



## Focus on January 2025



*Nidderdale by Matthew Webber*

## WELCOME TO WESLEY CHAPEL

Our Sunday Morning Worship is at 10.30am, see p3 for details of our services.

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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**Church Council Secretary:** Jenny Goodwin

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### Address

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**Charity Registration** 1134055

***The deadline for Wesley 'Focus on February' is 25 January***  
*Please send any notices, news, articles, photographs to Judith Yeats: 07733 064697 [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 5 JANUARY 10.30am.** Covenant Service led by Rev. Gordon Hay. .

**MONDAY 6 JANUARY 1pm** Lunchtime Recital. See page 12 for details.

### **SUNDAY 12 JANUARY**

**10.30am.** Morning Worship led by Eric Robertson

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

**SUNDAY 19 JANUARY 10.30am** Morning Worship led by Josie Burdon and Celia Booth

**FRIDAY 17 JANUARY 10am.** Online Coffee. (Link will be sent out or contact Les or Judith).

### **SUNDAY 26 JANUARY**

**10.30am. Morning Worship** led by Rev. Gillian Robertson.

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

**SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2025 10.30am** Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Rev. Mark Godfrey.

**TUESDAYS. 10.30am to 1pm.** Wesley Wheelie Welcome Café. Come and join us for a tea or coffee, and a chat. Cuppa soup, sausage rolls and toasted teacakes served after 12.

*Mary left one of her gloves behind at the last meeting of the Fellowship group and Les returned it and received this message of thanks:*

Dear Les, Thank you so much for returning my mitten its partner is delighted to be reunited. I have had them since 1985 and they are almost 40 years old and have never been parted before.

Thank again. Love Mary x

## INTRODUCING RICHARD



Richard Cooper is the new chief executive of Harrogate Homeless Project (HHP). The project rents Wesley House and the Lower Hall which it uses as offices and a day centre respectively.

Richard came to Harrogate in 1995 to work as a campaign organizer for the local Conservative Party. He moved here from Huddersfield, where his parents still live, after gaining a degree in Communications Studies at Sheffield Hallam University.

Almost as soon as he moved to Harrogate Richard volunteered with Harrogate Homeless Project. Back in the 1990s it was a much smaller charity having been founded by local churches a few years before. (See p 6). There were just eight rooms in a hostel on Bower Street.

In 1999 Richard was elected to Harrogate Borough Council and remained a councillor for 24 years representing Harrogate town centre where he still lives. In 2001 his day job changed when he became the Communications Manager for the National Association of Theatre Nurses (NATN). At that time NATN held one of the largest annual conferences in the town.

*Introducing Richard continued.*

When Andrew Jones became our Member of Parliament in 2010 he asked Richard to run his constituency office which he did until just before the 2024 General Election. During that time Richard was elected as Leader of Harrogate Borough Council. He remained in the position until the council was abolished in 2023 having held the position longer than any of his predecessors.

As a councilor Richard was able to continue supporting Harrogate Homeless Project cementing a relationship between the council and the charity. Over that period HHP grew so that now it has 38 rooms in a variety of accommodation to help people take the journey from homelessness through to a stable tenancy, healthy lifestyles and positive relationships. The project also runs the Springboard day centre which provides a meal to clients and former clients alongside clinical support and welfare services.

After six months as HHP's chief executive and nearly 30 years as a volunteer Richard is still learning more about the charity and homelessness every day.

He commented: 'The issues surrounding homelessness are many and complex. The work HHP do is, and needs to be, so much more than providing a roof over someone's head important though that is. We try and help clients with the root causes of their homelessness – addiction, poor mental and physical health, relationship breakdowns and much more besides.

It is a privilege to be part of the team that is helping people take life-changing journeys from the lowest points in their lives.'

*Thank you to Richard and we look forward to working with him as he gets settled in*

#### **HHP VISION.**

**'Our vision is to make sure nobody in the Harrogate District has to sleep rough and that those experiencing homelessness have all the support they need to move towards independent living.'**

## HARROGATE HOMELESS PROJECT TIMELINE

**1989.** Young men were noticed sleeping rough on the Stray.

Wesley member Nancy Stuart, found that more vulnerable people were squatting in the abandoned Adelphi Hotel on Cold Bath Road.

