

WASHBURN & MID-WHARFE CHURCHES MAGAZINE

APRIL 2026 ~ ISSUE 498



Washburn & Mid-Wharfe United Benefice

Farnley, Fewston with Blubberhouses,
Leathley and Weston with Denton.

Priest-in-Charge

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terry.drummond@hotmail.com

The Revd Barry Miller

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Fiona Schneider

Email fisch108@aol.co.uk

Churchwardens

Blubberhouses & Fewston:

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- Tel: 07752 431886

Denton & Weston

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Peter Goodwin - Tel: 01943 969953

Leathley:

Terry Bramall CBE Tel: 07802 877799

& Liz Webster 01943 468376

Safeguarding Officer

Rebecca Campbell (01943 818600 or
07973 334298)

Or Rev Teresa (as above)

Methodist Ministers

Rev Cameron Stirk
thestirks@tiscali.co.uk

Rev Tim Perkins

01943 864187

of revtmp1971@gmail.com

Norwood Retreat Centre

Norwood, Otley LS21 2RA,

Tel: 0748 415 4032

norwoodretreatcentre@gmail.com

Methodist Chapels are in the circuit of
Wharfedale & Aireborough

Websites:

Saint Oswald's Church, Leathley
www.leathleychurch.org

All Saints Church, Farnley
www.farnleyallsaints.org

Fewston with Blubberhouses
www.fewstonwithblubberhouses.org.uk

All Saints Church Weston
www.westonchurch.wordpress.com

Benefice web site

<https://washburnmidwharfebenefice.org.uk>
Including Safe guarding information

Norwood Retreat Centre

[www.yorkshirewestmethodist.org.uk/
people-places/norwood-retreat-centre](http://www.yorkshirewestmethodist.org.uk/people-places/norwood-retreat-centre)

Benefice Administrator

Anna Bowman

admin@washburnmidwharfebenefice.org.uk

Telephone: 07523 798338

please note the role is part time so I will reply to
your email or return telephone calls as soon as I
am able.

Front cover Image

Cover image: Empty Tomb

Credit: Gracefullwalls Studio ©

Thank you to our sponsor for the
colour image Happy Easter



Village Church Services April & May



Please check on www.achurchnearyou.com
for up to date information.

Holy Week

2nd April

7 pm

Maundy Thursday
Farnley Holy Communion

3rd April

11 am

Good Friday
Fewston Morning Prayer

5th April

9.30 am

Easter Day (Gold/White)
Leathley Holy Communion (Common Worship) (TMc & PMc)

9.30 am

Weston Morning Prayer (Book of common Prayer) (TD)

11.00 am

Fewston Morning Prayer (JC)

12th April

11 am

The Second Sunday of Easter (White)
Fewston Holy Communion (CL)

9.30 am

Farnley All age Service (FD)

11.15 am

Denton Morning Prayer (DW)

19th April

9.30 am

The Third Sunday of Easter (White)
Weston Morning Prayer (Book of Common Prayer) (TMc)

9.30 am

Leathley Morning Prayer (PMc)

11.00 am

Blubberhouses Lambing Service (FS)

26th April

9.30 am

The Fourth Sunday of Easter (White)
Farnley Holy Communion (TMc)

11.15 am

Denton Holy Communion (TMc)
with the Baptism of Annabelle Speight

3rd May

9.30 am

The Fifth Sunday of Easter (white)
Leathley Morning Prayer (Common Worship) (PMc)

9.30 am

Weston Holy Communion (Book of common Prayer) (TMc)

11.00 am

Fewston Morning Prayer (TMc)



Services at Norwood Methodist Chapel April

Sunday 12 April 2.30 pm Roland Henney – Afternoon worship

Sunday 26 April 2.30 pm Rev. Annie Baker-Streevy –
Worship to inspire and bless

Do come along and join us!

The Vicar's Monthly Message NEW LIFE



Just recently there have been some beautiful “Spring like days”. We are blessed to live in this area with wonderful clumps of daffodils along the roadside brightening our car journeys. When we look in the fields they are slowly being filled with lambs, playing not too far from their mothers. It all seems idyllic and the perfect place to be at this time of year.

For Christians this is indeed the perfect time, as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. The start of the month will lead us to Calvary on Good Friday. Jesus paid the ultimate price for our sins, so that we were able to be reconciled with the Father. Then on Easter Morning there was the amazing, unique event of the Resurrection, not only giving us renewed hope and the assurance of God’s love, but the promise of eternal life.

So, as we buy our easter eggs and prepare to celebrate Easter this year, may we remember that very first Easter. Things seemed very bleak then, until God’s power broke through. A time to start thinking of new life, new beginnings. A time to ponder on all that it means to us, a resurrected life made possible through the obedience of one very special person, Jesus Christ.

Easter Blessings
Teresa

News from Norwood Methodist Church

Dear friends

Easter arrives each year just as the world begins to blossom. After the long grey stretch of Winter, small signs of life appear: buds on branches, brighter mornings, birdsong returning to our streets. This year has been a particularly vibrant year for flowers, though those suffering from hay-fever are suffering earlier as the blossoms bloom in a short sharp snap!

The Easter story speaks into this familiar moment of renewal. Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead at Easter time, a reminder that hope can rise even when life feels buried beneath worry, grief, or uncertainty.

In our fast and often anxious world, the message of Easter feels deeply contemporary. We live among climate concerns, increasing numbers of wars, economic pressures, and constant digital noise. Yet the rhythm of spring quietly reminds us that renewal is woven into creation. Seeds push through dark soil, trees come into leaf again, and communities can rediscover kindness and connection as we see one another out walking and in our gardens.

Easter invites us to notice these small resurrections around us. A neighbour helped, a friendship restored, a moment of quiet prayer in a busy day.

The empty tomb is not only an ancient event; it is a living promise that new life can begin again and again – each and every day.

