



Focus on December 2020



Left: Fountains Abbey (Eileen and Ian).

Bottom right: Ripley (Eileen and Ian)

Bottom left: Thorpe Perrow Arboretum (Judith)



The **Methodist** Church



One Church. 14 Locations.

WELCOME TO WESLEY CHAPEL

At the time of publishing this edition we are again on lockdown and unable to hold services in our churches.

Meantime our online church is still very much alive and you can access circuit services either online; via a printed weekly service sheet; or by telephone.

Please visit <https://www.facebook.com/NiddValley/>

Circuit Sunday Service at 10.30am every Sunday
Morning prayer at 8am Monday—Saturday led by one of our Nidd Valley Ministry Team.

Telephone Service. Dial a thought. Ring 01423 648644. Changes weekly.

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

Ministry Team: Rev. Lesley Taylor, Rev. Trevor Dixon.

Senior Steward: Les Sudron

Church Council Secretary: Jenny Goodwin

Safeguarding Officer: Christine Sudron

Focus Editor: Judith Yeats e-mail judithyeats0@gmail.com

Website: www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk

Wesley Centre Contacts

Wesley Centre Manager: Philippa French (Pippa)
pfrench@wesleycentreharrogate.org.uk

The deadline for 'Wesley Focus on January' is 23 December.

Please send any notices, news, articles, photographs to Judith Yeats: 01423 506014, judithyeats0@gmail.com. Focus is also on the website. <https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/our-focus>

MESSAGE FROM REV. LESLEY

Ministry during Covid-19.

This is my 19th year as a Methodist minister and it's been the strangest start I've ever had to a new appointment.

I've found it difficult not being able to invite people into the manse or hold meetings here. Doorstep conversations are lovely, but not quite the same as a good chat with a cuppa.

Meetings on Zoom have been very helpful in getting church business done and in getting to know people, but I know that not everyone has internet access or feels confident using Zoom. I haven't forgotten that fact and, at all of our meetings, we've thought about how we can keep everyone connected and feeling part of the church family.

I'm also aware that not everyone feels able to return to worship in church...when we're allowed to be open for worship. But, the weekly service sheets and online Sunday morning worship and morning prayers will continue. As a preacher, it's been challenging to try and keep worship to only 30 minutes. And I'm missing being able to do all-age worship or be more interactive with you as a congregation, which are the things I enjoy.

We're definitely living through challenging times. But, I am confident that we will get back to normal. However, this is not looking particularly likely much before Spring of 2021. In the meantime, we need to continue to love and be kind to others and ourselves and know that God is with us.

And, even in these strangest of times, I do want to say a huge thank you to everyone for making me feel so welcome and a part of the Nidd Valley Circuit.

I know that we're all looking forward to life getting back to normal, so here's a few things I'm hoping for...

Continued p4

Message from Rev. Lesley continued.

Things I'm looking forward to when we go back to normal...

A hug! This is what I have missed most.

Seeing my family and friends again. I haven't seen my nieces since January, my sister since August and Mum since October.

Meeting you all at church, coffee mornings and lunch clubs without masks and social distancing. I've missed getting to you know all since moving in August. I love being with people and, even with Hattie, the manse can feel a bit lonely.

Being able to sing in church, but please switch the microphone off. Being thrown out of the school choir at the age of 11 means I only sing in the car or the kitchen, where nobody can hear me.

Never again having to say 'Please can I see your risk assessment?'

Getting dressed up to go out. Hmm...What is "going out?"

God bless
Lesley Taylor

Rev Lesley is looking for volunteers to help her with online worship, when it's her turn to do the coordinating. If you are willing to lead prayers or do a reading and feel confident to film yourself or get help from family or friends (social distancing allowing) please let Lesley know. Thank-you. **Les.**

Christmas quotes: *'One can never have enough socks,' said Dumbledore. 'Another Christmas has come and gone and I didn't get a single pair. People will insist on giving me books.'*

— **J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone**



Focus on Advent and Christmas

Advent at home. For Advent this year, there will be two resources available for use at home. The first resource is from the Roots worship magazine and is a weekly activity. The activity sheet will be sent out with the Circuit newsletter for 29 November.

One of the suggested activities is to create a nativity scene over the weeks running up to Christmas. Please don't go to the expense of buying a nativity scene. If you've got one at home, please use it. Otherwise, let your imagination run riot and make a nativity scene...paint one, make a collage from newspaper and magazine pictures, make one out of scraps of left over fabric...the possibilities are endless. I hope that we can publish some photos of the final nativity scenes in Wesley Week pieces.

The second resource, which is from the Church of England, is another way of reflecting on the Christmas story. This will be sent out in its entirety for Sunday 29 November.

