



February 2026

**The monthly magazine of the Emmanuel Benefice,
Berry Brow Methodist Church, and Netherton Methodist Church.**

Feel free to take home





Junior Church members showing off their Epiphany Service labours!

Children's Society Donations

It seems a while ago now, but on the run up to Christmas we held a couple of services, the collections from which were donated to The Children's Society, namely the Christingle and Nativity services. It was pleasing be able to donate to the Society £282.03 from the service and candle money boxes and £257.90 from the Nativity collection. So a very fine £539.93 in total. Thanks are due to all who contributed.

February 2026 Church Services

Sundays:

1st February	10.00 am	Holy Communion at Armitage Bridge Church
(Candlemas)	10.30 am	Joint Covenant service (Debby Plummer) Netherton/Berry Brow Methodist Churches at Berry Brow
8th February	10.00 am	Holy Communion at Armitage Bridge Church
(Generosity)	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Mr Ieuan Jones) at Netherton Methodist Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship (Linda Bettany) at Berry Brow Methodist Church
15 th February	10.00 am	Lay-led service at Armitage Bridge Church
(Generosity)	10.00 am	Own team Morning Worship at Netherton Methodist Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship (Rev Fran Nunn) at Berry Brow Methodist Church
22 nd February	10.00 am	Holy Communion at Armitage Bridge Church
(1 st of Lent)	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Ms Linda Bettany) at Netherton Methodist Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship (Sandra Oldroyd) at Berry Brow Methodist Church

* Please keep an eye on the Netherton MC Facebook page if the weather is snowy or icy – we'll update on there if we have to cancel services or events. <https://facebook.com/NethertonHuddersfield>

Every Wednesday at St Paul's, Armitage Bridge.

9.15 am - Morning Worship, 30 minutes of worship and prayer.

All welcome.

Every Thursday - Christian Meditation, 5.30 pm, at various people's homes until clocks go forward next Spring. Please contact Rev. Debby for details, Tel: 07762236986 - all welcome.

Additional Service at St Paul's: 6pm, Wednesday 18th February – Ash Wednesday Service of Reflection

February 2026 Readings

Sunday 1st February – Psalm 24: 1-end & Luke 2:22-40
Sunday 8th February – 2 Corinthians 8:1-9 & Matthew 4:1-11
Sunday 15th February – 2 Cor: 9:6-15 & Mark 6:30-44
Sunday 22nd February – Romans 5:12-19 & Matthew 4:1-11

CONTACTS

Web page: www.theemmanuelteam.org.uk

Ministers

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	Revd Canon Debby Plummer	07762236986
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Churchwardens

Armitage Bridge:	Pamela Thomas	01484 359270
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Safeguarding Officers

Armitage Bridge:	Pamela Thomas	01484 359270
Berry Brow:	Carol Waters	cmwaters53@gmail.com
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A VIEW FROM THE CLERGY – Rev. Frances Nunn



unanswered
prayer
the prayer course II

Fran will be running the 24/7 Prayer Course II throughout Lent, described as ‘An opportunity to process life’s most painful questions.’ Over 5 weeks we will explore the topic of unanswered prayer, between 6-7pm at St Paul’s Armitage Bridge on the following dates:

Wednesday 25th February: God on Mute: Engaging with the silence.

Wednesday 4th March - Maundy Thursday – How?

Wednesday 11th March - Good Friday – Why?

Wednesday 18th March – Holy Saturday – Where?

Wednesday 25th March – Easter Sunday – When?