Rev. Gordon Lister (Minister at Wesley Chapel), provided emergency support to these men. He managed to collect a £1500 donation from his Church to secure deposits on flats and bedsits.

**Christmas 1989.** The Baptist Church opened up a temporary shelter for the homeless, providing a bed, a bath, food and advice.

**1990.** The Methodist Church, the Salvation Army and the Harrogate Theatre realised that homelessness was a serious issue affecting Harrogate.

Churches Together' under the presidency of Doug Baker established a Housing Aid Group.

**March 1991.** Harrogate Homeless Project was established as a limited company and registered charity liaising with other agencies to become part of a growing network of support for the homeless.

**October 1991.** Acquisition of No. 7 Bower Street – a new overnight emergency shelter for the homeless.

**1992.** First client has moved into a house of his own.

**Christmas 1992.** Wesley Chapel provides the first Christmas dinner for the homeless.

**1994.** Acquisition of No. 8 Bower Street. The overnight shelter and supported house meant that 12 people could be accommodated at a time compared with 6 in 1991.

**20 October 2009.** Launch of the Springboard Day Centre..

**For more information and up to date news visit**

*<https://www.harrogate-homeless-project.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/HHP-Impact-Report-2024-web.pdf>*

## A STORY OF TWO FAMILIES

On Wednesday 18 December I attended the funeral in Otley of Sybil Shepherd, a longstanding family friend. The friendship of our two families went back to WWI. Frank, Sybil's father met Arthur, my grandfather in the trenches and their friendship forged there was to last their lifetimes and beyond.

A strong bond between them was their faith, Frank was a Baptist and Arthur a Methodist. Despite the distance between their homes, Frank lived in Yorkshire and Arthur in Norfolk, they continued to meet regularly for the rest of their lives and this included their families. These meetings were interrupted by WWII, but when petrol rationing eased they met up again, firstly at a half way point in Lincoln.

Both had an only child a daughter. Arthur became father to Evelyn, my mother, in 1920. Frank became father to Sybil in 1944. In 1950 Sybil was bridesmaid at my mother's wedding in north Cambridgeshire. After the two men died their families continued to meet up. My moving to Harrogate in the 1980s made it easier for our families to keep in touch. This link is now at end. Sybil had no children, neither have my brother or I. But it's been a good innings from WWI to 2024!

**Janet Allen**





## PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT MINISTER

Dear friends

I am writing with Christmas greetings to each and every church and member in the Nidd Valley Circuit. We have had an interesting year as a circuit particularly with my extended time off due to my broken arm. I did note at the Circuit Meeting how grateful I have been for the prayers and support of so many around the circuit. I have also been thrilled to return to a circuit that is facing up to the difficult but necessary conversations around the future structure of the circuit – it has been the greatest joy to have people say back to me unprompted that ‘the status quo is not an option’!

There is one further change that is another reason for my writing a pastoral letter. Many of you will have noted that our District Chair, Rev Leslie Newton, had a difficult time in 2023 with his health which has continued throughout this year. He is clearly on the mend but during this time it has also become clear how much the role of District Chair has grown over the last 5-10 years. Some of you will know that at Synod in May 2023 I was appointed Deputy Chair and during Leslie’s absence at the beginning of 2024 I deputised for him at several occasions including presiding over Presbyteral Synod.

Many Districts are now coming to the realisation that the District Chair role is actually bigger than one person can cover and have had someone officially stationed part-time into a Deputy Chair role. The District Leadership Team in our District are not yet at the point of being ready to do this but they have agreed to the exploration of this work through formalising part of the Deputy Chair’s role. So from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 I will be offering 2 to 3 sessions a week (a session being a morning, afternoon or evening) on a flexible basis to alleviate some of the workload that Leslie carries. This is done alongside the two Assistant Chairs who have specific remits but who cannot in all cases deputise as they have not been appointed by Synod.

*Continued*



*Pastoral letter from the Superintendent Minister continued*

Obviously this then has an impact on my workload. Do not worry I have been clear as part of the work around setting all of this up that I simply haven't the capacity to take on more without looking at my own workload. So as part of this, again from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025, Clair Webster who works alongside me at Trinity and Pannal will be given an additional 6 hours a week, paid for by the District. In my superintendency role I will be joined, again on a flexible basis, by Mrs Heather Shipman who many of you will know is the Lead Local Pastor for the District having looked after churches and circuits for many years now. She will be the 'Local Pastor for the Superintendency' so she may appear at things in my stead in the coming months around the circuit. There may be some pieces of work I am able to hand over for the period of time but I do ask that I am kept up to date with things either through Heather or directly. Heather and I will work side-by-side on the things she does for the circuit.