I hope that one or both of these resources will bring you closer to Jesus this Advent time. **Lesley Taylor**



Christmas Day Lunch

Update on the 2020 Christmas Day Lunch party. Sadly, of course, for reasons of which we are all aware, this can't happen this year. My plan B of providing for all our customers meals-on-wheels is also a non-starter due to the renovations involving the kitchen.

So, we are doing what we can by organising gift boxes cum mini-hampers for all the folks on the lunch party list of the last 2 years. We have already been given 120 gift boxes by a shop and are busy shopping for goodies of food or treats with which to fill them. We shall add a Christmas card from Wesley Chapel. We will simply need a team of drivers to take the gift boxes out to help make these people 'not feel forgotten' on Christmas Day, which for them is the loneliest day of the year.

Let's hope we can continue in future years to continue to provide not only a Christmas meal, but also that for which these folks crave, some company and fellowship, particularly on their otherwise lonely Christmas Day.

Philip Goodwin



The Oxen by Thomas Hardy

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.
'Now they are all on their knees,'
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years! Yet, I feel,
If someone said on Christmas Eve,
'Come; see the oxen kneel'

In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

The Oxen' was published on Christmas Eve 1915 in *The Times* and is one of Thomas Hardy's best-loved poems, Hardy recalls how in days gone by he would sit with others at midnight and picture the oxen in the manger paying homage to the birth of Christ. There was never any doubt in their minds that this really happened. But Hardy reflects that nowadays most people wouldn't believe such a thing as animals kneeling before Christ, and the magic has been lost. Yet he goes on to say that if one Christmas Eve he was invited to see the oxen kneeling, he would happily go to see them, hoping that such a thing might happen.

The Oxen reflects a yearning for childhood beliefs. Thomas Hardy had lost his religious faith early in life, but remained 'churchy' (to use his own word), with a profound affection for the liturgy of the Anglican Church.

The poem was written during the First World War. The war stripped away many illusions, and people who might have been clinging to a belief in old customs and traditions often found themselves becoming disillusioned very quickly.

Hardy's poetry is often pessimistic. The last line of this poem suggests a note of hopefulness. **Judith Yeats**

Extracted from an article by Dr Oliver Tearle, literary critic and lecturer in English at Loughborough University. To read the whole article visit <https://interestingliterature.com/2016/12/a-short-analysis-of-thomas-hardys-the-oxen/>

Selected Notes from Church Council Meeting held online Monday 2 November 2020.

Present: Rev Lesley Taylor (Chair) Jenny Goodwin (Secretary) Mike Greenberg (Treasurer) and 6 other Church Council members.

Greetings and Condolences: the Secretary confirmed that she had already written to the families of those of the church family who had died since the last meeting in February.

Appointments: The meeting confirmed that Les Sudron (Senior Steward), Mike Greenberg (Treasurer) and Jenny Goodwin would continue to be our representatives to the Circuit Meeting. Christine Bunting is the reserve.

Creating Safer Space: The updated Statement of Safeguarding Principles was accepted.

Data Protection: The latest update compiled by Les Sudron, was accepted.

(NB The above policies can be viewed on the website).

Matters to/from Conference, Synod, Circuit:. A Change in the Model Trust. There has been a recommendation from the Methodist Council that paragraph 14(2A) be amended. The Circuit Meeting and all Church Councils are required to consider the resolution on or before March 2021. The change concerns worshipping communities using our churches and will allow a licence to worship longer than the present 12-month period. The recommended changes were unanimously agreed.

Reopening. We reflected on the recent re-opening of Wesley for Sunday services at the end of September (although at the time of this meeting we will have to shut again until December). It was felt that the services were very much welcomed by those who came, and attendances had remained steady, between 18 and 26 people, for the 6 Sundays we had been open. Lesley read out a pastoral message from our superintendent Rev. Ben Clowes to the circuit. *(This can be viewed on our website).*

Weekly service sheets and video recorded services will continue to be produced by the Circuit for each Sunday.

Continued p9

Church Council notes continued.

Conversation on the Work of God

Worship: The Circuit Plan will continue to be produced on a monthly basis for the moment, as the present situation makes forward planning difficult.

Learning and Caring: The meeting observed a short silence to remember those who have died since the last meeting.

Service:

Finance. Mike highlighted the fact that our reserves are now down to £7,500 from the original £10,000 with which we had started when the Chapel became separate from the Centre. This is due to a number of factors: e.g. reducing collections, lack of income from lettings, church coffee mornings, Forward Together and other fund-raising activities. Until now, we have been able to meet our circuit assessment commitments. The Circuit understands the situation of the churches and accepts that not all will be able to meet assessment costs for the moment. Mike was thanked for all his work as Treasurer.