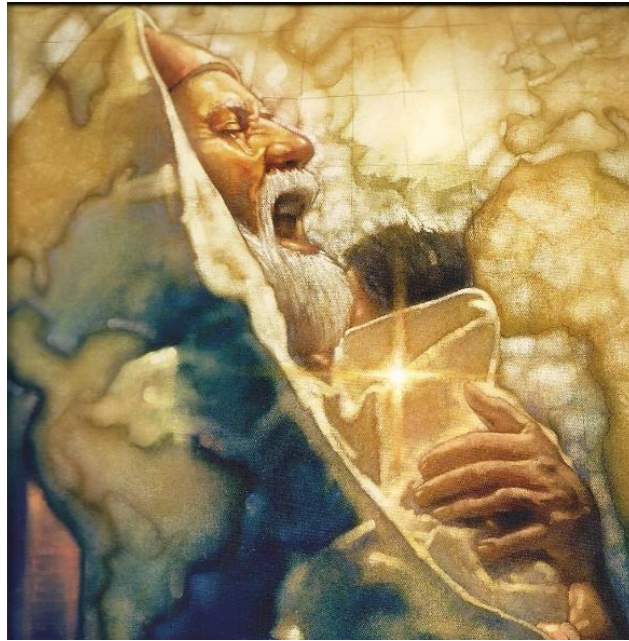
The companion book for this course is Pete Greig’s ‘God on Mute,’ should you wish to go deeper. **If you’re interested in joining Fran for an associated Life Group linked to the course on Mondays at 11am from 23rd February for 6 weeks – let her know.**

Midweek Life Groups: Our hope is to launch these after Easter. A Life Group is one that meets regularly for fellowship, prayer and



exploring the Bible together, usually hosted in someone’s home. **There will be a meeting after the Sunday morning service at St Pauls on the 8th of February for those interested in hosting or helping facilitate a group between April and July.**

Please speak to Fran if you want to know more.



Simeon's Moment by Ron-DiCianni

I have always loved this painting of Simeon, which seems to reflect the wonder and joy of this faithful old man as he holds the infant Jesus in his arms (see Luke 2:22-40). In the background we can just make out a map of the world as Jesus' light shines. Both Simeon and the prophet Anna had lived their whole lives worshipping and praying in the house of the Lord for this moment – and here at last was Emmanuel – God with us.

I wonder how this passage makes you feel. I am reminded of the Sovereign Grace song 'Who would have dreamed':

**And who would have dreamed or ever foreseen
That we could hold God in our hands?
The Giver of Life is born in the night
Revealing God's glorious plan
To save the world**

<https://sovereigngracemusic.bandcamp.com/track/who-would-have-dreamed>

As the season of Christmas and Epiphany ends and we move towards Lent – let us never lose the wonder of all that God did in sending his Son for us.

Fran

DIARY DATES FOR THE NEW YEAR

Going for Gold

Readers will remember some time back that St Paul's achieved the Eco-church Silver award, status which recognises efforts the church has made to essentially take care of our wonderful planet. Your PCC has decided that it is now appropriate to 'go for Gold', which will involve quite a lot of work over the next few months. A small group has been formed to take us forward, towards the target. There will be periodic updates to let everyone know about progress – and you should also see some changes about how we go about the business of running the church. Our work is externally assessed by 'a Rocha', an international family of Christian environmental organizations focused on conservation, scientific research, and education, working to show God's love for creation through community projects in over 20 countries.

In the meantime folk may wish to consider doing their bit for the planet. Each month we will be suggesting simple things which you can do to help. The first 3 months suggestions are shown below:

January

Many people will already have taken part in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch over the weekend of 23rd-25th January. It is the world's largest garden wildlife survey. Every year, hundreds of thousands of nature lovers like you take part, helping to build a picture of how garden birds are faring. This is so important in identifying which species are doing well, and which need help. The results will appear in due course.

February

2026 Carbon Fast for Lent - In the Bible, caring for creation is God's first instruction to humans. This Lent, a time when Christians traditionally fast and focus on God, we encourage you to take up our Lent challenge – living more simply and finding new ways to cut your

carbon footprint. Each week will feature a different theme designed to help us take climate action. Sign up via the email link below and beginning on 18th February, you will receive a weekly email containing some key facts and suggestions for how you could reduce your carbon footprint, and a prayer.

Here's the link: info@climatestewards.org if you would like to receive those materials as soon as they are ready.

