Judith and Jackie
27 February	Christine and Les	Christine and Les
05 March	Jean and Wendy	Maureen and Mike
12 March	Eileen and Ian	Jenny and Philip
19 March	Jean and Wendy	Judith and Jackie
26 March	Shelagh and Pat	Shelagh, David, Laura

The winner of last month's Isle of Mull competition was won by Maureen who received her chocolate prize for being the first to identify Tobermory in the last Pieces!





## WESLEY WEEKLY PIECES

Wesley Weekly Pieces was started in April 2020 in response to the first Covid 'lock-down'. It was part of our response to ensure all Wesley folk felt connected, informed, valued and supported. The success of Wesley Pieces was due to so many people sharing their stories, reflections, hopes and encouragement. We set up the Wesley Support group with nearly forty members sharing their email addresses and this covered about 85% of all Wesley folk. Many of the 'Pieces# articles were included in our monthly Wesley Focus and all those without email contact received a copy of Focus in the post; they still do.

Today, we no longer face the challenges of lockdown and the Wesley Chapel fellowship is mostly back meeting together. This in turn means that the Wesley Pieces is not so important in keeping people connected and indeed the number of weekly contributions has reduced in recent months. The time has come therefore to retire our Wesley Pieces sharing. Once again, our brilliant Wesley Focus magazine will be our main method of communication and sharing, and it is so important that we all still send Judith our stories and pictures.

We will maintain our Wesley Support email group circulation and also the Wesley Sunday Share twice a month and the Friday coffee Zoom monthly gathering.

### Les Sudron

*Wesley Weekly Pieces has served us well and hopefully we will not be 'isolated' by a pandemic ever again.*

*Our grateful thanks to Les who worked so hard during the pandemic to keep us all together, we shall forever remember what a brilliant job he did. He signs off with this:*

*'In our first Pieces we had this picture and many people liked it a great deal.'*



## CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Christine and Les visited Castle Howard for the Christmas lights.



Left The Nativity scene in the Chapel. Above. Les at the fountain with the sun in his eyes and very dark clouds behind



Uncle Daniel and Benjamin read a book together!

*Church Family New continued*

Judith was not able to be at church on Christmas morning to show off one of her presents. It's not just any old cushion, but one that says 'Grandma's Garden' with a list of all her grandchildren and their birth-month plants.



Maureen and Mike went to Harlow Carr on the 29 December. They were amused to see that there's always one Christmas decoration that ends up in a strange place. They also spotted the first snowdrops to appear.



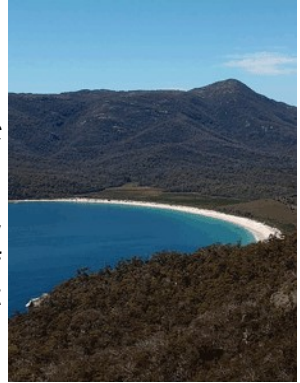
*Snowdrops: Theirs is a fragile but hardy celebration...in the very teeth of winter.*

*Louise Beebe Wilder (1878-1938) – American Gardening Writer*

## Desert Island Discs

*Philip Goodwin is our castaway this month..*

*J S Bach Organ: Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor.* I quote from the introduction in my old tattered music copy 'It is universally regarded as one of Bach's greatest works, eminently fitted to display the resources and grandeur of the organ.' Sadly I have to admit that it is not eminently fitted to the skills of this organist, I've returned to it several times over the last 40 years, and managed to murder it occasionally



on Wesley Chapel's organ when no-one is listening! It is a stupendous work. A Passacaglia quotes an 8-bar theme on the pedals. Bach then, over the next 16 pages (!) requotes it over 30 times with the most extraordinary variations, ending, of course, with a flourish with full organ. The man was an utter genius.

*J S Bach Oratorio: B Minor Mass.* Another masterpiece, though in a totally different vein of course. Though introduced as '... this stupendous creation of his mighty genius ...' in our choral society copy, Bach wrote in 1733 to the Duke of Saxony 'I lay before your Kingly Majesty this trifling work ...' Talk about self-effacing, or perhaps he was pandering to his future boss! Of all the several big oratorios by Bach this is for me the most grand, and Jenny and I have been privileged to sing it with Harrogate Choral Society. It is grand and stirring stuff. Please can I take it all to my desert island? It only lasts about 2 hours.