Wesley Centre: Imminent changes are taking place in the Lower Hall, which we are all aware of i.e. that the Harrogate Homeless Project will be leasing the entire ground floor and this will entail major refurbishment including the refitting of the kitchen and installing toilets in the Foyer upstairs. There will be some upheaval for the next few months while everything is put in place and our weekly activities (when they resume) will take place in the Upper Hall.

Evangelism: The annual Remembrance Sunday Civic service (did not take place) this year, due to Covid restrictions.

AOB: Lesley has prepared some Advent Studies material which can be used individually or by groups via zoom, to help keep us all connected. (See p5).

Date of next Church Council: Tuesday, 9 February, 2021.

Jenny Goodwin

Recitals return to Wesley

On 2nd November 2020 we managed to resume our lunchtime concerts with a piano recital by Susan Tomes from Edinburgh. A great deal of work went into preparing for the concert and David Megginson, much missed, played a vital role in this respect. As the audience needed to be socially distanced, the numbers were limited to 75. (The seating capacity under normal circumstances is 352). The tickets went very quickly.

Susan Tomes gave an excellent and varied recital with works by Scarlatti, Debussy, Janacek, Chabrier and Billy Mayerl. She introduced each group of pieces. I received many enthusiastic comments afterwards, one audience member describing the recital as " a light shining in the darkness", another member commenting, "What a delight and joy to listen to live music again!"

Many thanks to the Wesley team for making the concert such a success!

Andrew Hitchen



(see also p22)

Les was laid up for a few weeks with a horrible virus, not Covid 19, but very nasty and debilitating nevertheless. We're pleased that he has joined us again, and is feeling better. Meanwhile many thanks to Maureen who took over the Wesley Weekly pieces (wks 31,32 and 33) and did an admirable job. Welcome back Les, and thank you Maureen..

Wesley Week Pieces 30 - 24 October

The rain came back this weekend, we remembered to put the clocks back and as far as I know nobody turned up to church an hour early.

Janet visited Helen at Foss Park hospital in York and sent this message: 'I took Helen a 'goody bag' of cards and presents from neighbours and Wesley Chapel folk. I went in to see her in cheery mood and she was cheery back. She opened most of her cards and presents with me there and was delighted with them.....Malcolm her husband said (later) she was very pleased to see me and delighted that she still had more cards to open when she returned to the ward.'

(Thank you, Janet for persevering in your endeavour to visit Helen, we are sure it will have been appreciated by Helen and her family. We keep them all in our thoughts and prayers. Les.)



We had another good coffee morning this week and all managed this lovely collection of smiles. We haven't had any new friends join us for a while, it is easy to join, just click the link (which will be sent to you). You can join and leave anytime and chat or just listen, whichever you prefer! *(All our screenshots are on the website).*

Wesley week 30 continued.

From Judith. David's painting output has increased enormously over the past few months. Here is one of his recent ones and one of my favourites



(Wow, that looks like a Monet to me. The one on the left is David's the one on the right is Monet's; or is it the other way round? Congratulations David, we look forward to you holding a painting exhibition at Wesley sometime. What do you think? Les.)



Cake and sleep-over to celebrate Elsa's 7th birthday (see p29)

Wesley week 30 continued

Molly writes: 'Thought you might like a photo of Marlie, my youngest granddaughter's little one.' See page 16.

(Thanks Molly, the pumpkins look great. Les.)

From Jenny. Here are some photos taken when our new granddaughter, Kára Jennifer, was christened in the Faroe Islands. She was wearing the same christening gown worn by her grandmother, Marjun, 70 years ago! Kára's first name is the female version of her grandfather, Kari. She is being held by one of her godmothers, Liv, with Zanna, Sunnuva's niece, another godmother, next to her. Rachel and Anna are also godmothers and one of James's friends, Mark, is the godfather. They seem to go in for a lot of godparents over there!!

(What lovely pictures Jenny and you must be very proud to be recognised within Kára's name. Les.) Christening photograph on p16.

Right: Kára Jennifer.

Below, One happy family..



Wesley week 30 continued

Jenny also writes, I called in to see Nancy Clapham this week and did a bit of shopping for her, at the request of Eileen Temple, who is away at the moment. Nancy was in good spirits, but doesn't get out much.

(We do miss Nancy and it is so good that we have people like you, Eileen and Ian and many others who keep closely connected to so many of our members. Les.)

And from our youngest to our eldest church family member, Betty Taylor recently celebrated her 102nd birthday. Liz her daughter sent in these lovely family pictures of the birthday celebration lunch. Many congratulations Betty, love to you from all your friends at Wesley Chapel!



Betty with some of her family and the cake.

Right Mawuli, Isla and Orin with their great grandma

Wesley week 30 continued.