March

The Great British Spring Clean is the nation's biggest mass-action environmental campaign. Since 2016, an army of millions of amazing 'Litter Heroes' have shown they love where they live by picking more than 4.5 million bags of litter. The Great British Spring Clean (and Great Big School Clean) are back for 2026 and will take place from 13 – 29 March 2026. Watch this space for details of clean-ups near you.

Warm Welcome at Berry Brow Methodist Church

Weekly on **Tuesdays** from 12.30 pm onwards, with quizzes and fellowship.

Crafty Chatterers at Berry Brow Methodist Church

This group runs **fortnightly**, from 9.30 am – 12.30 pm – 3rd and 17th February.

'The Bread and Butter Thing'

Every week from 11.45 am, at Berry Brow Methodist Church - volunteers are always welcome. Contact 07507 237311 to find out more and if you are interested in helping out. This food charity has delivered almost 100,000 meals in Kirklees during the past year, saving struggling families an estimated £740,000.

Shrove Tuesday

Almost unbelievably, it's come round again! On 17th February from 11.30 am at Berry Brow it's Shrove Tuesday Pancakes – don't forget to indulge before the privations of Lent begin from the following day.



Film Café

Don't forget on Saturday 14th February at 2.00 pm. Can't imagine what the subject matter will be – a romcom perhaps?? Refreshments are provided during the interval.

South Crosland Coffee Mornings

On the second Saturday of each month at **South Crosland Junior School, Moor Lane, Netherton**, funds are raised for a selected charity each month.

The January monthly community coffee morning which should have been held at South Crosland Junior School on January 17th January unfortunately had to be cancelled due to a combination of poor weather and a heating system failure in the school. Hopefully normal service will be resumed this month. The next couple of dates are shown below. All are welcome at future events:

14th February – Prostate Cancer UK

14th March – British Heart Foundation

Netherton Methodist Church Coffee Morning

This takes place on Saturday 28th February between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon. Bacon and sausage sandwiches will be prominent along with a fundraising raffle. All are welcome to join us.

Pop-up Shop dates for 2026

The 2026 pop-up shop dates are booked and will be held at Newsome Scout Hut on the following Saturdays, 10am-1pm: (See the advert later in the magazine).

28th February

30th May

22nd August

7th November (Christmas Extravaganza)

Support your local community and visit
the

Together

Pop Up Shop

**Newsome Scout Hut
Saturday 28th February**

Recycle

10am – 1 pm

Re-use

with

Newsome Explorer Scouts

raising funds offering light refreshments
including—bacon butties!

Save the
Environment



Grab some Bargains!

Free Entry

Local churches working together

Contact 07740425093

Raffle!

Film Café 2026

**At Berry Brow Church
HD4 7LP**

Feb 14th

March 21st

April 18th

Start: 2 p.m.

**Come along for family friendly
fun,**

**With an interval & light
refreshments for all ages.**

Free admission



Contact 07740425093



EVENT REPORTS

Nativity Service

Once again the Nativity Service at St. Paul's provided a magical precursor to Christmas festivities. A superb attendance of 90 grown-ups and **45 children** were present, including the usual suspects – shepherds, angels, wise men, not to mention a few lambs, sheep and a slightly dodgy horse!! There might even have a tear or two shed in the congregation. It was, I guess, inevitable that Gabe would be an angel...

Midnight Reflection with Communion

Following a rapid transformation after the Nativity, the church was returned to a more traditional layout, albeit with a few stray bits of straw, for the Midnight service. Just under 30 hardy souls attended for a lovely reflective hour as we prepared for His coming.

Christmas Morning

Not too many hours later, the bells rang out and folk were back again to celebrate Christmas Morning. There were rather fewer children in attendance as they were obviously far too busy dealing with Santa's overnight exploits.

Oddly Fran had the task of giving a blessing to a dragon (aka Martha) – probably hasn't happened too often!