As flowers open and daylight lengthens, may this season encourage us to nurture hope, share compassion, and believe that love is still growing in our world today, quietly, persistently, beautifully, everywhere we choose to look.

God Bless you and your loved ones this coming month and at Easter.

Cameron
Rev. Cameron Stirk
(Norwood Methodist Church)



Community Notice Board



Denton Flower and Cleaning Rota April & May

5 th & 12 th April	Julie Crowther
19 th & 26 th April	Ann Chadwick
3 rd & 10 th May	Helen Cobley
17 th & 24 th May	Karen Boothman
31 st May & 7 th June	Sue Wood

Weston Flower and Cleaning April & May

5 th April	Mrs J Cowgill
12 th & 19 th April	Tom & Ruth Raper
26 th April & 3 rd May	Sally Stanley
10 th & 17 th May	Mrs H Pullan
24 th & 31 st May	Mr & Mrs Senior



WASHBURN PARISH LITTER PICK

Please help to keep our beautiful area clean by joining the annual litter pick on Saturday 25th April

Meet at 10 am at Norwood Social Hall, Fewston Parochial Hall or the Robinson Library.

Equipment supplied, but please bring gloves.

See page 29 for more information

Sponsor a front cover

Please send any items for the magazine or enquires to sponsor a colour front cover to the editor.

See Page 38 for details

All Saints' Church Farnley

The PCC of Farnley Church

hopes you will join them at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Tuesday 14th April at 2pm

Short Mat Carpet bowls

Join us again on Wednesday 2nd September 2pm at Fewston Parochial Hall when we are beginning again for the Autumn and Winter seasons.

For further information ring Gillian on 07795464042

Community Notice Board

 Fewston Foxy Ladies 
Fashion Show time!

It's going to be a fantastic and fun evening at Norwood Social Hall **21st April 7.30pm** when we strut our stuff down the catwalk! Tickets include a glass of fizz and are free for members and £5 for non members. Give Gillian a ring if you'd love to come

We meet at 7.30pm at
Fewston Parochial Hall
All are welcome!

If you would like more information please contact

Gillian 07795 464042 ; Sue 07812 071636; Sheila 07931 292910 ; or Margaret 07949 765888



T&T



Dominoes.

Join us for prize winning dominoes plus tea and talk at 2pm on Tuesday 7th April at Norwood Social Hall. See you then, if not before!

All welcome!

It is only £2 per person.
If you want to hear more about T&T, give Gillian a ring on 07795 464042
I have always got time for T&T!



Fewston Parochial Hall Charity teas

Teas, lunches and homemade cakes
Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th April
10.am till 4.00pm.

All proceeds to St Michael's Hospice. Please see page 8

Askwith Ladies Social

The social evening is on the 2nd Thursday of the month, the next meeting is the

9th April at 7pm at
The Penny Bun

Contact Anne for more information - Tel: 07713884328
Email: laeatham@gmail.com

Community Notice Board



Cakes or time needed

The hall committee are raising money for **St Michael's Hospice** (see page 7). Any baking or volunteers to help out would be greatly appreciated.

Please contact Jackie on
jjackson840@hotmail.com if you can help



Last Friday Supper.

The **FINAL** supper to be cooked by the Leathley Village Hall Committee will be held on **Friday 10th. April** from 7.00pm. There will be a two course meal followed by tea or coffee priced at £15 a head.

If you intend being there please let me know by Tuesday 7th. April.
If you have any special dietary requirements or food allergies please inform me.

Paul Howarth pandshowarthotley@gmail.com. 01943 465076

ASKWITH VILLAGE HALL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TO BE HELD IN
ASKWITH VILLAGE HALL
ON
WEDNESDAY 13th MAY
7.00 PM

Everyone welcome

Weston and Denton

EASTER WALK AND EGG HUNT

On Easter Monday 6th April
Start at 2pm from Askwith Village Hall
for a 3.5 miles (5.5km)
walk round Askwith
with an Easter Egg Hunt on the way
All Welcome

FEWSTON FOXY LADIES PRESENT

LET'S GO GIRLS! FASHION SHOW

Tuesday 21st April 7.30 pm
Norwood Social Hall

TICKETS: Gillian 07795464042

Members: FREE Non-Members: £5
Ticket price includes a glass of fizz!
Opportunity to buy clothes on the night

Great fun night out!

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Cheri 01943 465977

Pat 01943 880284, anderson@delvesridge.plus.com

Refreshments Washburn Heritage Centre

Leathley Parish Room

Domino Drives 7:00 pm
Friday 24th April

Friday 5th June
Friday 10th July
Friday 28th August
Friday 2nd October

Raffle and Cash Bar. Supper included:

Pork Pie, mushy peas, tea or coffee - £5

Pizza and drink - £2.50

Vegetarians option available - please tell us when booking

All welcome, whether a seasoned pro or never picked up a domino before, any age that can stay awake until about 9:30. Please let us know (using contact details below) by the evening of the Wednesday before so we can be sure to order enough pies

Booking; Booking Secretaries on 07802212111
or leathleyparishroom@btinternet.com

Gardens in Askwith, Denton and Weston.
 Planning is now underway for this year's this year's
Open Gardens Weekend
Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th June

Do please consider opening your garden this year for a most enjoyable community event when we welcome folk to visit our beautiful villages and enjoy their gardens.

For further details please contact Ann 07986 454 433
 Priscilla 07791 836 391 or Sally 07768 750 101

Norwood Social Hall
Dominoes
Friday 15th May

Raffle & Pie and Pea supper
 7pm for a 7.15pm start.

2026 Domino dates for your diaries
 Friday 18th September
 Friday 16th October
 Friday 20th November
 Friday 11th December Christmas Dominoes

Hope you can join us.

HERITAGE BOYS
60s evening
Music, Supper and Dancing
 12 June 2026 7.00 for 7.30pm
 Norwood Social Hall

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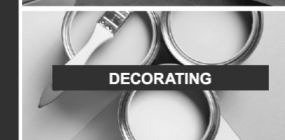
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Tel: 01943 462684 Mob: 07813 102766 Email: julieahouseman@gmail.com

Leathley Parish Room

Why not hire the Village Hall in Leathley for a Business Meeting; a Fundraising or Social Event - or a Children's Party? The hall now has WiFi.