*J S Bach Orchestral: Brandenburg Concerto No.4.* This is the 4th concerto, and is for orchestra and two recorders (or two flutes). All six of the Brandenburgs are lively foot-tapping classical baroque style, and will never pall for me.

*Schubert : Piano Quintet 'the Trout' Franz Schubert,* famous for writing his 600 romantic songs, also wrote over 50 chamber music pieces, from trios, quartets, quintets and up to an octet. 'The Trout', for piano and 4 strings, is perhaps the most well-known, though any of his many quartets will do for me. Why chamber music? Well, I love to be sitting close and watching, seeing and feeling the wonderful sense of ensemble playing, that 'togetherness' where they are all listening and responding to each other, talking to each other musically.

*Continued*

*Philip's Desert Island Discs continued.*

*Max Bruch: 'Kol Nidrei'.* Here the 'cello soloist, for me, has to be André Navarra. I have a 60+ year old vinyl LP, being my introduction to Max Bruch. I feel the 'cello is the most soulful solo instrument, it can really speak or sing with feeling. 'Kol Nidre (Hebrew/Aramaic for 'All Vows') is a prayer sung in Jewish synagogues and starts with an expression of repentance for all unfulfilled vows and promises to God. The combination these sentiments, this soulful instrument, Bruch's rich music and the interpretation by André Navarra I find strongly emotional. You can actually hear this old Navarra recording on You tube (sound only) or view other cellists' performance.

*Oscar Peterson: 'Lulu's Back in Town'.* Now to move to a lighter vein. Peterson is just the outstanding jazz pianist for me, and this is such a happy, upbeat, honkytonk piece played with utterly remarkable technique. He is usually seen to be smiling while playing, and often muttering or singing to himself. Lovely to watch and to hear.

*Joe Pass - Guitar: 'Ain't misbehavin'.* I love hearing and watching a good guitarist. I see the guitar as its own complete solo instrument, but when you hear the American jazz artist Joe Pass you can hear the sounds and rhythms of a complete band. He performed a lot with Oscar Peterson, George Shearing and Ella Fitzgerald. On this delightful virtuoso recording he is introduced by Oscar Peterson.

*Bix Beiderbecke: Riverboat Shuffle.* Bix was a famous jazz trumpet player and bandleader in the creole jazz band world of the 1920s in New Orleans. This is highly nostalgic for me, taking me back to my boarding school days. My pal Richard and I shared a study, and besides forming a skiffle group, used to spend most of our pocket money in Sedbergh village ordering early jazz records at the little music shop. This track is on a 10" LP vinyl, which I still have.'

Just in case anything here appeals to you, then happy listening. And a Happy New Year !

**Philip.**

*Lots there to appeal Philip, thank you for sharing your choices. Of course you may take the whole of the Bach Mass in B Minor.*

*Next month Ulrike will be sharing her Desert Island Discs.*

**WESLEY CENTRE CONCERTS. SEASON 2023-2024  
LUNCHTIME RECITALS**

Mondays 1 - 2pm . Admission £10.00 unless otherwise specified



**8th January 2024 Mithras Trio** (Current BBC Radio 3 NGAs)  
Programme:

Arno Babadjanian. Piano Trio in F sharp minor.

Beethoven - Trio in B flat major, Op. 97 'Archduke'

**5th February 2024** Jonathan Leibovitz (clarinet) Maciej Kulakowski (cello), Ariel Lanyi (piano). Programme:

Brahms - Clarinet Trio in A minor, op.114

Beethoven - Trio for piano, clarinet and cello in E flat (Beethoven's own arrangement of his septet), op. 38

**12th February 2024 Jean-Efflam Bavouzet (Piano).** FFLAM BAVOUZET (piano). Programme: works by Debussy, Liszt and Massenet. He will give the same programme at the Wigmore Hall on 13th February 2024 as part of his three year residency.

