

Focus on February 2024



Vincent van Gogh - Almond blossom

!

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>

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The deadline for 'Wesley Focus on March is 20 February Please send any notices, news, articles, photographs to Judith Yeats: 07733064697 judithyeats0@gmail.com. Focus is also on the website. <https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/our-focus>

WHAT'S ON AT WESLEY

SUNDAY 4 FEBRUARY 10.30am. Morning Worship with Holy Communion ed by Rev. Anne Brown.

MONDAY 5 FEBRUARY 1pm. Lunchtime Recital. See p11

11 FEBRUARY

10.30am. Morning Worship led by Rev. Gordon Hay

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

SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY 7.30pm. Sir Stephen Hough Piano Recital. See p12.

MONDAY 12 FEBRUARY 1pm. Piano Recital Jean Bavouzet. (See p11)

FRIDAY 16 FEBRUARY 10am. Online Coffee. (Link will be sent out or contact Les or Judith).

SUNDAY 18 FEBRUARY 10.30am Morning Worship led by Rev. Peter Whittaker .

SUNDAY 25 FEBRUARY

10.30am Morning Worship. Local Arrangement.

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

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 FEBRUARY ONLINE TALKS. SUNDAY 9am.

4th Feb – Clair Webster

11th Feb – Clair Webster

18th Feb – Clair Webster

25th Feb – Rev. Ruth Gilson-Webb



Many thanks for your generous donations for Christian Aid at Christmas 2023. We raised a total of £109.45. Our church's Christmas gift could help more women and girls in Kurigram, Bangladesh, where they are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis and where they face threats to their livelihoods, pressure to marry young, and have few chances for study or work. With our support, Christian Aid can provide training, equipment and funds, so more women can thrive. **Ulrike**

The envelopes for regular giving for 2024-25, starting from 3 March 2024, are now available. If you are interested in joining the scheme, please have a word with Ulrike Hitchen.

WESLEY WHEELIE WELCOME CAFÉ 2024 DUTY ROTA

	10.30 to 12 noon	12 noon to 1pm
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

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Ian and Eileen took a New Year's Day walk at Fountains Abbey, along with about 4,000 other people. It was a lovely day but very crowded. Fountains is one of their favourite walks and they visited again with Jean on a chilly day. They soon warmed up and were safely in the café by the time the rain came. Ian says 'the scones were lovely'.



Rowan is the current 'Scrabble King' in the family, 'we know we should not have allowed him to start with "Devon"!!!!'

Church Family news continued.



Elsa and Rowan took their grand-parents to the Holgate windmill in York during the Christmas holidays and it is well worth a visit. It is the oldest 5-sailed mill in the country and is now fully restored and producing traditional stone-ground flour.

Link <https://www.holgatewindmill.org/>

An English Breeze

Up with the sun, the breeze
arose,
Across the talking corn she goes,
And smooth she rustles far and
wide
Through all the voiceful
countryside.

Through all the land her tale she
tells;
She spins, she tosses, she
compels
The kites, the clouds, the
windmill sails
And all the trees in all the dales.

God calls us, and the day
prepares
With nimble, gay and gracious
airs:
And from Penzance to
Maidenhead
The roads last night He watered.

God calls us from inglorious
ease,
Forth and to travel with the
breeze
While, swift and singing, smooth
and strong
She gallops by the fields along.

Robert Louis Stevenson

OBITUARY: LAURIE BURN 1924-2023

Some of you may have known Laurie Burn who was a member at Bilton Area. He and his late wife Dorothy were married there in 1952 and Laurie was a Sunday school superintendent, sang in the choir and worshipped there for 65 years. Those of us who knew Laurie, knew him to be a lovely man. Laurie died on 5 December aged 99 and a half. He would have been 100 on 4 May. He was a 13/18th Royal Hussar and the last veteran of the regiment that spearheaded the landings on Sword Beach on D-Day. On 2 January Laurie's obituary appeared in the Times Newspaper, with a full description of Laurie's experience on that momentous occasion. The Times reported that Laurie remained in awe of the organisation of D-Day: 'Whoever worked it out, it was wonderfully, wonderfully done'



If you would like to read the whole obituary from The Times please see Judith.