After the service we had a convivial sharing of sherry and mince pies for the 30-40 people in attendance, before they disappeared to see how the turkey was doing! The general agreement was that now this has happened two years running it has now become a tradition...

Advent reading of The Gospel according to St. John

Members of the congregation will recall that David suggested in a recent service that rather than gorge ourselves on advent calendar chocolate, we should try reading a chapter per day of St. John's Gospel and write down one word or phrase each day, to see what we can take from the readings. Well, here is one person's thoughts.

'The progress through the gospel a chapter a day then thinking about the meaning and message behind the chapter by summing it up in one word was a very good way for me to narrow down my thoughts from each daily reading. It was a good way to read a Gospel in manageable sections then analyse the message behind it. I found it a clear progression from identifying Jesus as the Son of God and his ministry and work in a clear way.

I liked to be able to link various text to the Prophets in the Old Testament looking at Jesus ministry through the miracles to his crucifixion and resurrection. It brings us back to the powerful verse which says "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

Not only was it more thought provoking doing it this way it made me look deeper for the meanings and messages.

Some of the words I took from this Advent reflection were: - Denial, peace, believing, action, truth, deeds, light, love, messiah, proclaim, search, spirit and many more.

Thank you, David, for suggesting this to us as something we could carry out as we prepared for Christmas. I hope others also found it enjoyable and beneficial to their spiritual growth.'

SNOWDROP *Galanthus nivalis*

The front page of Focus this month gives us an indication that Spring is not too far away. But how much do you know about the humble snowdrop? Well one member of our congregation apparently knows quite a lot!

Galanthus, From Greek, gala, - milk. Anthus, flower. *Nivalis*, white / growing near snow.

In Yorkshire the plant is also known as Snow Piercer. More widely, Candlemas bells, February fair maids, dingle dangle and no doubt many others including rather poetically, Flower of Hope. However, snowdrops, contrary to popular opinion, are named after earrings, specifically the 'teardrop' type worn by fashionable women in the 16th and 17th Centuries.

These stunningly beautiful, hardy plants may be found throughout the British Isles and provide us with a welcome reminder, (perhaps just when we need it) that Spring is not all that far behind. They prefer damp soil and may often be found along the banks of rivers and streams, in woodland and also in gardens, and scrubland. They do not enjoy full sun. Most flower before the Vernal Equinox, 20th or 21st March.

The snowdrop has always seemed to be an ambiguous, paradoxical plant. It is a species of Winter as much as Spring. We regard it as a wild flower and yet, most of its colonies probably began long ago as garden escapes. They are native to Europe and the Middle East and there is no record of them in Britain before 1770, although they were possibly here in the early 16th Century.

Their pure white blooms have long been accepted by the Catholic Church as a symbol of the Feast of Candlemas, (this year Monday 2 February). There is a very strong link with monasteries throughout Britain and many such sites have striking displays. Likewise, very

many churchyards have thriving colonies. There is a renowned, large surviving colony at the site of the Cistercian Roche Abbey, Maltby, near Doncaster. At a similar distance is the Cistercian Fountains Abbey. Goldsborough Hall, Knaresborough has over 60 varieties and offers dedicated snowdrop walks in season.

Most colonies in Britain, whether in the wild or in gardens reproduce by division of the bulb rather than by seed. The reason for this is that cultivated populations invariably come from the same genetic stock and accordingly are sterile. Further, insect activity is usually very limited in February and consequently cross pollination is unlikely.

(There was a rare variety of snowdrop bulb which in 2022, fetched £1,850 on eBay - plus an added £5.0 postage! It has been suggested by various authorities that worldwide there may be over 2,500 varieties of snowdrop.

Snowdrops are the source of the chemical compound Galantamine used in the treatment of Alzheimer's syndrome. It improves acetylcholine levels in the brain which in turn help with cognitive function though they don't cure the disease.

There are groups of enthusiasts who have a passion, sometimes an obsession for collecting Snowdrops – “Galantophiles.” Sound like Doctor Who characters or receivers of New Testament Epistles!