From Les. As many of you know Margaret is a prolific knitter, she can knit while reading, sleeping, watching TV and telling me off. Her grand-daughter Emma asked her to knit a hat with tassels on for great grandson Benjamin and here is the picture on page 16.; I bet Ben will love this when he is ten. Oh, and Margaret also knitted the jumper...

Wesley Week Pieces 31 - 31st October

Maureen takes over editorship of Wesley Weekly whilst Les recovers.

Dorothy writes: Many years ago Wesley was having a family service and Linda East (a lot of folk will remember Linda and Alan) was organizing a sketch for the young people. Linda asked my darling Cathy and her lovely cousin Rachael, to help by going on the stage but she didn't tell why!! She produced two ordinary table forks each attached to a five foot pole and put a plate of food between them and asked them to prod a piece of food and eat it off the fork. Of course they couldn't get it into their mouths and entertained us trying. She then whispered to them 'feed each other' and they did very successfully!!!

At this time when the whole world is suffering from this terrible Covid this particular sketch came into my mind and reminded me of the meaning of the sketch 'help each other'. Love and blessings to all from Dorothy.

(Thank you Dorothy. You have reminded me of that very funny sketch. And also of Linda and Alan who were inspirational Sunday School leaders, local preachers, stewards, neighbours and friends to so many of us. Maureen.)

Ian sent in a lovely picture of Eileen and Georgia at taken at Chartwell this week. (see p17)...

...and the Greenberg wheelchair delivery service shows its first satisfied customer – Christine with her pot on. (see p18)..



Molly's granddaughter and great granddaughter.



Margaret has been knitting for her great grandson Ben.



Christening of Jenny and Philip's granddaughter Kára Jennifer, with parents and Godparents. (see page 13)



Eileen and Georgia at Chartwell



Elsa's 7th birthday celebration and sleepover.



Above. It was half term and Halloween and there were there were lots of spooky exhibits around the Thorpe Perrow to amuse the children.

Right. Harry (a Harry Potter fan) on his 9th birthday



Wesley Week 31 continued.

Maureen writes: if you saw last week's circuit streamed service you will have seen Mike being presented with his certificate for 25 years as a local preacher. He opted to have it presented inside Wesley. Just Mike, Ben and Grace were present but later in the week this photograph was taken.

(Congratulations Mike we love it when you preach at Wesley. The video of Mike's presentation is on the website—see link below. Judith)

<https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/lockdown-videos>



Greenberg wheelchair delivery service



Snape Castle

Wesley Week 31 continued.

Judith managed to get away to far flung places: 'Dave and I stayed in a cottage next to Snape Castle which is a few miles from Bedale, and a mile from Thorp Perrow Arboretum. Snape Castle originates from the 13th century, and Katherine Parr, sixth wife of Henry VIII (the one that survived) lived there with her first husband. It is now a private dwelling, but the chapel is very much still in use and we were able to borrow the keys to look around. The weather wasn't particularly good but we made the most of our days there and we visited Middleham Castle which was home to Richard III (I am a huge Richard III fan). We discovered a lovely part of North Yorkshire we hadn't seen before and enjoyed a lovely few days away. *See photos page 17 and 18.*

(I didn't know you were a Richard III fan, Judith. You kept that very quiet! Maureen.)

Continuing the theme of Halloween, Maureen and Mike sent a photograph of their very own wizard, Harry on his 9th birthday. A Harry Potter fan! (see page 17).

Wesley Week Pieces 32—7 November

From Janet. I returned from a 7 day break in Cambridge last week, as I'm sure most of you realise where I come from and where sadly I no longer have a mother in a care home. All went well and visited friends from Castle St Methodist Church as well as attending the service there which I had to book on line! One afternoon I visited the Cambridge University Botanic Gardens. Fans of Harlow Carr will love these. The photos (on the back cover) show two trees in autumn colour. The one turning red may be the very same species of tree Judith showed (on front cover), but don't ask me what the trees are, just thought they looked lovely.

Christmas quotes: *"I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach."*

— **Charles Dickens**, *A Christmas Carol*

Time to play: Hunt the Tablecloths

Jenny writes: I went to Wesley this week to help Pippa and Derek (one of the HHP staff) look at all the kitchen cupboard contents and decide what needs to be kept (most of it!) and what we can dispose of. The cupboard which contained the tablecloths (underneath the microwave and to the left of the ovens) was already empty. Christine Bunting has the long white linen cloths at her house as she has been laundering them. However, the square cardboard box which contained several small square cream coloured cloths with light brown embroidery round the edges has gone. Christine last saw them in the cupboard in August. I have asked a few people, including the HHP staff, Pippa and one or two Wesley people but no-one has seen them recently. Does anybody know where they are now? It would be a shame to lose them as they are very useful when we want to use the smaller square tables for catering events.

