

# The Benefice of Upper Wensleydale 'Church in the Home'

December 2024 and January 2025

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Edition Number

## From the Vicarage

### 'Angels from the realms of Glory'

It's a season for **Angels**. As Advent progresses and Christmas approaches, the display of angels around us will increase in number. They may be hanging from a tree, adorning festive table mats, candle holders, shop windows or street light displays. They may feature on Christmas Cards or gift tags. We will sing of them in Carols or be entertained by them in the annual Nativity Play ... they really are *everywhere* and I always find this a comforting reminder of a great spiritual truth.

The word angel comes from the Greek word '**Angelos**' meaning a messenger or a courier. Angels are not *random* interventions in life but the directed and purposeful appearances of God's messengers. The Bible teaches us that angels intervene in the affairs of nations, that God uses them to deliver messages or judgement, that they can guide, comfort, challenge, protect and fight on God's instructions.

Published in 1566, Martin Luther's book '**Table Talk**' states that: '*An angel is a spiritual creature without a body created by God for the service of Christendom and the Church.*' They featured in announcing the first arrival of Jesus Christ eg Luke 1:26, Luke 2:9&13 and we're told of how they will certainly feature in his glorious return: Matt.25:31, Rev.5:11.

There are plenty of autobiographical accounts of people having met or experienced encounters with Angels. Indeed, you may have one yourself. I remember one in particular relating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century South Pacific Missionary John G Paton. He recalled in his memoirs a conversation he had later had with some natives who were intent on murdering him, his wife and everyone else at their missionary station. After having completely surrounded the encampment and with the missionary's lives in his hand, the chief gave the surprising order for his warriors to withdraw and return to their village. He later explained to Paton the reason why. He realized that he was hopelessly outnumbered by the 'hundreds of men dressed in shining clothes with drawn swords in their hands'.

*'The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him'* Ps.34:7

So; as we take in the varied display of angels this Christmas, I hope that we might reflect upon their spiritual reality. That they are servants of God, fulfilling His will, reflecting His glory, providing comfort and protection and, above all else; calling us to **Worship**.

I look forward to seeing you all at the very many different services and events in the weeks that lie ahead as we do precisely that. **Happy Christmas!**

*'Hark the Herald Angels sing, Glory to the new born King!'*

The next 'Gathering' will be on **Sunday 1 December**

10:30am at St Margaret's in Hawes



# Toy Service

An Opportunity to **Bless a Family in Crisis** this Christmas  
Bring along a new unwrapped gift for the Salvation Army to distribute

We look forward to welcoming you there!  
*Be a Blessing – Be Encouraged – Be Church*



## Wensleydale Filling Station

Thornborough Hall, Leyburn

Friday 13th December 2024

**A Christmas Celebration – come and join the worship**



## ADVENT?



For many Christians unfamiliar with the liturgical year, there may be some confusion surrounding the meaning of the Advent season. Some people may know that the Advent season focuses on expectation and think that it serves as an anticipation of Christ's birth in the season leading up to Christmas. This is part of the story, but there's more to Advent.

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "Arrival." It is believed that during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the January feast of Epiphany. During this season of preparation, Christians would spend 40 days in penance, prayer, and fasting to prepare for this celebration. Originally, there was little connection between Advent and Christmas.

By the 6<sup>th</sup> century, however, Roman Christians had tied Advent to the coming of Christ. The "arrival" they had in mind however, was not Christ's first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but rather his second as the judge of the world. It was not until the Middle Ages that the Advent season was explicitly linked to Christ's first coming at Christmas. Today, the season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. It's a season of expectation and preparation. A time of looking back on the promises of God that were fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ but also in looking forward to the promises that are yet to come and of His return in glory. It's so easy for us to become lost in the busyness of the preparation for Christmas Day that we can forget these things and lose sight of the joy that there is in walking closely with the Lord along the way. So this Advent, why not plan in some essential down time and enjoy a 'Coffee with the Lord?' Put on some music, light a candle and spend some time with the one who loves you and longs to spend some quality time *with* you.



Come and celebrate **Christmas Day** with your family at **St Mary & St John's Church, Hardraw**.  
The Benefice Family Communion Celebration will be led by Rev Dave and take place at 10.30am

Our last service of **2024** will be a said Communion and will take place at 9.30am at **St Margaret's Church, Hawes**.