For details of facilities and rates, and to make a booking please go to: www.leathleyvillagehall.org.uk or telephone the booking secretary on 07802 212111

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07730 488539

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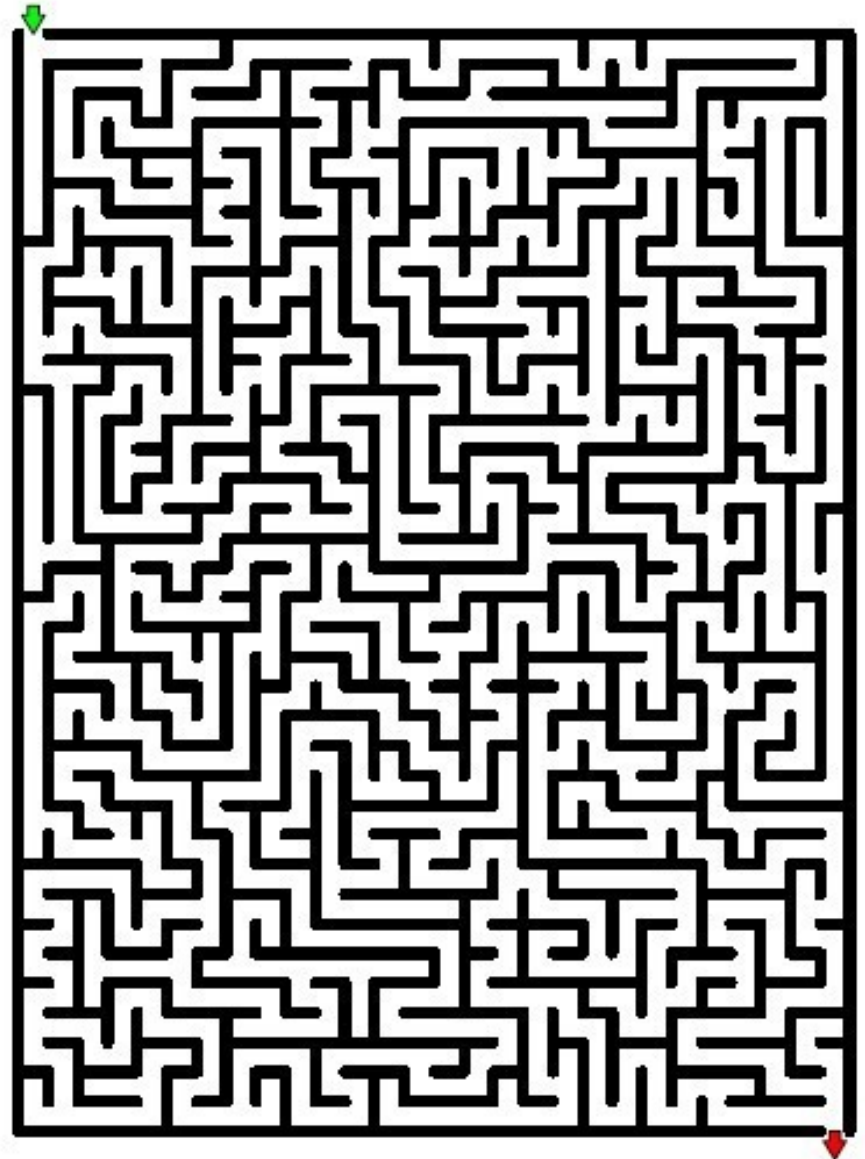
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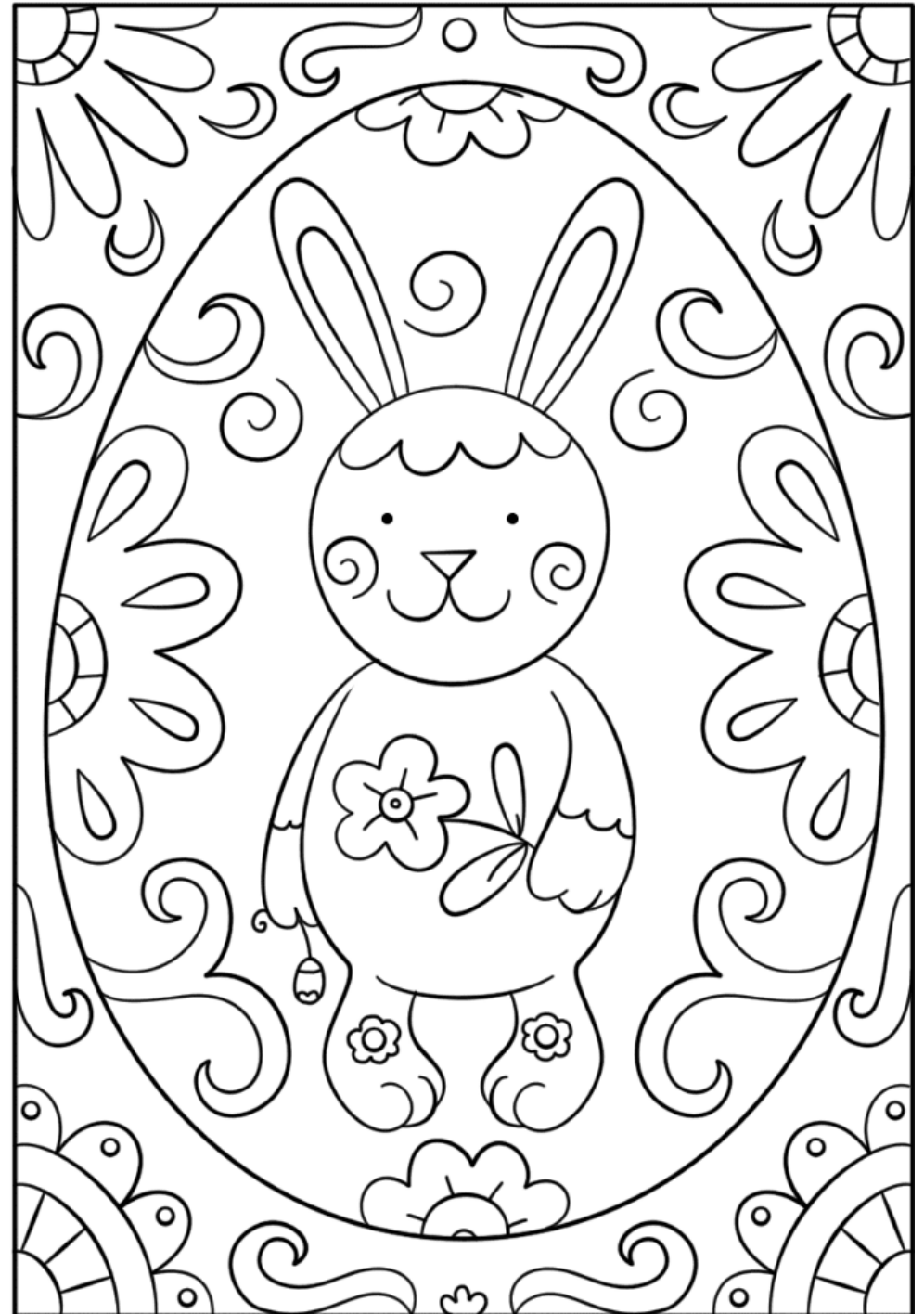
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Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Mark 16:1-8, John 20:1-18