And : Hunt the Accounts Records

Mike is still looking for old accounts records that have disappeared from being stored in a cupboard in the Lower Hall. If you've put them, and the tablecloths, in a safe place please contact Jenny and Mike. I believe there is a prize for this game.

This is Rosie the kitten who turned up at David's house (Ian and Eileen Temple's son) unannounced and looking emaciated. She is now a lot more robust and very much part of the family - and very mischievous!

(Will Rosie win the cute award for this week? Maureen)



Wesley week 32 continued.

Ian sent this photo of toadstools found on a walk. Absolutely beautiful and poisonous. I looked it up. It's called *Amanita muscaria*, commonly known as the fly agaric or fly amanita. I hope you didn't touch it Ian, or be tempted to put it in an omelette. (Maureen)



Sorry Rosie you are not the cutest. Look who came to visit Wesley : Juno with Christoff and Andrew and Ulrike . A lovely family picture. And Happy Birthday to Esther and Martin who recently celebrated their 30th.

Wesley week 32 continued.

Many of you will know that there was a concert at Wesley Monday 2 November, lunchtime. An amazing concert, enjoyed by an audience of 75 socially-distanced regular concert goers, who had pre-booked their seats, had their temperature taken, and hands sanitized. Well done Andrew.

Andrew received the following email:

'Dear Andrew. This is to thank you and the team at Wesley Centre for allowing us all to enjoy today's excellent recital by Susan Tomes. It is always a delight to hear her playing topped by her brief comments on the music - always so perceptive. The whole thing must have been a great effort and not a little worry. Thank you again - this has been a light shining in the darkness! Says it all really.'

And from Andrew: 'Can I add my thanks to all who helped in any way to make the recital such a success. 'As an added bonus the audience donated over £200 in addition to the ticket price. If you were not at the concert and would like to know the programme do contact me and I'll send you the details.'

Wesley Week 33 –14 November

From Les. Methodist Homes (MHA) filmed within Wesley Chapel as part of their 2020 Christmas Carol Service DVD that will be shared throughout all their homes and services, with their volunteers and supporters.

Wesley is the main base for the Carol Service and the MHA Chair Mr John Robinson CBE was filmed introducing the Carol Service and leading a prayer of remembrance and thanksgiving; members of the MHA Chaplaincy team also took part. In the next few weeks many other people from MHA homes and services, school children and MHA's music therapists, all around the country, will add their contribution to what should be a lovely and moving service.

Continued p23

Sue Oliver, MHA's Community Services Manager said; 'I just wanted to say how good it was to see you all at Wesley Chapel on Monday for the filming and that we could be joined by John Robinson and Christine, one of our Chaplaincy team. Once again, a heartfelt thank you to everyone for pulling this together at the beginning of a very exciting journey for MHA in Harrogate and Wesley Chapel/Wesley Centre as well as the wider Methodist circuit. I hope that everything went according to plan for you and the film crew, Crispian, and I'm sure we are all really looking forward to seeing the whole service put together in December.

Personal thanks especially to our own Lynne Close, Jenny, Philip and Trevor for helping to get the Chapel looking so nice; we hope that many of us will be able to enjoy these decorations during Advent.

Remember Rev. Philip Blackburn? Judith writes: My brother-in-law sent me a consignment in the post - 36 years of his father's diaries from 1951 to 1997. This is my late husband's father. He has led an interesting life, and I have long wanted to take possession of these diaries. So that's my winter afternoons taken care of.



I have started to transcribe the diaries (it's going to take a while), and whilst my brother-in-law says they are very boring - on the contrary they are fascinating. The 1951 diary begins with the family's voyage to British Honduras (BH) where my father-in-law, Harold was to be head of the technical college in Belize, then the capital of BH).

The first visitor Harold had on his arrival will be of interest to some of our Wesley people. The entry for 3 March 1951 reads 'Rev. P Blackburn called'. This of course was Rev. Philip Blackburn who was minister at Wesley from 1982-1988.

Continued p24

Wesley Week 33 continued.

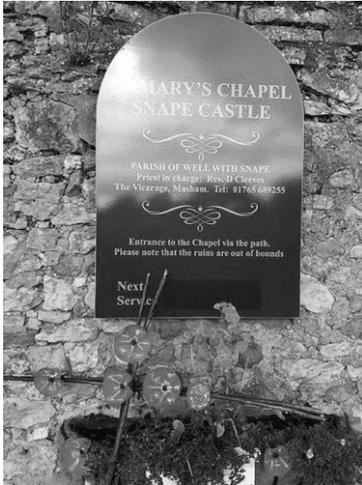
My late husband, Phil, had discovered that his 'old' headmaster from Wesley College, Belize was now a minister in Harrogate when he walked past Wesley Chapel and saw Rev. Philip Blackburn's name on the notice board. He got in touch and we started attending Wesley Chapel. Rev. Blackburn remembered all of Phil's family and even remembered the name of the family dog. So it was that sadly, and yet strangely comforting to me and Phil's family, that Rev. Blackburn officiated at Phil's funeral in 1984. I've had many experiences of the world being 'a small place', but perhaps this has been the most personal and poignant.