## Askrigg Christmas Tree Festival

14-31<sup>st</sup> December

The Christmas Tree Festival is back with trees inside and outside of the church!

The Festival will begin with a Concert on 14<sup>th</sup> December from 7pm given by the Askrigg Ladies who Sing for Pleasure and the East Witton Male Voice Choir



## The *MAGIC* of Christmas



*Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December*  
*2-3.30pm*  
*St Margaret's Church, Hawes*

*With Malcolm Carruthers (organ)*  
*Amy Cockett (vocals)*  
*The Askrigg Handbells*  
*& Rev Dave*

*Free admission - Donations to Salvation Army Christmas Appeal*

*Festive Refreshments available*  
*Sponsorship from Saputo*

## Christmas

What's it all about?

Starting Tuesday December 3rd  
9:15-10:00am

Three short Bible investigations

Meet the Ancestors

Meet the Mother

Meet the Witnesses

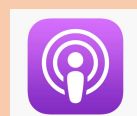
In St Margaret's

'The West End' - Meeting Room  
*We'll have the kettle on!*



Catch up on the week's bible teaching ... or listen again!

'Rev Dave from Wensleydale'



Apple and Spotify Podcasts

You are invited to a

## *Christmas Memorial*



**St Oswald's Church, Askrigg  
on Sunday 1st December  
from 2pm-4pm**

The sense of loss that we feel through bereavement is often intensified at this time of year. We would like to invite you to an opportunity to remember your loved one in a seasonal way.

- Light a Candle in their memory
- Leave a named Star upon the Tree
- Listen to the names read out
- Have some sacred space to remember the ones we love but have lost
- Take a time of quiet reflection and prayer

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN UPPER WENSLEYDALE

## **Taizé Service**

AT

**GAYLE CHAPEL**

**12 noon TUESDAY**

**10 DECEMBER 2024**



The event will start with a hearty soup and bread lunch followed by the service itself at  
1pm

**EVERYONE WELCOME**



## *One Christmas*

One Christmas hangs in memory  
like lamps in a deep wood,  
the year the village band chugged up our hill  
in an old van  
and set up over the road in a gateway.  
Their forest green jackets were snubbed  
with silver,  
Cornets and Tubas slicing the dark like moons,  
and what looked like flowers,  
white flowers blooming in winter,  
turned out to be sheep  
jockeying for position as the word got round.  
Later I went out for coal and heard floating up  
from Keld, 'Away in a Manger',  
misty on the night air.  
The sheep hadn't budged from the gate but the  
flock had spread,  
a great wing over the fell as it stood there;  
Listening  
Stone still  
Waiting for the next move.

**Ann Pilling,**

HOME FIELD, Arrowhead Press, 2008.

# Advent Wreaths

The Advent wreath first appeared in Germany in 1839. A Lutheran minister working at a mission for children created a wreath out of the wheel of a cart. He placed twenty small red candles and four large white candles inside the ring. The red candles were lit on weekdays and the four white candles were lit on Sundays.

Eventually, the Advent wreath was created out of evergreens, symbolizing everlasting life in the midst of winter and death. The circle reminds us of God's unending love and the eternal life He makes possible. Advent candles are often nestled in the evergreen wreath. Additional decorations, like holly and berries, are sometimes added. Their red colour points ahead to Jesus' sacrifice and death. Pinecones can symbolize the new life that Jesus brings through His resurrection. The most common Advent candle tradition involves four candles. A new candle is lit on each of the four Sundays before Christmas. Different colours may be used to represent something different, although traditions vary eg Purple or Red for the Patriarchs, the Prophets and John the Baptist with a rose colour for Mary on week 4. A white candle is usually used for Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

## A Christmas Poem

And somewhere,  
A young boy lies blanket wrapped upon a  
pavement.  
And somewhere,  
A widowed woman stares at an empty  
chair.  
And somewhere,  
A soldier prepares for battle.  
And somewhere,  
A malnourished child flicks flies from her  
hair.

Yet we believe, the carols' message can  
make a difference.  
There will be light!  
There will be hope!  
There will be joy!

We are not wrapping fairy lights around  
the planet's darkness.  
A glorious dawn appeared for all with this  
baby boy,  
It's a real chance, not a fantasy we are  
proclaiming.  
Jesus, life and resurrection, a salvation  
does it give.  
His birth, his sacrifice, his Spirit calls us,  
The Christmas message all the year to live.