**4th March 2024 Jean-Paul Gasparian** (piano) Programme to be confirmed.

**13th May 2024** Artist to be confirmed

**3rd June 2024 Nicholas Daniel** (oboe), Hugh Watkins (piano)  
Programme to be confirmed.

**1st July 2024 Jazz Concert. Richard Wetherall Trio.**

**ALSO : On Monday, 8th January 2024 at 7.30 pm** - Recital at Holy Trinity Church, Ripon Students from the Royal Northern College of Music (piano sonatas and string quartets by Beethoven) (Ripon Concerts. [www.riponconcerts.co.uk](http://www.riponconcerts.co.uk))

*Wesley Concert Season continued.*

## **EVENING CONCERTS**

Saturdays 7.30pm. Tickets £18.00 (age 26 and under £8)

**10th February 2024.** SIR STEPHEN HOUGH (piano). Programme  
Cecile Chaminade. Selected Pieces.

Franz Liszt. Sonata for Piano in B minor, S178

Interval

Cecile Chaminade. Selected Pieces

Frederic Chopin. Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58.

If you wish to purchase a ticket for the recital by Sir Stephen Hough please contact [a.hitchen81@gmail.com](mailto:a.hitchen81@gmail.com) or tel. 01423-883618).



*Stephen Hough at the  
Quincena Musical de San  
Sebastián, 2021*

**13th April 2024** ANGELA HEWITT (piano). Programme: Bach,  
Mendelssohn. Shostakovich, Samuel Barber.



Canadian pianist Angela Hewitt in  
Toronto 2017.

## AROUND THE CIRCUIT

**Bilton Methodist Amblers.** The next walk is Saturday 13 January. All walks start on the car park of Bilton Area Methodist Church where we meet to arrange transport at 9.30. Winter walks generally about 4-6 miles and normally end at a cafe or pub for food. All welcome. If interested please contact Janet Allen, 01423 524634, E-mail [janetallen09@btinternet.com](mailto:janetallen09@btinternet.com)

Additional walks: Saturday 10 February; Saturday 9 March.

**Bilton.** We have available places for people to join Bilton Area Methodist lunch club on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month (or just one of the dates). The meal is a balanced 3 course meal consisting of mains, dessert then followed by cheese and biscuits and tea or coffee. Cost £5.50 or £6 if you need a lift. Contact Julie Dekanski 07713 822832 or Ann Ellis 01423 503840 if interested.

**Gracious Street** Monthly coffee morning, in The Bridge on the 4th Saturday of the month, 10am-12 noon - Each month will support a different charity/good cause so please come and have a drink, cake and a chat.

Thursday 25 January 2024. 10.30am – 12 noon. Meet Local Crimewriter, Author Tom Sibson. Free Entry. Refreshments.

**Harlow Hill.** Friday mornings 10.30am—12 noon. Little Beans baby and toddler sessions. Coffee/tea/squash and biscuits, £3.00 per family. Parents, grandparents, nannies, carers all welcome.

### **Killinghall**

Every Thursday, 11:30 - 14:00, Resurrected Bites

Coffee Morning. Last Saturday in the month 10.30 to 12 noon through the year except September and December. Next Coffee morning Saturday 27 January.

*Continued*



*What's on at our other churches continued.*

**Starbeck.** Ahoy there! The Chorus Crew are returning to Starbeck to perform an afternoon concert on Sunday 14 January 2.30pm. Beat the mid-winter slump with sea shanties, folk songs, humour and joviality from Captain Don and the lads! This event is part of the programme of community concerts at Starbeck Methodist Church. Entry is £9, pay at the door. Concessions: <12 yrs free, teenagers £5. Refreshments are served during the interval.

Saturday 10 February 7.30pm. St. John Fisher Catholic High School. *These pupils are incredibly musically talented, highly enthusiastic and work as a great team supporting each other's performances. MD Craig Ratcliffe.*

Saturday 9 March 7.30pm. Kaminari UK. Taiko Drummers. *An evening of Japanese music by this York based group along with their special guests.*

## **Woodlands**

### **Every Friday morning 8.45-10.00. (Term time only)**

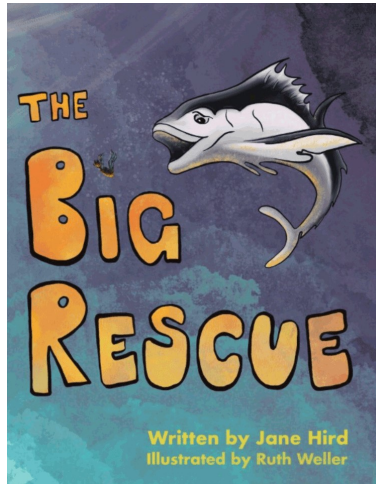
Toast Community Café - Welcomes anyone from the community, whether you have just dropped off children at school or are just passing by. We offer tea, coffee and toast and a place to sit and chat.