'Everyone was violently busy on that crowded, dangerous shore. The pebbles were the size of apples and feet deep, and we stumbled up a road that a huge road shovel was scooping out. We walked with the utmost care between the narrowly placed white tape lines that marked the mine-cleared path, and headed for a tent marked with a red cross...Everyone agreed that the beach was a stinker, and that it would be a great pleasure to get the hell out of here sometimes.' – **Martha Gellhorn, the first female journalist to report on D-Day**

Desert Island Discs

This month Ulrike shares her desert island discs.

Robert Schumann – Symphony No 3 in E flat major, op.97 -“The Rhenish”. The first two movements are sometimes described as the unofficial anthem of the Rhineland where I am from, with the second representing the waves of the Rhine. For many years, both movements were used as theme music for a news TV programme called “Hier und heute” in North Rhine-Westphalia and I always enjoyed the upbeat music. Schumann wrote the first movement full of optimism, joy and energy in only a few days in 1850 when he and his family had moved from Dresden in Saxony to Düsseldorf in the Rhineland to take up his new position as director of music.



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – Piano Sonata in C major for four hands, KV 19d. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oTJDS1dprLg>. This light, bright and melodic piano sonata for four hands was composed by Mozart in 1765 when he was only nine years old and on tour in England with his father and sister Nannerl. This sonata has a special history in my family. My mother first learnt it when she got engaged to my father and started to play it with my paternal grandmother who was a piano teacher. When I was a teenager, I played it with my grandmother and with my mother, and now I often play it with my daughter Susanna. Listening to this sonata on the island, would bring back many happy memories with a fair amount of laughter!

Harold Arlen – Somewhere Over the Rainbow. A lovely song which will remind me of my children, in particular of Susanna who sang this as a soloist in her school choir and also at Wesley. There are many other songs and pieces of music which I have heard beautifully performed in the wider family but this has a special place for me.

Johann Sebastian Bach – Prelude & Fugue in E flat major BWV 552 ;St Anne
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hts8RqoCBnU>

Continued

Ulrike's Desert Island Discs continued.

Listening to this brilliant, majestic and joyful work always fills me with great happiness, and I last heard it with Andrew in my hometown of Wesel, in the cathedral where we got married, on the weekend of our 40 th wedding anniversary. It also reminds me of many times listening to organ music in Germany, but also at Wesley.

George Frideric Handel – The Messiah (Der Messias- sung in German). I first sang the Messiah in the local choral society in my hometown of Wesel in then West Germany when I was fourteen years old. I had been chosen to sing with other girls from my school choir and I felt really excited and proud to be a member. The choir rehearsed for nearly a year and after the great performance in the cathedral, Willibrordi-Dom, I was rather sad because I knew I wouldn't be able to sing it again in the near future nor hear it performed live for some time as the Messiah is not performed with such regularity as in England (quite unthinkable here!). On the island I would love to sing all the choruses again. My maternal grandmother, who never knew her grandchildren, must have had a good soprano voice and used to sing the solo; I know that my Redeemer liveth" ("Ich weiß, dass mein Erlöser lebet") on Easter Sunday in her local church in East Prussia.

Sergei Rachmaninoff 2nd Piano Concerto in no.2 in C minor op.18.

Before I came to England for my gap year in Harrogate, I can't remember having heard any music by Rachmaninoff. It was Andrew who introduced me to this work and gave me a LP of the concerto. I find this concerto very melodical and tuneful and full of emotion.

Ludwig van Beethoven- Piano Sonatas opp. 109-111. Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany, and is therefore the most celebrated citizen of the town, with the house of his birth attracting visitors from all over the world. Having studied at Bonn University, Beethoven has had a special significance for me since then. These three last sonatas are very profound and beautiful to listen to and in parts seem to take you to different spheres. In the programme notes for the CD recording by Steven Osborne , for the final movement of op. 111, it talks about being a "spiritual movement, which can be seen as a true foretaste of heaven." Listening to these sonatas would also remind me of many wonderful piano recitals at Wesley.

Co tinued.

Ulrike's Desert Island Discs continued.

Johannes Brahms- German Requiem. Brahms wrote this Requiem in 1865-68 after the death of his mother to whom he had been very close, when he was in his thirties. It consists of seven movements and is based on texts from the Bible, both from the Old and New Testaments. Unlike most requiems, this one is in German and doesn't follow the structure and liturgy of a Roman Catholic Latin requiem mass, praying for the soul of the deceased, but is meant to comfort and reassure the living. I have sung Brahms's Requiem both in choirs in Germany and in Harrogate and the very melodic tunes, wonderful orchestration and the texts have always made a deep impression on me. I would love to sing the tunes on my desert island.