David Barker



Here is the first of hopefully a series of pieces relating to our churchyard, drawing attention to the special value it brings for our flora and fauna.

God's Acre at St.Pauls

At a Sunday morning service in mid-June last year, Debbie announced to members of the congregation that they were invited to take part in a survey of wild flowers in the churchyard that very afternoon starting at 2.00 pm, an afternoon that was cloudless and very warm. (They will come again!)

I had to be elsewhere shortly after 3.00 pm, but decided I could do a one-hour 'trolley –dash'. I was concerned that lots of enthusiastic people would make an appearance and inadvertently trample the flowers but my fears were groundless as only Debbie and I turned up. Fran and Catherine called in for a chat.

Debbie, showing her typical enthusiasm set up a table outside the church containing a variety of Wildflower identification floras.

My hour began, (actually around 45 minutes as I spent some time chatting to Fran about a recent test match she had attended) and by the end I had recorded around 40 different species of wild plants, including ferns but not trees – that's a further project. Two species stand out. The first was growing outside the churchyard on the bank of the river. This was Hemlock Water Dropwort, a member of the Carrot Family and regarded as the most poisonous flowering plant not just in the UK but in Europe. Undeniably beautiful and perfectly harmless if you leave it alone. Incidentally this plant is not uncommon in our district.

The second of these was Great Masterwort (*Astrantia major*), rather stunning at nearly a meter tall and almost certainly a garden escape. It was growing at the edge of the church car park.

Churchyards are among the most powerful symbols of shelter in our culture, sanctuaries both for the living and the dead. They possess a quality beyond the ordinary and many people find a kind of peace exists in them whether they are set in wild places or in the centre of towns and cities. There is a sense that a churchyard has an existence that transcends time and the ordinary world. Further, today churchyards are recognised as urgently needed sanctuaries for many species of wild plant, some bordering on extinction, and together with their accompanying, dependent fauna – in many cases they have quite simply nowhere else to go.

St Pauls achieves the right balance. The efforts of dedicated volunteers do a great job in keeping the churchyard tidy where this is necessary and in other parts of the churchyard Nature is allowed to flourish. I aim to perform a much more thorough, non-time limited survey in the approaching summer. Do visit but mind where you tread!

David Barker



Hemlock Water Dropwort
– steer clear!



Greater Masterwort
(*Astrantia major*)

Armitage Bridge Ringers – News From The Belfry

Like other sections of our church the ringers have been very busy over the last 12 months, culminating in our ringing in 2026. Beverley, Lorraine, Cath, Alan and Mia entered the tower at 11:45pm to wish each other a Happy New Year with one can of Fanta Orange and another of "limited edition" Gingerbread Pepsi. Cath did mention that we had not done this for nigh on 20 years.

Looking back over 2025 we have managed to ring for nearly all of the Sunday services, a wedding, plus internments have also been catered for. We have entertained the Halifax Archdeaconry Society for their regular monthly Monday practice, The Yorkshire Association have also taken advantage of our excellent facilities.

A number of us went up to Addingham over the summer for the branch striking competition which was good fun, with some of our ringers representing Huddersfield in the 12 Bell "White Rose" competition at Bradford. One peal and 7 quarter peals were successful, plus general ringing for VE Day, also engaging in efforts at Lindley, Huddersfield Parish and Holmfirth.

Some of us trundled off to Wales for a week of ringing and relaxing around Cardiff, Swansea, and Abergavenny. Based in the Brecon Beacons we were treated to a trip on the mountain railway as well as a day at the seaside and we did encounter "bats in the belfry!"

In early December Alan had a day out in Loughborough to deliver and order ropes both for ourselves and Huddersfield Parish. It was a trip out which included our colleague Stuart Mills. After completing our business at Ellis Ropes we went on to Queens Park to visit the war memorial and the new "Hope Bell", which is a clock chime installation dating from 2025. The design is to mark the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Many highlights throughout 2025 and it is difficult to recall everything to mind. Needless to say it is heart-warming to know that that our bells are well used not only by ourselves but the wider local community and nationwide. We already have bookings for 2026 for various groups plus a potential wedding in 2027.