Jesus' tomb had been sealed with a large stone.
Very early Sunday morning, some of Jesus' friends went to put spices on his body.

How will we move the stone from the entrance?

the stone had been moved and the tomb was empty... except for an angel.

Don't be afraid! God raised Jesus to life and he isn't here. Go and tell the disciples.

But when they got there...

They fled to tell the others... but they didn't believe them.

Peter and John ran to the tomb to look.

They saw the tomb was empty and only the cloths that Jesus' body had been wrapped in lying there. So they went back to the others.

Mary Magdalene stayed by the tomb, crying. She didn't understand that Jesus was no longer dead. When she looked in the tomb there were 2 angels.

Why are you crying?

Someone behind her asked Who are you looking for?

I don't know where his body is!

Have you taken his body?

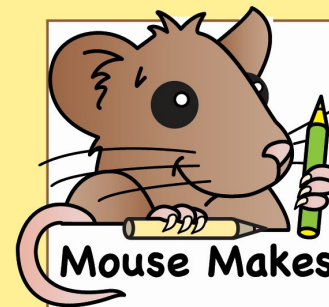
Mary

Teacher!

So Mary went back and told the others the amazing news!

Then she recognised Jesus!

Don't cling on to me - I can't stay now. Go and tell my disciples I am alive.



Mouse Makes

GOOD NEWS
OHOSANNA
DEATHQB
VNCOEUI
UAHNAAR
MIREVSU
ALIVETDR
RISENEOK
YOTHORNS
PALMSQKA
RPILATEN
CRUCIFYG
RHIQUAKE
OCJESUSL
STOMBVDY
SRYEMPTY

JESUS • DONKEY • PALMS
HOSANNA • PILATE • THORNS
CRUCIFY • NAIL • CROSS
QUAKE • DEATH • BURY
TOMB • STONE • EMPTY
ANGEL • MARY • HEAVEN
RISEN • ALIVE • GOD
GOOD NEWS • CHRIST
SAVIOUR • EASTER • JOY

EASTER WITNESS - I WAS THERE

I carried Jesus into Jerusalem

Read Matthew 21:1-11

I handed Jesus over to be crucified

Read Matthew 27:11-26

I nailed Jesus to the cross

Read Mark 15:16-32

We watched Jesus die

Read Mark 15:33-41

I laid his body in my tomb

I guarded the tomb

Read Matthew 27:62-66

We saw the empty tomb

and spoke to the angel!

Read Matthew 28:1-10

Jesus is alive!
He ate a meal with me!

Read Luke 24:13-35

All in the month of April

It was:

400 years ago, on 9th April 1626 that Francis Bacon, philosopher and politician, died. He served as Attorney General of England and Wales (1613-17) and then Lord High Chancellor of England (1617-21). Known as the 'Father of Empiricism', as his works influenced the scientific revolution in Europe.

125 years ago, on 3rd April 1901 that Richard D'Oyly Carte, theatrical impresario, died. He built the Savoy Theatre and the Palace Theatre in London, managed some of the most important theatrical stars of the era, and founded a touring opera company.

125 years ago, on 15th April 1901 that Joe Davis, snooker and billiards player was born. He co-founded the World Snooker Championship in 1927 and won the first 15 championships.

100 years ago, on 6th April 1926 that the Revd Ian Paisley, Baron Bannside, Northern Irish politician and Protestant evangelical minister was born. Leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) from 1971-2008, and then First Minister of Northern Ireland in 2007-08.

Also 100 years ago, on 21st April 1926 that Queen Elizabeth II was born.

90 years ago, on 23rd April 1936 that Roy Orbison, American singer, songwriter and musician was born. Best known for *Oh, Pretty Woman*, *Crying*, *Only the Lonely*, and many more.

80 years ago, on 2nd April 1946 that Sue Townsend, writer and humourist, was

born. Best known for her *Adrian Mole* series of novels.

80 years ago, on 21st April 1946 that John Maynard Keynes was born. The most influential economist of the 20th century, his ideas formed the basis of the Keynesian economics.

75 years ago, on 2nd April 1951 that General Dwight D Eisenhower (later US President) became NATO's first Supreme Allied Commander. He assumed command of all Allied forces in the Western Mediterranean and Europe.