Thank you for your beautiful choices Ulrike, I am sure we shall all enjoy listening to them. Our castaway next month is Shelagh.

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

Many members of our congregation appreciated Mike's service on Sunday 28th, dedicated to Holocaust Day. This was one of the hymns that Mike chose for the congregation to sing.

When words are spent and grief destroys compassion,
or fear of war throws shadows like a cross,
God melt our hearts and fire imagination,
that we might sense the pain within each loss.

This loss can blind our eyes and freeze our feeling,
can numb for us the pain of holocaust,
for memory fades, to leave just words revealing
a horror far beyond all human cost.

God open in our present generation,
a depth of human empathy to feel
humanity that bridges every nation,
that only love and hope and grace can seal.

Andrew Pratt 10/1/2023

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

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



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). 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.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750): *It's easy to play any musical instrument. All you must do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument will play itself.*

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827): *To play a wrong note is insignificant. To play without passion is inexcusable!*

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.

The recital by Sir Stephen Hough is almost sold out. We are having to strike a balance between the seating capacity of Wesley Centre and the fact that it is a church rather than a concert hall, i.e. the sightlines are not uniformly good. However, the screen will be in operation.



If you have purchased a 'ticket' for the recital by Sir Stephen Hough, and you find you cannot attend, please would you let me know. There may well be a waiting list.

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

Canadian pianist Angela Hewitt in
Toronto 2017.



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

Wesley Concerts continued.

The concert in January by the Mithras Trio was thoroughly enjoyed by an enthusiastic and appreciative audience, who were moved by a superb performance of Arno Babadjanian's Piano Trio in F sharp minor and Beethoven's Trio in B flat major, Op. 97 'Archduke' . Andrew receives consistent feedback about the concerts. People are profoundly moved by the music and come away from concerts deeply uplifted.

Here are some comments that Andrew received after the Mithras concert.

- *'I have never been so inspired by a chamber music performance!! The Mithras trio were fantastic.'*
- *'What a fantastic concert yesterday.'*
- *'What wonderful music-making yesterday.'*
- *'Wonderful that so many people experienced such joyful music-making.'*
- *'What a lovely treat this lunchtime - thank you.'*

Les also received feedback from a contact who knows about Wesley's musical heritage and who sent him this note, which we thought would be interesting.

'I was reading a book called Chasing Francis - its a novel (sort of) about a Franciscan faith - anyway there was a discussion of art / beauty and I thought of your concerts....'

The church is realising there is an awareness of God sleeping in the basement of the postmodern imagination and they have to reawaken it. The arts can do this. All beauty is subversive, it flies under the radar of peoples' critical filters and points them to God..... Our neglect of the power of beauty and the arts helps explain why so many people have lost interest in the church. Our coming back to the arts will help renew that interest.'

AROUND THE CIRCUIT

Bilton Methodist Amblers. The next walk is Saturday 10 February. 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

Additional walk: 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.

Coffee Morning, Sat 3 Feb 10-11.30am

Gracious Street

Bridge Café, Every Monday 9.30-11.30am

Men's Breakfast Saturday 3 February 8:45am - 10:15am. Speaker John and Ruth Parry: Underwater adventures in exotic places. For further information contact Peter Wilson 01423 862 553

U3A History of Art

Wednesday February 14 2pm - 4pm Gauguin and dusky maidens

Wednesday February 28 2pm - 4pm Seurat. Enough to drive you dotty!

For further information contact Brian Souter

Email briansouter@hotmail.com

Saturday, 24th February 10am - 12noon

Coffee morning. Bakers Dozen invite everyone for coffee and cakes in aid of Church funds.

Harlow Hill. Mondays 10am .11.30am. Coffee Morning.

Continued

What's on at our other churches continued.

Harlow Hill. Friday mornings 10am—11.30am. Little Beans Playgroup. Parents, babies, toddlers group. drop in between 10 and 11.30am for play, coffee and a chat. £3 per family.

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.