Woodlands Lunch Club - Come and join us for a home-made 3 course lunch **every Friday at 12.15pm.** (Term time only)

The club operates on a Pay as you Can basis. Transport may be available. If you would like to come along, please email [revannebrown@gmail.com](mailto:revannebrown@gmail.com).

## **ALSO**

**Boston Spa Methodist Church.** Friday 12 January at 1pm. Lunchtime Concert Chestra Trio: Caroline-Flute Delyth-Piano; Hannah-Clarinet. Concert Admission £6. Light Lunches served from 12 noon.,



This will be a new book out in the New Year aimed at 6 to 8 year old children. The author Jane was one of my flat mates back in Edinburgh. Jane never left Scotland, only changing cities to Glasgow. This is Jane's first book and it has been an amazing journey of prayer and connecting with the right people. An illustrator offered her services and the publisher offered helpful advice. Jane is also a grandmother and is very concerned that children hardly ever hear bible stories either at home or school.

The publishers have offered a deal and it will be available on line at Amazon and also in bookstores like Waterstones, WH Smith's and other bookstalls. I will keep you informed when the book is available.

## **Shelagh**

### **Ring Out Wild Bells by Alfred, Lord Tennyson,**

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.  
Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true...

## BRIGHTEST AND BEST OF THE SONS OF THE MORNING

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning;  
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;  
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining;  
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;  
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,  
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all!

Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion  
Odors of Edom and offerings divine?  
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,  
Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation,  
Vainly with gifts would His favor secure;  
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,  
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

The Singing the Faith Online website writes about the author of this hymn.

'At a time when hymn-singing at regular Sunday services was not officially sanctioned in the Church of England, Reginald Heber (1783 – 1826) conceived the idea of ordering (and singing) hymns around the church calendar. This innovative concept was, in a sense, the initial forerunner of Singing the Faith's own regular lectionary hymn suggestions. Heber himself wrote over 100 hymns while serving as vicar of Hodnet in Shropshire.

Born into a wealthy and educated family, Heber was bright, entering Oxford University aged 17 and winning poetry prizes, including the Newdigate Prize for his poem, "Palestine". Following graduation, he was elected a Fellow of All Soul's College and travelled in northern Europe before being ordained in 1807. He became vicar (and Lord of the Manor) in the village of Hodnet near Shrewsbury in the west of England. He remained there for 16 years, also active as an academic and editor, before taking up, following some initial hesitation, the bishopric in Calcutta (now Kolkata) in 1823. He was active across all of British India, and ordained the first Indian to take Anglican orders.

*Continued*

*Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning continued.*

Reginald Heber died in India, following three intense years of ministry and travel. He was seen at the time as a martyr to the cause of overseas Christian mission. (The monument pictured stands in St Paul's Cathedral, Kolkata.)

The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology comments that 'Heber's sudden and untimely death in India made him a missionary hero, and helped to ensure that his advocacy of hymn singing within the Church of England was successful. His position as a highly-regarded figure helped to dispel the idea that hymns were associated with Methodists and extreme Evangelicals.'

Other popular hymns by Heber include 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!' (StF 11), 'From Greenland's icy mountains' and 'By cool Siloam's shady rill', which has been taken up again in some more recent hymn books, including Church Hymnary 4.'

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/hymns/brightest-and-best-of-the-sons-of-the-morning-stf-227/>

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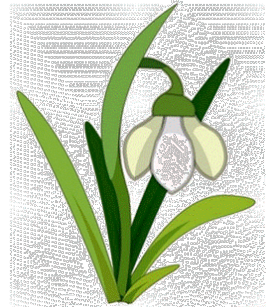
## WHERE ARE THE SNOWDROPS

"Where are the snowdrops?" said the sun.  
"Dead", said the frost," buried and lost, every one."  
"A foolish answer", said the sun,  
"they did not die, asleep they lie, every one".  
"And I will awake them", said the sun,  
"into the light, all clad in white, every one".