As I progress through the diaries and other information in my possession, I may have other stories of Rev. Blackburn and his work in British Honduras. Meantime there are some interesting nuggets in the diaries, e.g. on the 2nd day on board ship my father-in-law wrote: '50 Players 3/-'. He was clearly amazed (and no doubt very happy) at the thought of getting 50 cigarettes for three shillings. (15p in today's money).

We have lots of memories of Philip Blackburn - our children still talk about the preacher who, on Easter Sunday, reached over the pulpit and proceeded to eat a daffodil from the flower display. No one can remember what the message was in the children's address but everyone remembers him eating the daffodil. Please do not do this as some parts of the daffodil can make you very ill! How about sharing your memories of Philip. Maureen.)

Memories from Sheila Callow: When I read how much Judith and David had enjoyed their few days spent in a cottage next to Snape castle I thought straight away of a family legend that always made us smile! My maiden name was Snape and when my dad and mum visited Bedale in around the 1920's (not sure for what reason) he was so pleased to visit this big village called Snape where there was once a Lord Snape and a castle no less. My mum came from a small mining village in North Wales but my dad came from a more privileged background and when he came upon Snape village he was convinced somehow there was a family link.

Continued p25



The story goes he spent days searching (no technology then!) and sadly such a great disappointment as he found a snape was a Norman soldier who threw the dung over the castle wall! (Did my mum have a tiny smile?) But my dad didn't give up as he knew that William defeated the Saxons and rewarded his faithful men by giving them high positions in society. Did our lowly snape do such a good job to keep the castle sanitised that he was made a Lord? We will never know! **Sheila**

From Shelagh. This week has been Remembrance and Armistice Day. I was thinking back to remember my grandfather and father who served in the World Wars and our time at Sandhurst Royal Military Academy and the cadets there from all over the world. We had a bungalow in the grounds and in one of the other bungalows, the wife was French. What I didn't know then until after we had moved to Harrogate was that lady had been extremely brave during the Second World War, working in the French resistance.

On the same theme, on a walk just as this current lockdown started, it was foggy and all of a sudden I heard this noise coming closer and getting ever louder. It was a flock of geese, flying over. This reminded me of a service, many years ago by a local preacher, who unfortunately died when still young. Part of the sermon was about geese. Geese fly further together. The iconic V allows the geese to see the back of the bird in front, but each bird as it flaps its wings is creating lift for fellow birds allowing them to fly further with less effort. To fly alone needs more energy. Secondly when times are tough, they support each other. If a goose is injured or unwell usually two geese stay with it, until it recovers and then rejoin the flock. Thirdly how did I know it was geese in the fog? I couldn't see them, but they were communicating with one another, cheering and encouraging the flock on to their destination. *Continued p26*

Wesley Week 33 continued.

Once you have heard the noise you never forget it. Fourthly, it is a hard job at the front of the V, so they rotate the leadership to avoid fatigue. Five, they use the same flight path from generation to generation - they are loyal to the purpose. Six, like swans they pair for life and this can be very traumatic when one dies. Celtic believers also thought the wild goose and symbols replicated the Holy Spirit. My personal extra one is the V they fly in, which I think of victory which we have in Jesus Christ. I love how nature can teach us so much.

Shelagh Outhwaite

A lovely catch-up from Christine and Graham. Two months ago, before I had the operation on my foot, Graham and I spent a week in a holiday cottage in Reeth in Swaledale. Reeth is one of our favourite places in the Dales. We were fortunate to enjoy lovely sunny weather and the scenery looked fantastic. There were not too many people around and we were able to go on several short walks. The cottage was beautiful and the few days of relaxation were just what I needed to set me up for the operation.

We were fortunate to have the support of many family members while my foot was in plaster, including Graham's cousin Peter from York, his sister Christine from St. Neots, and our daughter Liz and her fiancé Rob. Liz and Rob stayed for a week and were here for Graham's birthday. We celebrated by having a Cote Bistro cook at home meal, which Liz expertly cooked and timed to perfection, no mean feat when there were six individual orders all with different main courses to time! David and Jemma joined us, but ate on the patio table outside to maintain social distance! We left the patio door wide open, fortunately it was lunchtime, a sunny day and fairly mild, so we didn't freeze! It was before the second lockdown, so we weren't breaking the rule of six, as our step-grand-daughter Lottie was at her father's that weekend. It was wonderful to have a family gathering; they have been all too rare this year and it made Graham's day really special. It was fortunate all this happened before this lockdown came into effect and were able to appreciate everyone's support.