Starbeck. Sunday 11th February, 2.30pm – Sunday Afternoon Concert. Knaresborough Silver Band are in concert. Do come along for an afternoon of brass band music and great entertainment in the comfortable and friendly environment of the church. Entry is £9, pay at the door. There are concessions for young people; under 12s are free, teenagers £5. Refreshments are served during the interval. (Please note that this concert replaces the February event that was shown on the original concert programme). For further information and details about the remaining concerts on Starbeck Methodist Church winter concert programme please see <https://www.facebook.com/StarbeckMethodistChurch> or email starbeckfff@gmail.com

Please continue to support All We Can, Harrogate Fair Trade Shop, Harrogate Foodbank, Harrogate Homeless Project & Resurrected Bites.

Please be vigilant of scams by letter, email and telephone.

Online sites that may be of interest.

Nidd Valley Circuit YouTube Channel:
www.youtube.com/channel/UCGs9zOlnk5tMKC8SCeQY1w

Nidd Valley Circuit Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/NiddValley

Gracious Street Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/graciousstreetmethodist

Knaresborough TV: www.youtube.com/c/KnaresboroughTV

WHAT'S ON IN HARROGATE

KAIROS MOVEMENT. Saturday 2 March 2024 at St. Mark's Church, Leeds Road, Harrogate, HG2 8AY. 9.30am for a 10am start until 2pm. *Campfire, fanning the flames.* A day for exploring new places for new people, fresh expressions and doing church in new ways.

It's a chance to learn more, think about the opportunities on our frontlines, develop ideas and plans and share the journey with others. Explore new opportunities like: New Places for New People; Fresh Expressions; Church planting; Church on the margins; Micro-church; New worshipping communities; Messy Church; Forest Church; Renew wellbeing; Pub Church; Being a Power.

Leaders include Rev. Leslie Newton (our Chair of District) and Major Andrew Vertigan (Salvation Army Territorial Pioneer and Fresh expressions Enabler).

For more information and to book your place: email colin.ashurst@gmail.com.

HARROGATE CHORAL SOCIETY. 20 April 2024 at 3pm St. Wilfrid's Church, Harrogate. Circlesong by Bob Chilcott, plus other works. Conducted by David Lawrence, with Backbeat Percussion. Pianists Thomas Moore and Anthony Gray, and featuring the Scunthorpe Cooperative Junior Choir. Tickets £15 (£5 for under 16s and students), from Harrogate Box Office, Tel. 01423 502116 or online at www.harrogatetheatre.co.uk and on the door.

Bob Chilcott is a British choral composer, conductor, and singer, and was a member of the King's Singers. Circlesong is a musical portrayal of the human life cycle as captured in the indigenous poetry of North America. It is based on poetry from many North American traditions, and marks the different stages of life, from birth and childhood to adulthood, middle age and death.

The music is stunningly beautiful. Ask Jenny or Philip or Judith. We at Harrogate Choral Society are thoroughly enjoying learning it, and next month we have a rehearsal day with the composer himself.

The concert is takes place in an afternoon, so you don't have to turn out on a cold dark night. Order your tickets now!



Coming up in 23/24

17th February - DVD Seminar at Woodlands Methodist Church. 'St Paul's Letters; - BibleTrack DVD with group discussion .

Is Paul really so important? If so, why? Chris suggests we should "approach the apostle Paul as a stranger." What are the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach? Chris argues that Paul inhabits three worlds: the Jewish, Greco-Roman and Christian. In what ways might understanding this help us to read his letters?

Dr Chris Tilling – is Graduate Tutor and Senior Lecturer in New Testament Studies at St Mellitus College and has published numerous articles on topics relating to the Apostle Paul,

10.00 – 12.00 noon with breakfast available from 9.30 am Tickets: General admission: £5 Under 18s: free Tickets:On Event Brite

9th March - Live Lecture Mark Oakley at St Mark's, Harrogate. 'The curse of literalism: poetic spirituality and the language of Christians.

13th April- Live Seminar at Woodlands Methodist Church. Ben Leighton 'The Agency of Sin in Romans 5-8' – Live speaker with group discussion. We usually speak of sin as something that we do. Sin is an anti-God action that...

For more details of the Harrogate School of Theology & Mission, visit hstm.org.uk

February, bending from Heaven. In azure mirth, it kissed the forehead of the Earth and smiled upon the silent sea, and bade the frozen streams be free, and waked to music all their fountains, and breathed upon the frozen mountains." – Percy Bysshe Shelley

ONLINE CHURCH

Elliot Crippen is the Digital Enabler for Yorkshire North and East Methodist District. Part of his role is advising churches on how best to engage online. Elliot has recently posted a blog on Facebook, sharing an outline for how he sees the next generation reimagining church in the online space. I thought it would be interesting to share some of his thoughts.