"It's rather dark in the earth today",  
said one little bulb to its brother,  
"but I thought that I felt a sunbeam's ray.  
We must strive and grow 'till we find our way",  
And they nestled close to each other.

They struggled and strived by day and by night,  
'Til two little snowdrops, in green and white,  
rose out of the darkness and into the light,  
And softly kissed each other.

***Annie Matheson (1853 – 1924)***



## SPECIAL DAYS IN JANUARY

**15th Jan 2024. Martin Luther King Day.** A day for celebration of the life and work of civil rights activist Martin Luther King. In the US some workers are given the day off work and schools may close for the day.

*'Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that.  
Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.'*

**18th Jan 2024. Winnie the Pooh Day.** Celebrated on author A A Milne's birthday.

*'I always get where I'm going, by walking away from where I've been.'*

*'How do you spell love? You don't spell it, you feel it.'*

*'Doing nothing often leads to the very best of something'*

*'You can't stay in your corner of the Forest waiting for others to come to you. You have to go to them sometimes.'*

**24th Jan 2024 International Day of Education.**

This UN day celebrates of the role of education in peace and development. The UN calls for free and compulsory elementary education, as well as stipulating that countries shall make higher education accessible to all.

**25th Jan 2024. Burn's Night.** A celebration of the birthday of Scotland's national poet Robert Burns, celebrated with a Burn's Night Supper which includes many traditional Scottish dishes and reading of Burns' poetry.

*'While Europe's eye is fix'd on mighty things, The fate of empires and the fall of kings;  
While quacks of State must each produce his plan, And even children lisp the Rights of Man;  
Amid this mighty fuss just let me mention, The Rights of Woman merit some attention.'*

*'Oh would some power the gift give us,  
to see ourselves as others see us!'*

*Continued.*

*Special Days in January continued.*

**26th Jan 2024. Australia Day** is the national day of Australia which marks the arrival of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove in 1788. A public holiday in Australia, it is celebrates the diversity of the Australian people with community and family events.

**26th Jan to 28th Jan 2024. Garden Birdwatch.** Organised by the RSPB. Across the UK, over half a million people took part in Big Garden Birdwatch 2023, counting a whopping 9.1 million birds! House Sparrows took the top spot, but counts of these chirpy birds are down by 57% compared to the first Birdwatch in 1979. In fact, we've lost 38 million birds from UK skies in the last 60 years. With birds facing so many challenges, it's more important than ever to get involved in the Birdwatch. Every bird you do – or don't – count will give RSPN a valuable insight into how garden birds are faring.

Mosst popular: House Sparrow 1,401,338; Blue Tit 904,637; Starling 904,079; Woodpigeon 750,251; Blackbird 716,734.

**27th Jan 2024. International Holocaust Remembrance Day.** The date marks the anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau by Soviet troops on 27 January 1945. It remembers not only the victims of the holocaust but of all genocide. For more information visit <https://www.hmd.org.uk>

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*The Magi Journeying (Les rois mages en voyage) - James Tissot . Brooklyn Museum*



## PRAYER CORNER

### **A prayer from the President and Vice-President of Conference**

God of peace and compassion,  
We pray for all impacted by the escalation in conflict in Israel-  
Palestine  
For all who are mourning  
For all who are fearful, today, and for what may lie ahead  
For all traumatised and re-traumatised by what they have  
experienced.  
Enable us to stand in solidarity with people of peace  
May your Spirit bring peace and healing to your troubled  
World. Amen

I am no longer my own but yours.  
Put me to what you will,  
rank me with whom you will;  
put me to doing,  
put me to suffering;  
let me be employed for you,  
or laid aside for you,  
exalted for you,  
or brought low for you;  
let me be full,  
let me be empty,  
let me have all things,  
let me have nothing:  
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things  
to your pleasure and disposal.  
And now, glorious and blessed God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.  
And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.'

*The Methodist Covenant Prayer*

## *PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MONTH*

*. We have had some beautiful sunrises and sunsets recently.*



*Sunsets by Christine and Les*



*Sunrise from back garden by Judith*

*'May every sunrise hold more promise and every sunset hold more peace.'* – Umair Siddiqui.