None of this affects my work on the Island of Flourishing Circuit Reorganisation work nor my passion to see the Nidd Valley Circuit continue on its path of growth into the future and all of this is subject to a review after 6 months. We will be asking around to see how people are finding everything. My hope is that the circuit and the churches I am connected with will see little effect as we have spent time putting in place people who can support in my absence. I'm also keen to remind myself and everyone that I passionately believe in the fact that Methodism is a lay-led movement; as a Methodist presbyter my role is to enable those who will be here long after I have moved on to be able to continue to grow in love and faith.

I had hoped to make this announcement at the Additional Circuit Meeting in November but not all the pieces were quite in place and I didn't want to make a half-announcement leaving people to be concerned. Ultimately I am still stationed as the Superintendent Minister of the Nidd Valley Circuit, subject to the discipline of the Conference but I do ask for your prayers for Heather, Clair, Leslie and myself as we seek to make this small change work for everyone and for the glory of God. Thank you for your understanding and do keep in touch if there are ways we can make things work even better. Yours in Christ





## DESERT ISLAND DISCS

*This month Eliza shares her desert island discs.*

I just want to say that I am certainly not from a musical family background, my childhood introduction to music was watching Top of The Pops every week and listening to the Luxemburg radio station. The music I would choose to take with me to a desert Island is a bit of a mixed bag but all have their own relevance and importance to me.

*Denis - Blondie.* Not long after Ed and I were married this song was released and although the name is incorrect the lyrics described exactly how I felt about Ed and so even now every time I hear this it still makes my heart miss a beat and I can't help but smile and sing along.

*Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves - Cher.* When our boys were little we went to Scarborough for a week in the school holidays every year for our summer holiday. We always stayed in the same little Guest House but we discovered a Hotel nearby that had a large family/games room that was open to non-residents so we spent some time relaxing there and watching the boys playing. One of the attractions was a juke box that played a record for just 10p per record and the boys used to play this song practically on repeat, they absolutely loved it, so every time I hear this it reminds me of those very happy family holidays.

*Wind Beneath My Wings - Brass Band Version.* When our 2 boys were at senior school they were both in the school's brass band and one of the tunes they played was this one. Then and even now when I hear this played, the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end and the proud feeling I felt watching the boys playing comes flooding back.

*Bridge Over Troubled Water - Simon & Garfunkel.* Whenever I hear this song I am reminded of the numerous times in my life when I felt lost and vulnerable but always knowing that there was someone out there who would look out for me eventually realising that it was Jesus.

*Continued*

*Eliza's Desert Island Discs continued.*

*Dancing on the Ceiling - Lionel Richie.* I have chosen this tune purely and simply because it is such an upbeat song and it really does make you want to get up and dance. It takes me right back to the 70's when we used to do just that.

*Tears in Heaven - Eric Clapton.* This song was written by Eric Clapton when his 3 year old son accidentally died and is extremely moving. Whenever I hear it I think of my own meeting with Jesus and wonder just what he would say 'if I saw him in Heaven'.

*Nimrod - Elgar.* Now that I am a 'lot' older my choice of radio listening is now Classic FM and as a result absolutely love this tune whenever it is played, which is quite frequently. It is very relaxing and makes me stop whatever I am doing and just listen!

*I the Lord of Sea and Sky - Daniel Schutte.* There is no way I could go all the way to a desert Island without taking this tune with me. Over the years as a Christian this song has been God's main route to talk to me especially if I have asked him if I am where he wants me to be. I would like to think that when I played it on my desert Island he would be saying that I am exactly where he wants me to be at that moment in time!