David Wells

## Welcome to our World

*Tears are falling, hearts are breaking  
How we need to hear from God  
You've been promised,  
we've been waiting  
Welcome Holy Child*

*Hope that you don't mind our manger  
How I wish we would have known  
But long-awaited Holy stranger  
Make yourself at home*

*Bring your peace into our violence  
Bid our hungry souls be filled  
Word now breaking heaven's silence  
Welcome to our world*

*Fragile finger sent to heal us  
Tender brow prepared for thorn  
Tiny heart whose blood will save us  
Unto us is born*

*So, wrap our injured flesh around you  
Breathe our air and walk our road  
Rob our sin and make us holy  
Perfect son of God  
Most perfect son of God*

Chris Rice

## What resolutions make for a Happy New Year?

Earth moves in a squashed circle round the sun and we notice plants grow up and die back in response to the changing weather. At what point are we into a new year?

- Many Jews celebrate New Year in September with family fun in a festival called Rosh Hashana but also a very serious day of Atonement for repenting of sin.
- Churches like our C of E begin a new liturgical year on Advent Sunday in November or December, giving us four weeks to prepare for the birth of Jesus at Christmas.
- The Chinese celebrate New Year by the new moon that appears between January 21 and February 20 and they pay homage to their ancestors who have died.
- The Inland Revenue starts a new tax year in April related to the date farmers used to hire their labourers on annual contracts.

Our New Year on January 1<sup>st</sup> was left behind in Britain by the Romans along with traces of their Latin language but it fits very well into modern life coming exactly a week after the excitement and exhaustion of Christmas Day. We have seen a lot of our family members and we have caught up with the happy and the sad things that have been happening for them. Now, as we write 2025 on a page somewhere, we are encouraged to make some promises to ourselves about things we would like to change – things to get rid of or things to introduce.

Will we be able to keep these promises? On our own, probably not but we don't have to be on our own. We have the best chance if we keep our minds fixed on a loving God who understands our weaknesses and who wants us to keep on growing to be more like him day by day and year by year.

*Vera Sinton*





### Covenant Prayer for the New Year










I am no longer my own but yours.  
Your will, not mine, be done in all things,  
wherever you may place me,  
In all that I do and in all that I may endure;  
when there is work for me and when there is none;  
when I am troubled and when I am at peace.  
Your will be done:  
when I am valued and when I am disregarded,  
when I find fulfilment and when it is lacking;  
when I have all things and when I have nothing.  
I willingly offer all that I have and am to serve you,  
as and where you choose.  
Glorious God, you are mine and I am yours.  
May it be so for ever.  
Let this covenant now made on earth  
be fulfilled in heaven.  
**Amen**

### New Year prayer

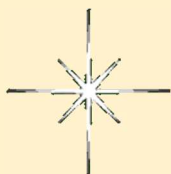
Eternal God... we give you thanks for  
bringing us through the changes of time  
to the beginning of another year.  
Forgive our lack of love and impatience.  
Perfect our faith. Let the radiance of  
your Spirit renew our lives, warm our  
hearts and give light to our minds that  
we may walk into and through this New  
Year with the Hope and Joy you bring us  
through your son, Christ our Lord, who  
is the beginning and the end and reigns  
with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
One God, now and forever more.  
**Amen**


  
**Upper Wensleydale Benefice Services**  
**December 2024**

	St Mary & St John's, Hardraw 9.00am	St Margaret's, Hawes 10.30am	St Oswald's, Askrigg 10.30am	St Matthew's, Stalling Busk 2.30pm	Evening Prayer 4pm
1 December	<b>9am Holy Communion at St Margaret's Hawes</b> <b>10.30am The Gathering – TOY SERVICE at St Margaret's, Hawes</b> <b>2-4pm Christmas Memorial at St Oswald's Askrigg</b> <b>4.30pm Bainbridge Lights Switch On</b>				Evening prayer by telephone
3 December		<b>9.15-10am</b> <b>Advent Bible Study</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">Meet the Ancestors</div>			
4 December		<b>1pm</b> <b>Gavin Martin's</b> <b>Thanksgiving Service</b>			
6 December	<b>10am Communion at Sycamore Hall</b>				
7 December		 <b>Magic of Christmas</b> <b>Concert 2pm</b>  <b>Hawes Christmas</b> <b>Lights Switch on</b> <b>4pm</b>			
8 December	<b>Holy Communion</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>	<b>Café Style</b>	<b>12.30 Soup followed by Communion</b>	Evening prayer by telephone
10 December		<b>9.15-10am</b> <b>Advent Bible Study</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;">Meet the Mother</div>			
12 December			<b>BAWB School</b> <b>Nativity</b> <b>'Angel Small'</b> <b>6pm</b>		
13 December			<b>BAWB School</b> <b>Nativity</b> <b>'Angel Small'</b> <b>2pm</b>		
14 December			 <b>Christmas Tree</b> <b>Festival Starts</b> <b>with a Concert</b> <b>7-8pm</b> 		
15 December		<b>Family Nativity Celebration</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> 9am		Evening prayer by telephone