75 years ago, on 17th April 1951 that the Peak District National Park was established. It was Britain's first National Park.

70 years ago, on 18th April 1956 that American film actress Grace Kelly married Prince Rainier III of Monaco and became Princess Grace of Monaco.

65 years ago, on 10th April 1961 that South African golfer Gary Player became the first non-American to win the Masters Tournament in Augusta, Georgia.

65 years ago, on 12th April 1961 that Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first person in space and the first person to orbit the Earth.

60 years ago, on 10th April 1966 that Evelyn Waugh died. This satirical novelist, biographer, and travel writer is best known for *Decline and Fall*, *A Handful of Dust*, *Brideshead Revisited*, and *Sword of Honour*.

Continued on page 33



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Washburn Parish Council

Washburn Parish Council covers the areas of Blubberhouses, Fewston, Norwood and Timble. The Parish Council is the first tier of local government and is a body of volunteers elected to represent the views of their community.

At the meeting of Council in early March the Council discussed current issues in the parish around highways, planning and maintenance.

It was agreed that the Council will undertake a **litter picking day** in the parish on **Saturday 25 April**. Equipment will be provided for participants although you are encouraged to bring your own gloves. The arrangements are: Timble meet at the Robinson Library at 10.00am; Fewston meet at Parochial Hall 10.00am; and Norwood meet at Norwood Social Hall 10.00am. All are very welcome. Anyone who needs further details please contact Cllr Andrew Campbell.

At the meeting of Council held in January it was agreed to increase the parish budget for the upcoming financial year at the current rate of inflation. The Council agreed a parish precept of £8,660 for the year 2026-27. This precept will be used to ensure local maintenance works carried out by the parish caretaker, upkeep of the Meagill Lane Chapel, and upkeep of parish defibrillators, as well as ensuring the Council meets its statutory obligations and responsibilities through the Parish Clerk.

The next meeting of Washburn Parish Council will be held on Monday 11 May 2026, commencing at 7.15pm. This will be preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors commencing at 7.00 pm.

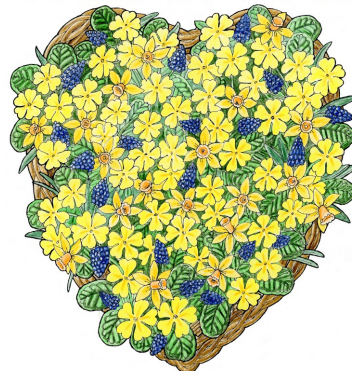
Should you wish to contact any of your councillors please email washburnpc@gmail.com or for more information about your council please visit www.washburn-pc.gov.uk



Mothering Sunday coffee morning

On a lovely sunny spring Saturday St Helen's hosted the annual pre Mothering Sunday coffee morning at Denton. Numbers attending were disappointing, but all those who came enjoyed a warm welcome and plenty of delicious home-made cakes. Many thanks to all who baked, helped and supported. Your generosity and enthusiasm was much appreciated!

THANK YOU



Friends of the Dales Protecting Birds of Prey

Despite more than 70 years of full legal protection, raptor persecution remains a serious and persistent wildlife crime. The Yorkshire Dales is one of the UK's worst-affected areas, with 152 confirmed incidents of persecution or suspicious disappearances recorded between 2009 and 2023.

To tackle these wildlife crimes effectively, the charity Friends of the Dales is asking people and supporting organisations to add their name to its Petition to Government seeking better national recording of wildlife crime, the introduction of sentencing guidelines and the strengthening of penalties for offenders, and more effective regulation for those industries where the crimes often happen. Head over to its website at www.friendsofthedales.org to find out more and add your name.

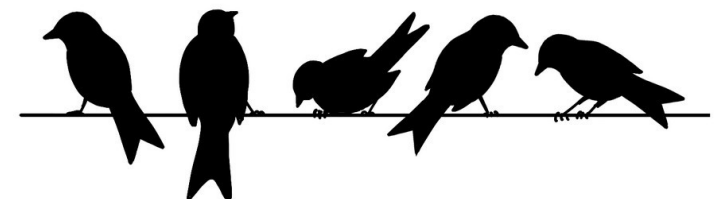
The charity also has the following events scheduled to support its **Eyes on the Skies campaign** speaking out against birds of prey persecution: **Birding for Beginners** - Saturday 9 May, 10am – 4pm

Designed especially for 18-35 year olds, this event offered in

collaboration with the Upper Wharfedale Field Society, comprises an informal but informative morning session near Grassington to get you clued up on what to look (and listen!) for. In the afternoon participants will then venture out on a **4-5 mile scenic walk**, spotting birds along the way and learning how different species use the landscape throughout the year.

To book email: victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk
Online Talk – Talking Raptor Persecution with Dr Ruth Tingay
New date Wednesday 20 May, 5.30pm – 7pm

A unique opportunity to hear from wildlife conservationist Dr Ruth Tingay, who has worked in the field of raptor research and conservation for more than 30 years. A former President of the international Raptor Research Foundation, Ruth now focuses on campaigning against the illegal killing of birds of prey in the UK through the blog Raptor Persecution UK. Ruth is also a co-director of the wildlife conservation organisation Wild Justice, with Chris Packham. Book at: www.friendsofthedales.org.uk/events



... All in the month of April~ continued from page 23

50 years ago, on 3rd April 1976 that the UK won the 1976 Eurovision Song Contest with *Save Your Kisses for Me* by Brotherhood of Man.

50 years ago, on 7th April 1976 that politician John Stonehouse, who infamously had tried to fake his own death in 1974, resigned from the Labour Party, leaving the government in a minority. After his death in 1988 it was revealed that he had been a Czech spy since 1962.

40 years ago, on 11th April 1986 that Halley's Comet made its closest approach to Earth during its most recent visit. It will return to Earth's vicinity in 2061 and 2134.

40 years ago, on 17th April 1986 that TV journalist John McCarthy was kidnapped in Beirut, Lebanon by the militant group Islamic Jihad. Released 1991.