## **Eliza Walton.**

*Thank you Eliza for your lovely choices and your stories to go with them. D.I.D is always my favourite part of editing Focus.*

*Next month Deacon Gary will be our castaway.*

*'I have my books  
And my poetry to protect me;  
I am shielded in my armor,  
Hiding in my room, safe within my womb.  
I touch no one and no one touches me.  
I am a rock, I am an island.'*     *Simon and Garfunkel's Greatest Hits*

*Lynne received a letter from Sarah Burton (nee Roberts) for inclusion in Focus. A lot of folk will remember Sarah fondly and it was lovely to see Sarah and Charlie recently at Wesley. They were delighted to be there and very much enjoyed the service which was led by our own minister Rev. Gordon Hay.*

Sarah writes:

Martin and I moved into the Master's Lodge at Sidney Sussex College in Cambridge on 1st September 2023 and what a rollercoaster ride it has been!

As Master of the college Martin is responsible for overseeing the overall life and strategy of the college and he also spends time interacting with the University and with students, alumni and donors.

The college was founded in 1596 by Lady Frances Sidney who was a widow, a devout Puritan and an influential person in the Royal Court. The Master's Lodge is situated in the original 1596 building. The photograph right shows Hall Court with our front door on the right!



The photograph left shows the view of the Master's garden from the back of the Lodge.

*Letter from Sarah continued.*



The photograph left shows the “Picture Gallery” as it is known which features portraits of (former student) Oliver Cromwell, Mrs Cromwell (his mother or possibly wife - nobody is sure) and several of the early Masters.

Martin’s study is off this hall and so the Lodge is usually busy with Fellows (the academic dons who are trustees of the college and who teach and supervise the students) meeting with Martin, visitors and students who, from time to time, come to an event such as a talk or pre-dinner drinks in the Audit room (a large reception room) which can be glimpsed in the photo.

As well as attending College dinners and functions with Martin, I am still working (very part time) as a nurse with the homeless at a specialist GP practice in Cambridge . I have also become an Independent Custody Visitor, a voluntary role with the Police and Crime Commission in which trained volunteers from within the community make unannounced, regular visits to Police Custody Suites.

All this seems a long way from Harrogate, Wesley, Harrogate Operatic and the Gilbert & Sullivan Society. Martin often says ‘I wish Geoff and Peggy could have visited; what fun we would have had’ But we remember them often, as we remember Wesley, with much love.

**Sarah Burton (nee Roberts).**

*Dear Sarah*

*Thank you so much for keeping in touch with your Wesley family and for the interesting description of your life in Cambridge. The photographs are lovely. It is good to hear from you . Keep in touch.*

*Love and all good wishes from your friends at Wesley.*

## LUNCHTIME RECITALS

2024/2025 season

This season, we are pleased to be able to take card and contactless payments on the door (£12).

## LUNCHTIME RECITALS

**Monday, 6 January 2025 (1pm)** Ashley Riches (bass-baritone), Joseph Middleton (piano). The programme will include songs by Schubert, Brahms, Richard Strauss, Wolf, Fauré, Ravel and Howells. It is our Leeds Lieder recital, Joseph Middleton being Director of the Leeds Lieder Festival (5th to 12th April 2025).

Monday, 3 February 2025 (1pm) artist to be confirmed

Monday, 3 March 2025 (1pm) artist to be confirmed

Monday, 7 April 2025 (1pm) Jess Dandy (contralto), Simon Lepper (piano)

## AFTERNOON CONCERT

**Saturday 18 January 2025 at 3pm.** Ariel Lanyi, piano. Prizewinner at the 2021 Leeds International Piano Competition. Schubert Sonata in G Major, D.894, Bartok: 15 Hungarian Peasant Songs Sz.71. Chopin: Sonata No. 3 in B minor. Op.58/ Tickets £18. Free for age 26 and under.

## EVENING CONCERT

**Saturday 15 February 2025 7.30pm.** Jean-Efflam Bavouzet and his wife Andréa Nemezc two-piano recital. Their programme is still to be confirmed, but we're excited to announce that they will be playing on not just one, but two Yamaha grand pianos. This concert is likely to sell out so we strongly encourage you to buy tickets in advance Tickets £20. Free for age 26 and under.

For more information about these concerts, please contact [a.hitchen81@gmail.com](mailto:a.hitchen81@gmail.com) or 01423-883618,



## AROUND THE CIRCUIT

**Bilton Methodist Amblers.** The next walk is Saturday 11 January All walks start on the car park of Bilton Area Methodist Church where we meet to arrange transport at 9.30am. 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, T: 524634  
. E: [janetallen09@btinternet.com](mailto:janetallen09@btinternet.com)  
Future walks: Saturday 8 February, Saturday 8 March.