		<b>Come and Join the fun</b>			
17 December		<b>9.15-10am Advent Bible Study</b>			
		<b>Meet the Witnesses</b>			
20 December		<b>Carol Service</b>			
		<b>In the Long Lounge, Sycamore Hall at 2pm</b>			
Date	<b>Hardraw 9:00am</b>	<b>Hawes 10:30am</b>	<b>Askrigg 10:30am</b>	<b>Stalling Busk</b>	
21 December		<b>Family Film Afternoon 2pm 'The Star' St Margaret's Church</b>			
22 December	<b>Morning Prayer</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>	<b>Afternoon Prayer 2:30pm</b>	<b>Evening prayer by telephone</b>
			 <b>Community Christingle At 5pm</b>  <b>4.30pm to make a Christingle</b>		
24 December	<b>Communion Service 10pm</b>	<b>Community Carols in the Market Square 7pm</b>	<b>Community Carols on the Cobbles 5pm</b>  <b>Midnight Communion Service 11.30pm</b>	<b>Communion Carols 3pm</b>	
25 December		 <b>Christmas Morning Family Communion Celebration St Mary &amp; St John's Church, Hardraw @ 10.30am</b>			
29 December		<b>Last Sunday of 2024 Communion St Margaret's Church, Hawes @ 9.30am</b>			<b>No Evening prayer</b>

## Christmas Eve Prayer



Eternal God,  
 This night you have made known to us again  
 The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:  
 Confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him  
 Until the day dawns and Christ the  
 Morning Star rises in our hearts.  
 To him be glory both now and forever. **Amen**







## Upper Wensleydale Benefice Services January 2025



	St Mary & St John's, Hardraw 9.00am	St Margaret's, Hawes 10.30am	St Oswald's, Askrigg 10.30am	St Matthew's, Stalling Busk 2.30pm	Evening Prayer 4pm
3 January	Sycamore Hall – Communion Service in the long Lounge – 10am				
5 January	New Year Promises	<b>The Gathering</b> <b>Benefice Family Communion</b> <b>St Oswald's Church, Askrigg at 10.30am</b>			Evening prayer by telephone
12 January	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	Café Style	12.30 Soup followed by Communion	Evening prayer by telephone
19 January	Holy Communion	'Jubilate' All Age Family Service	Morning Prayer		Evening prayer by telephone
26 January	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Afternoon Prayer & Pathfinders	Evening prayer by telephone

**'More Alive in 2025' – Living Life with God: Discover More**



### Invite someone you know to join us for Evening Prayer on Sunday

For some time now we have been offering the opportunity of sharing in a service of Afternoon/Evening prayer by telephone from your own home. It is very simple to join in. I am confident that there are many more people in the upper dale who would benefit from joining with us. You may be one of them or you may know of someone who would appreciate the chance to do so. If that is the case, then follow the instructions below and we look forward to welcoming you at 4pm on a Sunday afternoon.

As 4pm approaches, call this number **03330 164757**

You will then be asked to enter the Room Number **893 277 00#** and the **PIN 2772#**

And then you are in...

say 'Hello' or sit quietly and join a short service of prayer and reflection

**Rev Dave Clark:** The Vicarage, Burtsett Road, Hawes. DL8 3NP, 01969 667553, [office@upperwenben.org](mailto:office@upperwenben.org)

Upper Wensleydale Church – CofE [www.upperwensleydalechurch.org](http://www.upperwensleydalechurch.org)