40 years ago, on 24th April 1986 that Wallis Simpson, Duchess of Windsor and American wife of Prince Edward, formerly King Edward VIII, died.

40 years ago, on 26th April 1986 that the Chernobyl disaster took place in Ukraine, then within the Soviet Union. It was the world's worst nuclear power plant accident, killing 31 people outright, and leaking radiation across the western Soviet Union and Europe.

30 years ago, on 1st April 1996 that during the BSE ('mad cow disease') outbreak, the government announced that it would begin slaughtering all cattle over the age of 30 months to eradicate the disease. In the end, 80,000

cattle were slaughtered.

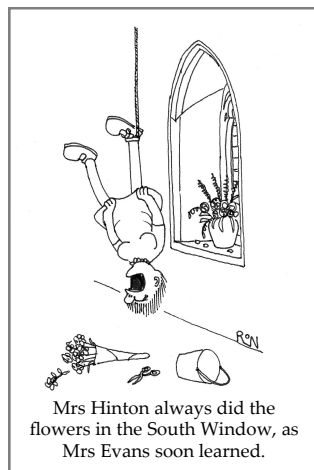
25 years ago, on 7th April 2001 that NASA launched its Mars Odyssey spacecraft to search for evidence of water and volcanic activity on Mars. It found water and ice below the surface.

20 years ago, on 6th April 2006 that the first case of H6N1 avian flu (bird flu) in the UK was confirmed, following tests on a dead swan found in Fife.

15 years ago, on 29th April 2011 that Prince William and Catherine (Kate) Middleton were married at Westminster Abbey in London. They were given the titles Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

10 years ago, on 20th April 2016 that Victoria Wood, comedian, actress, singer and songwriter died. Remembered for *Victoria Wood as seen on TV* and *Dinner Ladies*

10 years ago, on 22nd April 2016 that the Paris Agreement on Climate Change was signed. It came into effect on 4th November 2016.



Washburn Heritage Centre

www.washburnvalley.org.
Follow us on Twitter and Facebook

The Tea Room at the Heritage Centre is open on **SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS** during the summer from 11am until 4pm. We welcome **NEW VOLUNTEERS**. If you can spare a few hours at the weekend once a month we would love to see you in the Tea Room. It's a busy environment, warm and friendly, but you are rewarded with cake!

Our spring/summer programme **The Roads Taken** continues until the end of June. Please pick up a leaflet if you visit the Tea Room.

To book a place at any of our events please contact Jenny at the office on **01943 880794** or email centre@washburnvalley.org

Events in April:

Blind Jack of Knaresborough, Bernard Higgins **** SOLD OUT ****

Thursday 2nd April, 7.30pm – 9.00pm

Bernard will tell us all about 'Blind Jack', or John Metcalf. Although an attack of smallpox caused blindness from the age of six, John was skilled at various activities; violin and oboe playing, stagecoach driving, swimming, hunting and trading horses. At the age of 20 in 1737, he won a wager that he could walk from Harrogate to London in less time than a stagecoach ... 210 miles in five and a half days! He realised how much the roads could be improved and he ensured that they were built on good foundations, with a convex surface for drainage, just as today. Light refreshments served. Cost £10 member, £12 non-member.



Walking pathways, Colin Speakman
Thursday 23rd April, 7.30pm – 9.00pm

Colin returns to the Heritage Centre to tell us about the origins of walking for leisure and in particular the campaign to open the countryside in the UK, including the preparation of the Definitive Footpath Map and the creation and popularity of Long Distance Walks. Light refreshments served. Cost £10 member, £12 non-member.

Continued on page 37

Dawn Chorus

The dawn chorus is the collective singing, tweeting and chirping of wild birds. It's unmistakable. It starts with a few hesitant songs, probably Blackbirds, but maybe Robins and Thrushes too, just before dawn. They're soon joined by other voices until all the birds in the area are singing together. Mind you, unless you are up and about, the better your double glazing, the less you'll hear.

Wrens and warblers, (such as Chiffchaffs, Blackcaps and Willow Warblers) then join in, as will Wood Pigeons, probably for hours on end, and even worse, as a repetitive double act with Collared Doves. If you are near water, waders will add to the chorus. If you're near heathland, you might hear the fluid song of Linnets and near woodland, the iconic Cuckoo.

By mid-March most of our resident birds are in full song. Then during April, as millions of migrant birds arrive back in from Africa, the riot of sound reaches full volume. By early May the chorus is at its peak, diminishing slowly into early summer. Incidentally, Sunday 3 May is International Dawn Chorus Day 2026.

The dawn chorus is all about defending territory and finding a mate, most of the noise being made by male birds. Making this much of a hullabaloo uses a lot of energy. On an empty stomach after a chilly night, the strongest will produce the loudest songs. In doing so they demonstrate to females that they are fit, healthy and

hold a territory with plenty of food. A loud song also serves as a deterrent for any rival males. Early morning is too dark to search for food, or to be easily spotted by predators, making it the perfect time to sing. With less background noise and still air, sound carries further than it would later in the day, too.

Traditionally, ornithologists and naturalists thought that it was just the male birds that could sing, with females only calling. However, recent research shows that females do sing – though usually less often and less loudly, and as females are mostly duller in colour and patterning, it's easier to miss their song. It's worth pointing out that ornithology has historically been dominated by men, and maybe male researchers are less likely to study female birdsong than female researchers! A study published in 2016 found that from over 1,000 songbird species around the world, two thirds included females that sing.

You might notice that birds often leave pauses in their songs, waiting for replies to gauge the presence of competitors so they can adjust their efforts accordingly. Some species, such as Chaffinches and Great Tits, have an extensive repertoire of songs, maybe creating the illusion that multiple birds inhabit the area, and deterring potential challengers.