### **Bilton Area Methodist Church.**

Saturday 4 January 10 -11.30 am Coffee Morning

Wednesday 15 January 12.15 pm Lunch Club

Thursday 16 January 2.30 pm Prayer Meeting at 1 Winksley Grove

### **Gracious Street**

Saturday 4 January 08.45-10.15am Men's Breakfast with Nick Garrett speaking on Community outreach in action.

Monday, 6 January 7pm Gracious Street Youth Group (fortnightly group resumes).

Wednesday 6 January 11.15-11.45am Pause for Thought and Prayer (weekly group resumes).

Friday 10 January 10am -11.30am Playbox (weekly group resumes).

Saturday 11 January 10am -11.30am Who Let the Dads Out (monthly group resumes).

Saturday, 11 January 5pm Family Film night.

Monday 13 January 11.00am-12.00pm Fun & Games with Seniors (weekly group resumes)

*Continued*

*Around the Circuit continued.*

## **Gracious Street**

Monday 13 January 7pm-8.30pm CAMEO (fortnightly group resumes).

Tuesday 14 January 12.30-1.30pm Lunch Link (weekly group resumes).

Thursday 23 January 10.30-11.30am Book Club (monthly group resumes).

Saturday 25 January 10am -12noon. Coffee Morning

Monday 27 January 1pm - 3pm Digitally Connected: This month includes a drop-in clinic (come to us with any question relating to computers or getting online – bring your gadget or borrow one of ours) plus an informative briefing on “Fall Prevention at Home: Fun Tips & Tech Tricks to Stay Safe”.

Tuesday 28 January 2.30-4.30pm Memory Lane Café (fortnightly group resumes)

Bridge Café. Mondays 9.30am—11.30am. Gracious Street and UBU. Hot & cold drinks.

Tuesdays 10.00 - 11.30 in conjunction with Harrogate College

Wednesdays 09.30 - 11.30 in conjunction with Gracious Street & Henshaws *Hot & cold drinks, teacakes, scones*

Fridays 10.00 - 2.00pm - Resurrected Bites pay as you feel café  
*Hot & cold drinks, breakfast & cooked lunches*  
*Last orders at 1.30pm*

## **Harlow Hill.**

Coffee Morning. Every Monday from 10am to 11.30am. Everybody welcome.

Little Beans Playgroup. Parents and toddlers playgroup. Every Wednesday Morning. Drop in between 10am and 11.30am for play, coffee and a chat. £3 per family.



*Around the Circuit continued*

## **Killinghall**

25 January, 10.30-12noon, Coffee Morning.

Saturday 8 Feb 9.30am-12.30pm. Save the date: Foundation Safeguarding course at Killinghall on Please share with anyone who may need to sign up- many thanks.

## **Pannal**

Tuesday 14 January 2.30pm. Community tea.

Sunday 19 January 10am. A special service to mark the church's 120th anniversary

## **Park Grove.**

Saturday 25 January 10am until 12 noon – Coffee Morning with Rev Jackie Betts

## **Scotton**

Scotton Methodist Chapel starts its 200th birthday celebrations with the covenant service on Sunday 19th January 2025 at 10am. Service to be taken by Rev Diane Hicks and Peter Whittaker. All welcome.

## **Starbeck**

Sunday 12 January 2.30pm. Sunday afternoon concert. Come along and hear Echo42, Yorkshires longest running big band. it will be a great upbeat start for 2025! Adult entry is £10, teenagers £5, Under 12s Free. For further information visit <https://www.facebook.com/StarbeckMethodistChurch> or email [Starbeckfff@gmail.com](mailto:Starbeckfff@gmail.com).

Saturday 8 February 7.30pm. St. John Fishers Catholic High School. The music department st SJFCHS is outstanding and we expect this event to draw a large audience. Head of music Craig Ratcliffe.

## Trinity.

Every Thursday we will open our doors for a time of prayer at 10am. You will receive a warm beverage on arrival so you can enjoy a time of friendship and relaxation before prayer. The meeting will either take place in the prayer room or in the hall depending on the weather.