I have now the plaster removed from my foot and leg. The consultant was very pleased with my progress, so now I have to wear a rigid shell boot up to my knee to protect my ankle and foot while they gain strength.

Continued p27

The physiotherapist gave me a lot of exercises to do. I no longer need a walking frame and have a walking stick instead, which means I no longer feel as though I am a hundred and can walk a little quicker. Hopping on one leg was exhausting, so I now have a bit more energy too and can do a bit more for myself which is great. I now have to be patient for six weeks when I next see the consultant and hopefully get rid of the boot in time for Christmas.

Finally, a thank you to everyone who has helped in many different ways and for all your good wishes and prayers at this time. Graham is doing all right and is able to go on walks round about by himself while I am out of action. He misses seeing you all, as do I!

Wesley Week Pieces 34—21 November

Les is back and on good form once again. He says 'Good morning everybody. The year is moving on and yesterday was our last council garden brown bin collection for the year; frustratingly there are still lots of leaves yet to make it to the ground, so there will be some additional visits to the tip in coming weeks. The garden bin collections start again next spring and I wonder how life will be for all of us by then; looking forward with hope and positive expectation is the key!'

Our first sharing this week is from Sheila who writes: 'I enjoyed the mention of Rev Philip Blackburn in last weeks' 'pieces'. It will be very entertaining to read any additional stories as he was such a special character. I said in my piece eating the daffodil made such an impression that we are still talking about it! I did ask if he chose any one of the daffodils (washed) in the display but he wasn't saying!

Additionally, it is such a coincidence that only a little while ago, my son David, talked about the Minister who ate a daffodil when giving the sermon. David had joined Laurie and I for the Easter Service at Wesley and after many, many decades we still remember this episode and the simple but wonderful act illustrating such a powerful message.

Philip ate the daffodil and said that if one person saw him doing that and went outside to tell the people what they had seen, no one would believe them. However if 'ALL' the congregation had seen him eat the daffodil and because it was seen by everyone, it was true and we were able to go out with confidence and convince our friends that it really happened'.

Continued p28

Wesley Week Pieces wk 34 continued.

Well, we are still talking about it! Mary Magdalene went to the tomb, but Jesus was no longer there and so she went looking for him and at first, she did not recognise our Lord. We are told that she went to ten of the disciples and told them of the resurrection, but they were not convinced by just her word. Jesus told her to say he would see them on a mountain in Galilee and now that they 'ALL' believed he had risen, he told the disciples to go out and preach the gospel to the whole world.

Many, many centuries have past and we still sing our praises. Alleluia, Alleluia give thanks to the risen Lord'.

(Many thanks Sheila for that lovely recollection and reflection; our stories are powerful and we should always have confidence to share them with others when they concern our faith journey and our experience of the Love of God. Les.)

Ian and Eileen visited Fountains Abbey and Ripley and sent in the pictures on the front and back covers.

(Great pictures Ian and Eileen. We have so much to see in our area and we never tire of seeing pictures of our local natural beauty Les.)

Maureen added 'I was also at Ripley and in the deer park and actually saw some deer—first time I have ever seen deer in the deer park BUT on the photo I took the deer were tiny specks. I know they were there but I've no evidence. I'll have to go back again'.

(That sounds like a plan Maureen, we look forward to the pictures! Les.)



Lynne's lockdown therapy, knitting 20 hats for the homeless. See p29

Continued p29

Lynne sent this message about her 'lockdown therapy'. 'Inspired by Maureen joining the Harrogate Scrubbers and the clicking of Margaret's knitting needles I decided to indulge in therapy of some kind and was inspired to knit twenty hats for the homeless. I have now moved on to squares for blankets for children in Africa and clothes for premature babies. I may have over-indulged my passion, however, as my vision has been a bit blurred for a couple of days so I am having a break. My thanks to Sheila's friend, Kay, for providing me with wool and patterns and to Barbara who kindly gave me some wool.

My other indulgence was to purchase a soup maker. I am experimenting with different recipes and may not have quite reached the target of 57 varieties but I am working on it. Have any other Wesley members of Wesley got any other ideas for lockdown hobbies?

PS. I spoke to Carol Tomlinson this week who sends her regards to all at Wesley. She is in a bubble with her family and is gainfully employed in helping out with the care of her two grand-daughters, Annabella and Savannah, who are aged eight and two. Carol is also a jigsaw fan but had experienced a slight catastrophe this week. She lowered her ironing board to put the board on as she finds her table too high and managed to knock it off. She had just about retrieved it when I spoke to her. We all remember Carol and her late mum fondly. Marjorie was a real character with a wealth of interesting stories to tell.'

(That is a very encouraging piece Lynne and we agree that it would be great to hear of other people's "lockdown therapy" activities – come on everyone share your secrets! Les.)