Just as a postscript, songbirds are collectively known as passerines, from the scientific name of the House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*, and make



up almost two thirds of the world's birds. Passerines' legs are specially adapted for perching. A tendon in the rear of the leg will automatically tighten when the leg bends, making the foot curl and become stiff when the bird lands on a branch. This enables them to sleep while perching without falling off.

If you find the lives of our garden birds to be of interest and would like to join in and count the feathered occupants of your garden, please visit the BTO Garden BirdWatch website (www.bto.org/gbw). If you know of an organisation no more than 30 miles from York which would like a talk on garden birds, contact Mike Gray via gbwmike@gmail.com.



Titles: Robin (top)
Titles: Thrush
Photograph credit:
Mike Gray



Recipe - Chocolate Drops



This Recipe is reproduced from the All Saints Weston Recipe book, that was first printed 1st December 1956. 52 years later it was discovered by Reverend Marlene Wilkinson in her mothers possessions and reprinted again. She dedicated it to "Edith and all the other saints who made their Contributions"

68 years later we are sharing the recipes again.

Thank you to the people of Weston for their recipes

Ingredients

- 2 eggs
- 2 oz caster Sugar
- 2 oz plain flour
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1oz Cocoa
- 1 teaspoonful of milk
- Optional - Vanilla essence

- and creamy
- Fold in the dry ingredients and the vanilla essence (if desired)
- Drop in small teaspoonfuls on to a baking sheet
- Bake in a moderate oven for 10 - 15 minutes.
- Once cold decorate with cream or icing (they could be given an Easter theme)

Method

- Whisk eggs and sugar until thick
- Recipe provided by Miss Smith



Farnley Estate Womens Institute



Our second social venture provided our members with the opportunity to visit the Harrogate Club at 36, Victoria Avenue in the centre of Harrogate. The club founded in 1857 is a private members' club for men and women. We were given a tour of the magnificent building, its renovated interior and art work.

This was a very successful visit to somewhere our members have never had access to before and we were provided with refreshments at the end of our visit.

In March we are having a film and talk from the Yorkshire Air Ambulance which will give us a valuable insight into how the organisation is funded and the important work it carries out.

Later this month our social group will visit the grounds and gardens of Ripley Castle.

To view our programme for 2026 please visit <https://yorkshire-north-west.thewi.org.uk/find-wi/farnley-estate>

All our meetings take place on the second Wednesday of the month at Leathley Village Hall at 7-30pm unless otherwise stated. In addition on the 4th Wednesday of the month our new social events begin and these have been chosen by our members.

If you would like to come to any of the events above or want to know more about our WI please contact Diane Hanline our President by email to farnleyestatewi@gmail.com.



Gardeners Corner



Bulbs have really started flowering early this year, with some daffodils even in bloom in February. It is a joy to see such wonderful colours through the dreary days to lift the spirits. Dead head daffs but leave the foliage to die down naturally as this will feed the bulbs for next year's display

Spring is well under way and it is always a busy time in the garden. By now it should be warm enough to plant out sweet peas which will need supporting and tying in, but remember to harden them off first. They are hungry plants and will appreciate some well-rotted manure/compost before planting. Other seedlings that have been germinating should be pricked out into pots to grow on before moving to their final home in the garden. Just be aware that frosts can be a problem even as late as May, so don't be in too much of a hurry. Protect fruit blossom with fleece if frosts are forecast.

Traditionally potatoes are planted on Good Friday, either in prepared beds in the garden or in containers. I find the latter very rewarding as there is less likelihood of slug damage. As the month progresses, vegetable seeds can be sown directly into prepared beds. It is too early for runner beans and courgettes, but beetroot, carrots, leeks, peas and perpetual spinach should be fine. Watch out for slugs which enjoy tender shoots as they come through!

Early flowering shrubs that have finished, such as Forsythia and Ribes, (flowering currant), can be cut back. If you have enjoyed the colourful stems of dogwood and willow it is not too late to cut them right back, to encourage new growth for next season. Hardy fuschias can also be cut right back as the new shoots appear. Remember to give everything a good mulch.

Enjoy the lengthening days and have a very Happy Easter.



Washburn Heritage Centre continued



Ripley bluebells

Thursday 30th April, 10.00 am

This five-mile circular walk will take in the magnificent sight of the bluebells in the woods at Ripley, the village of Hampsthwaite and the River Nidd. There will be opportunities for coffee and lunch at Ripley Castle where the walk will start and finish. Cost £10 member, £12 non-member.



Have your say, on your emergency services

We are asking for your views on North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service. You don't have to have had contact with the services to take part. If you live, work or visit anywhere in York and North Yorkshire, we want to hear from you.

A print version of the survey is available on the website, as well as more information on what we'll ask you. The survey, closes on April 10th and takes just 5 minutes to complete. It can be found on line at <https://yorknorthyorks-ca.gov.uk/emergency-service-community-survey-2026-27/>

23rd April – St George, our Patron Saint who isn't English

The English have a patron saint who isn't English, about whom next to nothing is known for sure, and who, just possibly, may not have existed at all. But that didn't stop St George being patriotically invoked in many battles, notably at Agincourt and in the Crusades, and of course it is his cross that adorns the English flag.

It's most likely that St George was a soldier, a Christian who was martyred for his faith somewhere in Palestine, possibly at Lydda, in the early fourth century. At some point in the early centuries of the Church he became associated with wider military concerns, being regarded as the patron saint of the Byzantine armies. There is no doubt that St George was held as an example of the 'godly soldier', one who served Christ as bravely and truly as he served his king and country.

Book Review

Stories of the Saints

By Margaret McAllister,

A beautifully illustrated children's book featuring 12 inspiring stories of Christian saints, ideal for ages 7 to 11. From Saint Peter and Saint Paul to Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Teresa of Avila, Saint Bernadette, Padre Pio, and more, each story brings to life the courage, faith, and compassion of these beloved saints.

Lively and vivid, some tales are told in the first person, others through onlookers' eyes, with each story including extra information about the saint's life. Graceful illustrations, inspired by ancient art and architecture, make every page a visual delight. Perfect for young readers, families, and Sunday schools, this faith-based collection inspires children with stories of heroism, kindness, and devotion.