We at Wesley know very well the importance of digital – it is what kept us together, arguably brought us closer together, during lockdown. It allowed us to keep in touch, and to watch services online when we couldn't attend church. Many of our church family watched services from all over the country as well as logging in to our own circuit services every Sunday morning. The Circuit 'daily prayers', started during lockdown, is still ongoing and well attended if not always at 8am— many choose to log in later in the day. We at Wesley still hold our online coffee morning on the third Friday of the month and our Sunday Share, every second and fourth Sunday evenings, is still very special to those of us who attend. It is true to say that we have embraced technology and recognise the importance of digital.

The Methodist Conference has discussed the question of whether it is possible to have a 'local church' or 'society' which operates predominantly online and to explore the implications of that. Elliot asks the question 'what does the future of online church look like?', but goes on to say that when we say, 'online church', we mean 'church'. The 'online' is redundant'. He says that 'we live in a digital age where there is no distinction between online life and 'real life'. For younger generations the world is hybrid in a seamlessly integrated way – it is all part of a single experience. Just as 'online worship' is just worship, 'online church' is just church. It is different to what we do in the building, but no less real'.

When we are discussing online church there are questions like holy communion, baptisms and other traditions to consider. However Elliot is not proposing an online church with answers to holy communion and baptism in cyberspace. What he is proposing is a 'hybrid Methodism, which at its heart is about gathering a movement of people to receive and share transformation in a modern age. He writes 'I am not suggesting that we plant new online Methodist churches. And just as John Wesley didn't want to break away from the Church of England, I also see my vision sitting alongside the existing church.'

Online church continued.

To read the whole of Elliot's blog please visit <https://www.yorkshirenemethodist.org/digital-resources/future-of-online-church/>

Judith Yeats

'It's so hard to admit, but i see us applying sticking plasters in many areas of our church life to 'keep things going'. That'd be fine if they were only needed temporarily. But actually they're just masking a huge paradigm shift: the old is fading and the new is emerging – fast'.

Leslie Newton, 2022



We are open for nominations to award this year's John Batchelor Christian Impact Award. This is open to all the circuit and any young person between years 7 and 11 is eligible to be nominated. Nomination forms can be obtained from Trinity stewards in the first

PROBATIONER FOR NIDD VALLEY CIRCUIT

The circuit will be fully aware that we have been in stationing for a probationer to replace Rev. Moses John to look after Harlow Hill and Woodlands. Last weekend the Circuit Invitations Committee met a probationer presbyter who has been directly stationed to us. After a wonderful day visit to the circuit and subsequent reflections with relevant District Chairs we're pleased to announce that Rev. Ian Bryon, his wife Gayle and their two youngest loan and Carwen, both already adults, will be joining us in the summer.

The Circuit Invitation Committee were unanimous in their joy at receiving Ian and everyone who met him felt he was a really good match to the churches and to the circuit team. We look forward to welcoming him and his family in September 2024..

SPECIAL DAYS IN FEBRUARY

10 February. Chinese New Year is celebrated all around the world. 2024 is the Year of the Dragon. The date of the Chinese New Year is determined by the lunar calendar. The holiday falls on the second new moon after the winter solstice on December 21, therefore the New Year in China falls on a different date. The dates usually range sometime between January 21 and February 20.

13 February Shrove Tuesday: The name comes from 'shriving,' that is absolution, as given in the pre-Reformation church after confession. This was all part of the preparation for Lent. From at least the 16th century. Shrove Tuesday had been seen as a holiday, especially for apprentices who, full of boisterous high spirits, were released from their duties, usually signalled by the ringing of a bell at 11 am. (See *Pancake Bell p23*). <https://www.allsaintsbingley.org.uk/about-us/our-history/the-pancake-bell.php>

The pancake has a very long history and featured in cookery books as far back as 1439. The tradition of tossing or flipping them is almost as old. The ingredients for pancakes can be seen to symbolise four points of significance at this time of year: Eggs ~ Creation' Flour ~ The staff of life; Salt ~ Wholesomeness; Milk ~ Purity

14 February. Ash Wednesday. It marks the beginning of Lent – a time for turning again to the practice of our faith, in prayer, self-denial (fasting) and practical generosity (almsgiving). <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/ash-wednesday/>

14 February. St. Valentine's Day. The Feast of Saint Valentine, is celebrated annually on 14 February. It originated as a Christian feast day honouring a martyr named Valentine and through later folk traditions, it has also become a significant cultural, religious and commercial celebration of romance and love in many regions of the world. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valentine%27s_Day

15 February/ World Hippo Day/ This is a day which is dedicated to hippopotomuses, to help prevent their extinction by poachers who hunt them for meat and for their teeth.