Lorraine and Alan

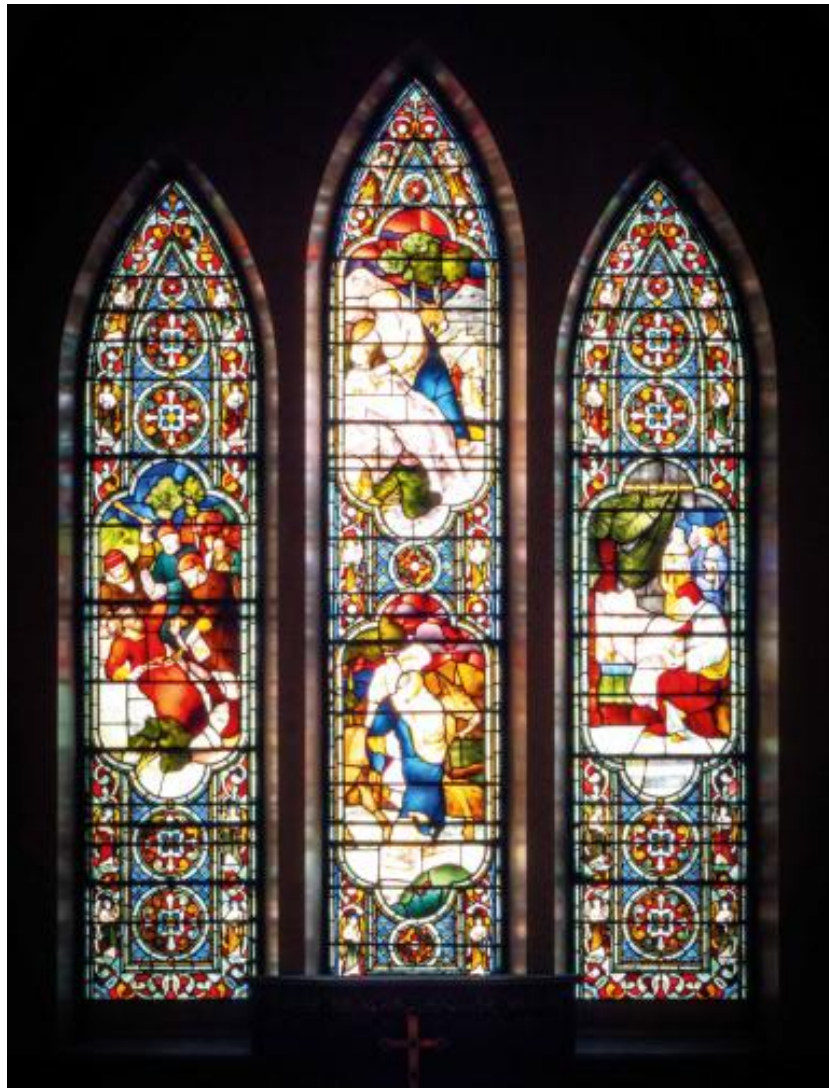


Relaxing after ringing at Addingham



The Hope Bell in Queen's Park, Loughborough

And finally... some time ago Alan Greaves brought an idea to the PCC for remembering the wonderful east windows of Holy Trinity, South Crosland which portray the story of the Good Samaritan. After many trials and tribulations with suppliers, Alan and David Kent's persistence has paid off. These beautiful light boxes have now been placed in the social area at the back of St. Paul's. Thanks to Alan and David for enabling this lovely addition to church.



Closing date for March 2026 issue: Fri. 20th January 2026

Copy contact details to Graeme Williams at

williamsgraeme400@gmail.com or Tel: 07805875379

This magazine may be read on-line in full colour. If you would like a copy, please let Graeme have your email address to be included.