The story of George and the dragon is of much later date and no one seems to know where it comes from. By the Middle Ages, when George was being honoured in stained glass, the dragon had become an invaluable and invariable visual element, so that for most people the two are inseparable. Pub signs have a lot to answer for here: 'The George and Dragon'.

The idea of the 'Christian soldier' was, of course, much loved by the Victorian hymn-writers - 'Onward, Christian soldiers!' The soldier needs discipline. The heart of his commitment is to obedience. The battle cannot be avoided nor the enemy appeased. He marches and fights alongside others, and he is loyal to his comrades. In the end, if the battle is won, he receives the garlands of victory, the final reward of those who overcome evil.

OUR MAGAZINE

Feeling inspired?

The magazine is created by compiling contributions from readers, the many people associated with running the churches, societies, clubs and event holders. Thank you to everyone for sending in items each month.

If you feel inspired to write an article for the magazine. Share some news, a poem or a seasonal recipe, please send them to the editor.

Email your items to:
magazine@washburnmidwharfebenefice.org.uk

Or send by post to:
C/O The Heritage Centre Office
Washburn Heritage Centre
Fewston Church
Harrogate
HG3 1SU

Our Community

The magazine was created to link the communities of the Anglican and Methodist churches in the Mid-Wharfe and lower Washburn Valley. The Anglican churches of the United Benefice are All Saints Weston, Saint Helen Denton, Saint Michael and Saint Laurence Fewston, St Andrew Blubberhouses, All Saints Farnley and Saint Oswald Leathley. Norwood chapel is in the Wharfedale & Aireborough Methodist circuit

Please find contact information on page 2.

The magazine is managed by our Treasurer Ann Johnson, Distributers who include Cheri Beaumont and the Editor Anna Bowman.

Advertising

We encourage business that are happy to provide a service in our rural parishes to advertise with us.

Please contact Ann Johnson by email ann@apmj.co.uk or Tel: 01943 880000 to discuss your advert

Our Prices are £100 for a half page or £50 for a quarter page, per annum (12 issues).

We are also happy to discuss single adverts for events.

Magazine Archive

To see past issues we have an online archive. Thank you to Paul (one of three Pauls who help create and deliver the magazine) for editing the website www.fewstonwithblubberhouses.org.uk/church-life/parish-magazine/.

How to Subscribe

The magazine costs £7 a year to have 12 copies of the magazine delivered by hand or £17.50 to have it posted directly.

Please contact the Editor if you would like to arrange delivery and payments

Answers to the March Magazine puzzles

7	2	9	6	5	4	1	8	3
5	4	8	9	3	1	6	7	2
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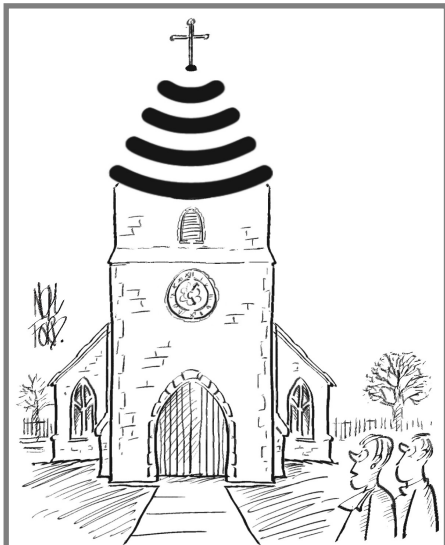
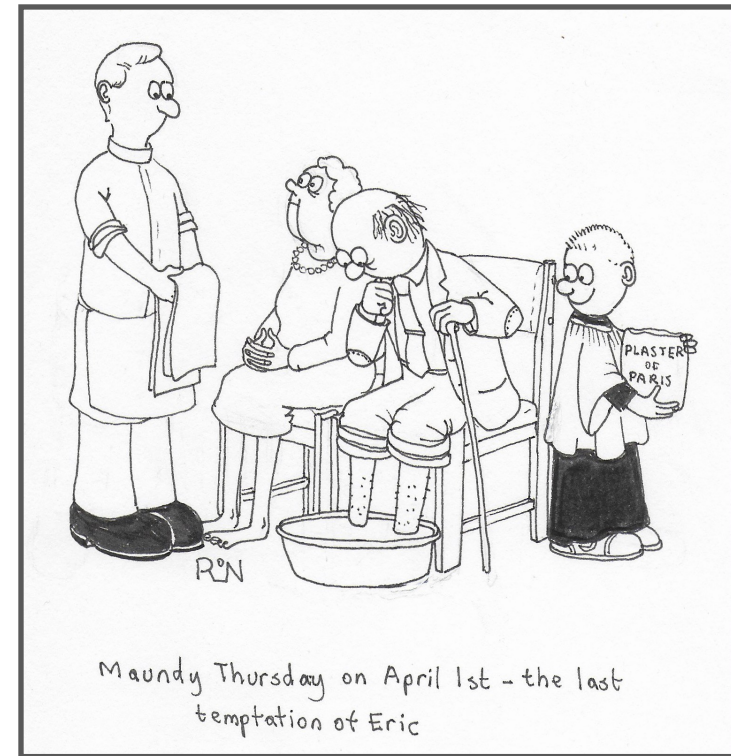
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Please see the Community Notice Board and notices on pages 6 - 12 for events, notices and future dates for your diary.

- For the Washburn Heritage Centre see page 32 & 37
- For the Farnley Estate WI see page 36

Puzzles and colouring, in the centre pages



"Looks like they've introduced contactless payments for their collections."



Next Contribution Deadline: 10th April

2026 Deadlines;
10th May 10th June, 10th July, 10th August

Edited by Anna Bowman
Email; magazine@washburnmidwharfebenefice.org.uk
For more information about the magazine and how you can contribute subscribe or advertise please see page 38