Last week there was much excitement in the Sudron 'juniors' household as it was Elsa's 7th birthday! As formal child care providers and within their family bubble Christine and I were thrilled to be able to join the birthday party tea; sadly Daniel and great grandma were not allowed to be with us although we did manage conversations with them both. Cate had set up a 'sleep-over' for the children downstairs in the lounge using a garden gazebo and lots of lights, midnight snacks (eaten at 7.00pm), balloons and new matching pyjamas and eye shades!!! Not sure how much sleep the children had but they did stay awake at school the following day. Happy Birthday Elsa. *(Photographs p12 and p17).*

Judith shared this story of her week. 'I often receive unusual phone calls, a typical example is someone who said 'I'm wondering if you can help me, my aunt belongs to a church in Harrogate and I am wanting to thank those people who have been looking after her.' It was a long shot. and believe it or not I was able to identify the aunt, and pass the message on to the kind people who had been looking after her throughout the pandemic.

The caller today was enquiring about a friend who had been living in Carlton Lodge. It was of course our friend Eileen Smith and I had the sad task of telling the caller that Eileen had died. Eileen was an old friend, who had lived with the caller's parents when she was a little girl and she had always called Eileen aunt, and kept in touch. She had just finished making Eileen her Christmas cake. I'm not sure how people get my telephone number but I am very pleased they do. It is so satisfying to be able to help and I have promised to send a copy of the obituary that was in our July Focus.

Barbara Lister and I had a lovely walk in Harlow Carr on Thursday and the sun was shining. The trees near the lake were stunning and we both declared that we love taking photographs of tree trunks and close-ups of bark. (see back cover). Barbara insisted I send this photograph for the weekly pieces'.

(Many thanks Judith and Barbara. Really nice that you could meet up together and thanks for both your musical contributions to the life of Wesley Chapel. Les.)

And finally from Les. I would like to share with you one of my favourite pieces of music, Christine and I once heard this sung live at the Conference Centre and it was amazing; it is called *He ain't heavy, he's my brother* sung by the Hollies. (4 minutes long)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_Jx9nqnXOM

(Thanks Les. This takes me back. We listened to this song ad infinitum when my boys were young. Our favourite version was by Neil Diamond. Judith.)

Prayer Corner

For this journey
bringing hope from heaven
to a spoiled world
we give thanks.

Grant us a traveller's hope—
a place to stay
furnished enough
for love to be born and live.

For those we know
carrying a burden's weight
towards an unknown
conclusion
we pray tonight.

For those we do not know
on journeys of despair,
homeless or losing hope,
we pray tonight.

© Godfrey Rust 2011, godfrey@wordsout.co.uk

Bobby Ball's Prayer

In his book 'My Life', Bobby Ball (of Cannon and Ball fame) includes a prayer he wrote.

In this world of ever-changing faces, help me to stay on the straight line I was destined to be on.

Help me to try and put right my faults, but to realise that my strengths are gifts.

Help me to be patient with others who are as impatient as myself.

Help me to learn the value of each minute of each day that I have on this earth, that I can bring love and happiness into someone else's life and not just my own.

Teach me to be honest with myself because if I am not honest with myself first, then it is impossible to be honest with others.

Make me slow to speak but quick to listen because others have a point of view too.

Help me gain a little wisdom as each day goes by because the smallest grain of wisdom is worth all the riches on earth.

Grant me peace and serenity that I may enjoy the days that I have left on earth.

Help me to see the good in others before the bad.

And last of all, help me to be honest in all that I do, because in spite of all our insecurities and faults we are the children of God and he gave us life.

So I shall try each day to become a better human being and, when my time comes to leave this wonderful world, I can go to God in the knowledge that at least I tried.

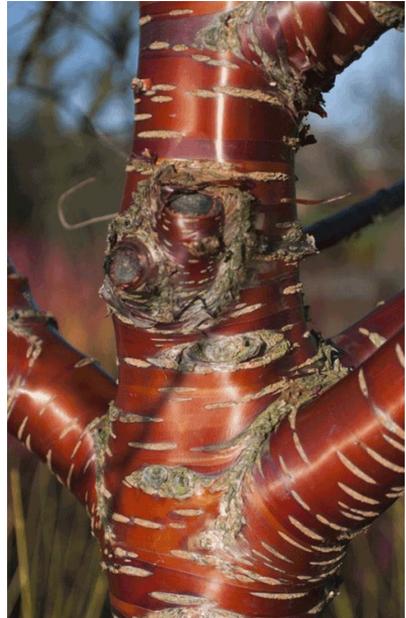
Amen



Cambridge University Botanic Gardens (see p19)



Eileen at Ripley Castle



Spectacular bark at Harlow Carr