## Woodlands.

Saturday 18 January 8.30am. Men's Breakfast: Come and enjoy a bacon butty and social. Contact Mark Harby [markharby@me.com](mailto:markharby@me.com)

Toast Community cafe every Friday morning in term time. Everyone welcome from 8.45-10.00am. We're a pay-as-you-feel café serving tea, coffee, toast and chat. Unplug, Reconnect, Refill.

Lunch Club Fridays in term time. Would you enjoy a home-cooked 3 course lunch in good company? Get in touch on 07966 715215. Book your place today.

Craft Group. Alternate Thursday mornings, 7th and 21st November 10.00-11.30am Bring your own crafts or join in with group project. Refreshments and chat.

Community Garden (behind the church) open to all every day.



## Upcoming Events

- 18 January** 10am – 12noon. Lecture – Arun Arora
- 22 February** 10am – 12noon Seminar – Assisted Dying.
- 22 March** 10:am – 12noon Lecture – Nicola Slee
- 12 April** 10am - 12noon Seminar – Being the Body of Christ

Lectures are held at St Mark's Church, Harrogate. Seminars are held at Woodlands Methodist Church.

For more information, and how to book visit <https://hstm.org.uk/>

## REGIONAL SAFEGUARDING ONLINE CONFERENCE.



# EVERY STORY MATTERS

**The theme chosen for the Regional Safeguarding Conference this year is based around the Justice, Dignity and Solidarity (JDS) strategy which was adopted by the Methodist Conference of 2021.**

### **Stories of Journeys - 3th February at 1:30pm**

Where have we come from as a church? Who have been the pioneers, what lessons have been learned from where it went wrong.

Led by Revd Helen Cameron

### **Stories of Justice - 4th February at 7:30pm**

Coordinated by the young people from our districts, sharing stories that have come from 3Generate and the church priorities.

### **Stories of Dignity - 5th February at 10am**

The lived reality of inclusion in the church. What a safe space feels like and what it feels like when church is not safe.

Led by Pauline Jackson

### **Stories of Solidarity - 6th February at 1:30pm**

Examples of good practice, stories of where things are working well and the positive impact of finding a safe space in church.

Led by Revd Mark Rowland

<https://2025ourstories.eventbrite.co.uk>

## The story behind the carol.

In 1847, a French parish priest asked a local poet to write a Christmas carol, which quickly spread throughout France. The hauntingly beautiful 'O, Holy Night' was an instant hit, but the French church soon banned it when they discovered the author was a socialist and the composer Jewish. But people continued to sing it, and in 1871, on Christmas Eve during the Franco-Prussian War, a French soldier ran out of his trench unarmed and began to sing this carol. Silence fell and when he was finished, a German soldier came out and sang a favorite German carol. A Christmas ceasefire followed.

<https://www.museumofthebible.org/magazine/featured/christmas-carols-stories-of-your-favorite-classics>



*Did you know that Wordsworth also wrote a poem about the snowdrop?*

### **A SNOWDROP by William Wordsworth**

Lone Flower, hemmed in with snows and white as they  
But hardier far, once more I see thee bend  
Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,  
Like an unbidden guest. Though day by day,  
Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops, waylay  
The rising sun, and on the plains descend;  
Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a friend  
Whose zeal outruns his promise! Blue-eyed May  
Shall soon behold this border thickly set  
With bright jonquils, their odours lavishing  
On the soft west-wind and his frolic peers;  
Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,  
Chaste Snowdrop, venturous harbinger of Spring,  
And pensive monitor of fleeting years!

## **The Year by Ella Wheeler Wilcox**

What can be said in New Year rhymes,  
That's not been said a thousand times?

The new years come, the old years go,  
We know we dream, we dream we know

We rise up laughing with the light,  
We lie down weeping with the night

We hug the world until it stings,  
We curse it then and sigh for wings.

We live, we love, we woo, we wed,  
We wreath our prides, we sheet our dead.

We laugh, we weep, we hope, we fear,  
And that's the burden of a year.

*From A Poem for Every Winter Day*

## **For Old Time's Sake**

The song Auld Lang Syne originated as a poem, but it probably wasn't written by Robert Burns as is commonly believed—at least not entirely. The poet was simply the first person to write down an old Scottish folk song (it bears more than a passing resemblance to "Old Long Syne," a ballad that was printed by James Watson in 1711). Whether it was transcribed or co-authored, it's safe to say that the 'Auld Lang Syne' we know today is some combination of an old poem and Burns' creative input.