17 February. Random Acts of Kindness Day. Spend the day doing random acts of kindness. The holiday was started by the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, which was founded in 1995.

THE PANCAKE BELL

The tradition of a Pancake Bell began in the Middle Ages and still survives in several English churches today. A bell would be rung at 11am on Shrove Tuesday which was said to be a signal to make pancakes and so use up perishable foods before the onset of Lent.

Shrove is the past tense of shrive, meaning 'to hear the confession of, assign penance to, and absolve.' On the Tuesday before Lent began, the same bell that called people to confession served as a stern reminder: use your eggs, milk, and butter now, because once the day is out, fasting would begin. Thus, everyone began to run home to make pancakes, and rumour has it that some even tried to cook the pancakes as they ran home, tossing them whilst jogging home.

In Scarborough the bell that was used was the curfew bell on St Thomas's Hospital and was rung at twelve noon. In 1861 the Hospital was knocked down and the bell was removed to the Rotunda Museum where the tradition continued until 1979 when the bell was replaced with a ship's bell, due to a crack in the original bell. In 1996 a replica bell was placed on a wall at North Street/Newborough junction, close to where the original bell had been sounded, and rung annually by the Mayor or Town Cryer.

To this day, the British town of Olney holds a pancake race in which participants must wear an apron and hat or scarf to compete. They are also required to toss the pancake three times during the 415 yard race, serve it to the bell ringer, and receive a kiss from him,

One story goes that in the year 1673, a riotous disturbance took place in the York Minster Yard. The Dean and Chapter prohibited the apprentice boys of York playing football in the Nave, a disorderly custom which had been practised on Shrove Tuesday for many years.

<https://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/Pancake-Day/>

<https://www.allsaintsbingley.org.uk/about-us/our-history/the-pancake-bell.php>

<https://www.scarboroughsmaritimeheritage.org.uk/article.php?article=699>

Drinking from My Saucer. by John Paul Moore

I've never made a fortune
and it's probably too late now.
But I don't worry about that much
I'm happy anyhow.
And as I go along life's way,
I'm reaping better than I sowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer,
'Cause my cup has overflowed.

I don't have a lot of riches
and sometimes the going's tough.
But I've got loved ones around me
and that makes me rich enough.
I thank God for his blessings,
and the mercies He's bestowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer,
Cause my cup has overflowed.

I remember times when things went wrong,
my faith wore somewhat thin.
But all at once the dark clouds broke
and the sun peeped through again.
So God, help me not to gripe
about the tough rows that I've hoed.
I'm drinking from my saucer,
'Cause my cup has overflowed.

If God gives me strength and courage,
when the way grows steep and rough.
I'll not ask for other blessings
I'm already blessed enough.
And may I never be too busy,
to help others bear their loads.
Then I'll keep drinking from my saucer,
'Cause my cup has overflowed.

*'You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. Psalm 23:5.*



PRAYER CORNER

Faithful God, we trust in your promise that the darkness so often contains treasures: maybe not of our choosing, or initially inviting; maybe lacking the shine and allure of other more obvious treasure.

May we have the wisdom to dig deep,
to slow our days, to sift our diaries,
to make the space to spot the hidden,
to explore and appreciate all that you have for us.

Help us to see life afresh through your eyes,
to appreciate its darkness and light, its dirt and beauty,
and to be so much more deeply aware
of the treasury of your overflowing love. Amen.

Leslie Newton, District Chair, Yorkshire North and East District

Let your peace rule in our hearts, O Lord that we may delight in your strength, rejoice in your grace and find our fulfilment in your will; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

A prayer from the Methodist Peace Fellowship

Oh Jerusalem, how we long for all peoples to be gathered up under the wings of peace and yet your heart is shattered and your sides pierced by swords of grief.

Beloved city, may mercy and justice walk in your streets and markets, show us how to look into each others eyes with love and equity so that all humanity might die to violence and live to trust our neighbours once again.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/prayer/>

PICTURES OF THE MONTH by David Yeats