Burns sent a copy of the poem to a friend in 1788 and later he contributed it to the Scots Musical Museum. Five years later, Burns wrote to James Johnson, who was assembling a book of old Scottish songs: 'The following song, an old song, of the olden times, and which has never been in print, nor even in manuscript until I took it down from an old man.'

It's unclear whether Johnson linked Burns to the song in his credits, but by the time the book was published in 1796, the poet was dead. He'd never know that those words would eventually help secure his own cultural immortality. <https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/73078/brief-history-auld-lang-syne>

## CHALKING THE DOOR

Chalking the door is a Christian Epiphanytide tradition used to bless one's home, which originated in medieval Europe.

Either on Twelfth Night (5 January), the twelfth day of Christmastide and eve of the feast of the Epiphany, or on Epiphany Day (6 January) itself, many Christians (including Anglicans, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics, among others) write on their doors or lintels with chalk in a pattern such as "20 C M B 25 (with the sign of a cross intersperse between the letters). The numbers in this example refer to the calendar year 2025 and the crosses to Christ. The letters C, M, and B stand for the traditional names of the biblical Magi (Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar), or alternatively for the Latin blessing *Christus mansionem benedicat* ('May Christ bless this house'), or IIIK referring to the three kings.

Chalking the door is done most commonly on Epiphany Day itself. However, it can be done on any day of the Epiphany season. In some localities, the chalk used to write the Epiphanytide pattern is blessed by a Christian priest or minister on Epiphany Day, then taken home to write the pattern.

The Christian custom of chalking the door has a biblical precedent as the Israelites in the Old Testament marked their doors in order to be saved from death; likewise, the Epiphanytide practice serves to protect Christian homes from evil spirits until the next Epiphany Day, at which time the custom is repeated. Families also perform this act to represent the hospitality of the Holy Family to the Magi (and all Gentiles); it thus serves as a house blessing to invite the presence of God in one's home.

In 20th century Poland, the practice of chalking the door continued among believers as a way of asserting their Christian identity, despite the Eastern Bloc's state atheism and anti-religious campaigns.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chalking\\_the\\_door](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chalking_the_door)



## PRAYER CORNER

### Epiphany prayer for use at home.

Visit, Lord, we pray, this home with the joy of your presence. Bless all who live here with the gift of your love. Help us share your care and compassion with one another, to make this a place of welcome and strength, of blessing and friendship, that all who pass through this doorway may find a hearth and home lit by the light of love.

May we grow with Christ in truth and wisdom, as we learn to follow in his steps, and take on his yoke, that we may be blessed by his grace, and find refreshment for ourselves, soul and body, as we walk in his light into the adventure of this new year. We make our prayer through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

<https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/epiphany-blessing-of-the-chalk-2025.php>

### A prayer that we see the world through God's eyes

If we see the world through your eyes, Lord,  
then we see a vision of our world as your love would have it:  
a world where all who are weak are protected and none go hungry;  
a world where your riches of creation are shared for everyone to  
enjoy them;  
a world where mutual respect is expressed between different races  
and cultures and harmony descends;  
a world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love.  
Give us the inspiration and courage to build it how you see it Lord!  
That all may praise together and the only power exerted is the power  
of your love. Amen.

*Gwynn Bamford, supernumerary deacon, Bromsgrove and Redditch Circuit*

May the mind of Christ my  
Saviour  
Live in me from day to day,  
By His love and pow'r controlling  
All I do and say.

May the peace of Christ my  
Saviour  
Rule my life in every thing,  
That I may be calm to comfort  
Sick and sorrowing.

*StF 504, v 1 and 3*



## SleepOut 4 Homelessness

January 18th 2025

For further details please contact:

admin@yorkshiremethodist.org or victoria@methodistyouth.org.uk



**Want to help support charities that are tackling homelessness?**

Why not get involved in #Sleepout25 by:



Don't want to sleep outside, not a problem at all - join us in prayer, boycott your bed by sleeping on the sofa or in your car, or donate!

Or you can join us at our indoor (for families) and outdoor campsite at Lidgett Methodist Church in York. The campsite opens at 7pm and we will be joined by representatives from each of the charities.

Email [admin@yorkshiremethodist.org](mailto:admin@yorkshiremethodist.org) for more information



This January we're supporting:



Donate here!